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**CHINA’S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY STRATEGY BEHIND THE BELT AND ROAD
INITIATIVE: HOW DID CHINA’S IMAGE IN TURKEY’S PUBLIC OPINION
CHANGE AFTER BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE?**

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“China is a sleeping lion, let China sleep, for when she wakes, she will shake the world”

Napoleon Bonaparte

Abstract

China's Public Diplomacy Strategy Behind the Belt and Road Initiative: How Did China's Image in Turkey's Public Opinion Change After Belt and Road Initiative?

This thesis study investigates the question of how Turkish public opinion's attitude towards China and perception of China was affected by public diplomacy strategy developed by China in the context of The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Having struggled with starvation 50 years ago, China is today in the position of world economy's driving engine. The largest coordinated infrastructure initiative in civilization history, The BRI will connect Europe, Asia and Africa by sea and land, and eliminate distances with China, that is predicted to be the world's largest economy in the next 10 years. In the international arena, there are those who consider the increase of China and The BRI as an opportunity, as well as those who regard it as a threat. Chinese government has created important significant transformations in their public diplomacy activities in order to gain support in international relations by shifting its foreign policy to a more pro-active approach. Although The BRI is an economy-centred project, it is also of significant importance to understand the public diplomacy activities functioning in the background of The Belt and Road Initiative against the perception of China as a threat. Therefore, the research discusses how effective activities of China's public diplomacy are in the context of The BRI. Based on this, the study is an effort to explain how effective China's public diplomacy activities are through empirical researches conducted in the context of Turkey.

Özet

Bu tez, Türkiye kamuoyunun Çin'e yönelik tutumunun ve Çin'e yönelik algısının, Kuşak ve Yol Girişimi ekseninde gelişen kamu diplomasisi stratejisinden nasıl etkilendiğini incelemektedir.

50 yıl önce açlıkla pençelesen Çin, bugün dünya ekonomisinin büyüme motoru konumunda. İnsanlık tarihinin en büyük koordineli altyapı yatırım projesi olan Bir Kuşak ve Bir Yol Girişimi, Avrupa, Asya ve Afrika kıtalarını karadan ve denizden birbirine bağlayarak, önümüzdeki 10 yıl içinde dünyanın en büyük ekonomisi olması öngörülen Çin ile mesafeleri ortadan kaldıracak. Uluslararası arenada Çin'in bu yükselişini ve Kuşak ve Yol Girişimi'ni fırsat olarak görenlerin yanı sıra bir tehdit olarak görenler de bulunmakta. Çin hükümeti, dış politikasını daha pro-aktif bir yaklaşıma kaydırarak uluslararası ilişkilerde destek kazanmak amacıyla kamu diplomasisi faaliyetlerinde önemli stratejik dönüşümler yarattı. Kuşak ve Yol Girişimi her ne kadar ekonomi merkezli bir proje olsa da Çin tehdidi algısına karşı, Kuşak ve Yol Girişimi'nin arka planında işleyen kamu diplomasisi faaliyetlerini anlamak büyük önem arz etmektedir. Bu nedenle araştırma, Kuşak ve Yol ekseninde ilerleyen Çin kamu diplomasi faaliyetlerinin ne derece etkili olduğunu tartışmaktadır. Buradan hareketle, Kuşak ve Yol içerisinde kritik bir konuma sahip olan Türkiye üzerinden yapılan ampirik araştırmalarla, Çin kamu diplomasi faaliyetlerinin ne derece etkili olduğu açıklanmaya çalışılmaktadır.

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

Having been an economic giant in the global system for many years, China is today in the position of principal supplier to several countries, USA being in the first place. Known as the sleeping giant of Asia for many years, although China was excluded from the global system next period of the World War II, it started to go through a transformation process after being accepted to United Nations in 1971. In this process, while Communist Party administration continued, the country made significant public and private investments starting from 1990's. Attracting a high level of direct capital due to the advantage of production costs, China has succeeded in transformation from imitation to innovation in the production process in recent years.

The world's most crowded country with a population of 1.4 billion, and the third largest country of the world with 9.6 million area, China draws attention with its fast and stable growth in recent years. China is one of the most important actors of the international arena with its economic size. In addition to its economic activities, it has made a great impact on international relations in recent years thanks to its proactive attitude in the global political arena.

The most effective move through which China asserted itself as a super power in global political arena was when Chinese President Xi Jinping announced 'Silk Road Economic Belt' initiative during his speech at Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan. With this initiative, China aims to establish economic and cultural ties with approximately 70 countries, economic size of which reaches 21 trillion dollars. "One Belt One Road" has the potential to change the balances in global politics due to its potential of having access to 4.4 billion people and approximately 40% of world economy.

The forms of power exhibited by the countries in policies of global scale also determine the sustainability of such policies. In this regard, not only the resources owned by China, but also how and through which means the country uses them is important. The ways of utilizing the resources is also effective in determining the power parameters of a country. In this way, gaining a dynamic character, the power will go into a constant motion and lead the way for the disclosure of strengths and weaknesses to the advantage of actors, who utilize their resources correctly compared to the other actors.

Under these conditions, China is a rising power within the power balances of global politics. The reflections of this rise are bringing forward a controversial issue in international relations. Such discussions are mainly focused on the exertion of hard power based on China's economic powers. On the other side, China's soft power policies, which accompany its rising power and extend to a wide geography as well as its immediate neighbours also draw attention.

While asserting itself as a global super power, China started the process of building a positive image in the public opinions of the countries it comes into contact with in addition to its economic and military power. As a rising power in global politics, the policies pursued by China within the framework of the concept of soft power make their presence felt more and more every day. It is observed that, after discovering the concept of soft power, China government is now in an effort to turn it into an important instrument of foreign policy for changing the perception of China as a "threat", which started after its rise, and ensure power maximization in global politics.

In this context, it was aimed to develop an answer to the question of how successful China's public diplomacy is based on the principal objective of the thesis study. Therefore, the discussion was centred around Turkey example, which has a critical importance for The Belt and Road countries. 'How was the perception of China in Turkey public opinion changed after The BRI?' was chosen as the main research question of the thesis.

From this perspective, as the first hypothesis of the thesis, it was argued that constructivist theoretical framework of public diplomacy and soft power can be the conceptual framework of diplomacy and public opinion. Based on this theoretical and conceptual framework, the second hypothesis is the argument that public diplomacy provides an analysis framework for the social aspect of China's foreign policy. Also, theoretical and conceptual insights provided by public diplomacy to Chinese foreign policy was investigated. It was also discussed whether public diplomacy is a different product of China's quest of power in their foreign policy. In addition to this, changing diplomacy practices and instruments of China, and roles of new institutions (Confucius Institutes, Xinhua, China Radio International) included to the field of foreign politics were analysed.

Methodologically, after public diplomacy was analysed in theoretical and conceptual terms, China's foreign policy and the effects of its soft power policies were analysed. This analysis was discussed based on China's development centred approach with soft power policies in the context of The Belt and Road. This discussion is based on culture, values and foreign policy,

which Joseph Nye stated as three elements of the concept of soft power. In this study, theoretical discussions of the soft power concept are evaluated. From this point of view, China's soft power policies are analyzed in line with the country's potential, possibilities and limitations.

Global claims and practices of The Belt and Road Initiative were investigated from this point of view. Within this framework, diplomatic development and transformation process of Turkey, which has a critical importance for The Belt and Road countries, and China was discussed. China's development based public diplomacy activities in Turkey particularly before and after Turkey joined the Belt and Road Initiative, were examined.

Therefore, the transformation of the perception of China in Turkey in the periods before and after The Belt and Road, was addressed with empirical studies in two phases. In the first section of this study, a research was conducted on the perception of China in Turkish media. A data set was created with 2,187,712 news from the printed media, television and internet media in periods before and after Turkey joined The BRI, and a content analysis was conducted. In this content analysis, the frequency of China's being brought to the agenda of Turkish media, mood of the news, news topics, sources of news and their transformation over the course of time were addressed.

In the second section of the empirical study, two public polls, one in 2016, before Turkey officially joined The BRI, and the other in 2019, which represents the period after Turkey joined the Initiative. In these research, we attempted to explain the transformation of the perception of China in Turkish public opinion during the said time period. The transformation of subjects such as the associations of China in Turkish public opinion, the trust towards China, status of liking and appreciation, whether China is regarded as a friendly country was evaluated.

Finally, transformation of the image of China in Turkish media and Turkish opinion in the relevant time period was interpreted based on the theoretical background and results obtained from the empirical study.

CHAPTER 2: New Environment and Dynamics in International System: Paradigmatic Transformation in Diplomacy, Public Diplomacy

Before discussing public diplomacy, it would be meaningful to draw a definitive framework on the concept of "diplomacy". Because the evolutionary development and transformation process of diplomacy through foreign policy led to the development of public diplomacy. In this context, public diplomacy will be defined through the transforming dynamics of traditional diplomacy in international relations, by referring to what the concept of diplomacy is.

The definition of the word diplomacy has been defined in various ways by various diplomacy theorists and those working on this subject from past to present. Claude Eilers defines diplomacy as the management of international relations and the communication between states. This communication process is used to assist in establishing international relations on various issues such as cultural exchange, trade, war, economy, and its main purpose is to achieve peace (Eilers, 2009). Hedley Bull defined diplomacy as "the peaceful maintenance of international relations by officials" (Bull, 2012). In another definition, Ernest Satow defines diplomacy as the *"use of intelligence in the conduct of official relations between the governments of independent states"* (Satow, 2011). As can be understood from the definitions, classical diplomacy is a foreign policy instrument whose main actor is the state.

Before examining the concept of public diplomacy, it will be useful to look at the change how diplomacy has undergone in the 20th century. Because the 20th century is an important threshold in the process from old diplomacy to public diplomacy. In order to better understand the reason for this, it is necessary to know the difference between old and new diplomacy. While the more closed understanding of diplomacy defined as the old diplomacy was the dominant understanding of diplomacy in the international system that existed before the First World War, the new diplomacy is used for the period after the First World War. The most basic feature of the diplomacy method, which continued until the 20th century, has been "secrecy". Confidentiality included not only interviews but also interview results (Tuncer, 2005). In cases where agreements reached as a result of such negotiations were announced to the world public, it was also common practice to keep "some" important articles secret. The First World War is generally regarded as the dividing line between the "new" and "old" periods of diplomacy. The inability to prevent the beginning of the First World War brought the questioning of the old diplomacy. Especially the October Revolution '17 was the event that dealt the hardest blow against the old diplomacy. The Bolshevik government published many secret treaties in Russian archives, primarily Sykes-Picot, in Pravda and Izvestia newspapers. With the new world order

that emerged with the end of the war, a new approach of diplomacy also emerged. Because, the belief that the secret diplomacy and propaganda works carried out during the war will ensure peace in the world order established after the war has disappeared (İskit, 2018). US President Woodrow Wilson laid the foundations of the new diplomacy understanding to replace the old diplomacy. Even the agreements to be negotiated openly, which started to be mentioned increasingly at the end of the war, are an indication that the old understanding of diplomacy has changed. The main features of the new understanding of diplomacy have been the fact that Wilson talked about his understanding of diplomacy and that he included concepts such as "morality" in this understanding of diplomacy (İskit, 2018).

Since the 1980s, specifically in the 1990s, when the post-Cold War era began, important transformations started to occur in international relations in the name of public diplomacy. In the post-Cold War period, the global system began to take shape with the effect of new globalization forces and communication technologies. This means that politics will be based on society in the post-Cold War period of globalization and information. Thus, a situation has emerged that requires states to give much more importance to the demands of the societies in the past, as societies become political subjects. Making politics at the social level required the transformation of diplomacy on the basis of public opinion.

Thus, the understanding that the state is the main actor of international politics has started to be questioned considerably since the 1980s, and new understanding of power and diplomacy has developed. In terms of public diplomacy, a new diplomatic order focused on soft power has begun to join the global system alongside the state-centered, hard-power and security-oriented diplomatic order. The transformation in diplomacy has created a new field of study called public diplomacy.

The birth of public diplomacy as a modern field coincides with the Cold War period after World War II. Its usage as a term and application examples go back to the middle of the 19th century (Szondi, 2008: 2). Language schools, radio channels, official and civil travels supporting classical diplomatic relations, festivals, fairs, established by countries in other countries have been frequently encountered and encountered practices in the first period of public diplomacy.

The first academic definition of the concept was made by Edmund Gullion (1965). Gullion defined public diplomacy as the effect of public behavior on foreign policy formation and execution, as it covers different dimensions of international relations (Demir, 2012: 6). According to another view, the concept of public diplomacy was implemented in the USA in

1963 during the Kennedy government by the US Information Agency (USIA – United States Information Agency) Director Edward Murrow. Murrow defined public diplomacy as the process of sharing the views of government and non-governmental organizations with foreign non-governmental organizations and public opinion (İnan, 2012: 64).

These definitions associated public diplomacy with the fields of international relations that are outside of traditional diplomacy, directly linked to the influence of the public opinion of other countries, the interaction with civil societies in foreign countries, the reporting of foreign policy issues, communication and cultural interaction studies between reporters and diplomats (Szondi, 2008: 2).

In the field of international relations, the changes in the last century have created a world society that is integrated in political, economic, social and cultural fields. While this partial integration significantly weakened the decision-making power of nation-states in domestic and foreign policy alone, it has created the obligation for governments to share their policy making and decision-making processes with different actors. While the effectiveness of domestic and foreign public opinion increases in foreign policy and decision processes, which have been seen as the area of expertise of political elites for a long time, the mediaization of the political sphere and the spread of the culture of transparency brought about by democratization thanks to the new mass and personal communication systems, by removing international relations from being a field of activity defined by the relations of governments, many actors has made it an area of interaction (Signitzer & Wamser, 2006, p.435).

Developments in the field of international relations and changes in the content of diplomacy have opened the door to the emergence of the concept of public diplomacy. As mentioned above, the concept of public diplomacy, which came to the fore in the 1960s, and the events that took place after September 11 were again and more widely discussed and gradually increased its importance. Traditional diplomacy methods are not effective enough in the current international relations system and in the defense of international interests. Because the methods required by the changing international environment have started to take a way beyond the traditional diplomacy. Now the ability to influence international public opinion and the agenda is gaining importance; This situation makes public diplomacy an important concept and dimension of foreign policy (Aslı, 2007: 10).

Globalization, communication revolution, non-state actors, public opinion and civil society have been important actors by transforming diplomacy. Public diplomacy has also been the concept expressing the paradigmatic change in diplomacy.

Thus, the understanding that the state is the main and even the only actor of international politics has been questioned considerably since the 1980s. Emphasizing that non-state actors should be considered as units of analysis, Rosenau carried out one of the pioneering studies in this area (Rosenau, 1984). In the global system, the transition from state-dominated international relations to non-state civil-political actors proliferated and diversified to global relations (Keyman, 2000: 17).

This means that politics will be based on society in the post-Cold War era of globalization and information. In parallel with this, liberalism and constructivism theories started to develop in the international relations discipline and literature since the 1980s (Linklater & Suganami, 2006).

2.1 Constructivism: The New Public Diplomacy

As a starting point, this study grounds the theoretical framework of public diplomacy with constructivism.

The reproduction of the 'constructivist turn' of the 1990s in International Relations theory is determined by the revival of ideational and social elements such as identity, culture and norms in international politics with the end of the Cold War and the re-gain of these elements in international relations studies (Küçük, 2009: 772). Constructivism argues that social phenomena such as identities, institutions, human actors, states, norms and interests are subject to change and reshaping in a continuous manner in the historical process. In this respect, this theory states that the main actors playing a role in the international system are not only states; on the contrary, it emphasizes that it is an element of theoretical plurality in organizations (Tandoğan, 2015: 635).

Constructivism is in harmony with public diplomacy as well as in line with the methodological and conceptual framework of public diplomacy, with an emphasis on the internal structures of the state and non-state actors in the aspects of the international system built by ideas, values, norms, culture and policies. Because the public diplomacy implemented by governments to affect public opinion and to provide public support to their policies coincides with the argument that constructivism is influential in global politics, internal structures, ideas, public and public opinion.

The gradual change of the globalizing world and the emergence of new global actors particularly after the September 11 attacks and the emergence of new understandings in international relations necessitated the stronger strategies established at the level of countries. Today, one of the most important instruments of this strategic power has been public diplomacy. In the current system, states produce new policies to control and use the emerging new actors to protect their national and international interests. Public diplomacy emerges as an important actor in order to accurately analyze the emerging new relationship forms and to produce integrated studies into the global system in this direction.

In this context, one of the main assertion of constructivism, the approach that the international system is built by ideas emphasizes that the most important dimension of international relations is not material but social. In this context, while international politics is considered as a power struggle between states in realists meanwhile constructivism differs from realists by evaluating global politics as a world policy formed by the interaction between subjects and formed by social relations shaped around ideas, norms and values shared by actors. Indeed, while Nicholas Onuf, the pioneer of constructivism, claims that the world consists of both material and social spheres (Zehfuss, 2002: 156), on the other hand, Alexander Wendt, who systematized constructivism, claims that power politics is also socially constructed (Wendt, 1992: 403-404). According to this approach, the factors that shape the behavior of states are ideas and interests. States' interests, unlike other theories, are not material and shaped by ideas. According to Constructivism, power has material elements, but this takes on a meaning around interests shaped by ideas. Power alone does not make sense without interests shaped around certain ideas, relationships, and perceptions (Wendt, 2003: 96-120).

Hence, it will be necessary to deal with the international power discipline in more detail and to understand the conceptual framework of public diplomacy.

2.2 Power Element in International Relations Discipline

In this section, the concept of "power", one of the concepts that form the conceptual framework of public diplomacy in the discipline of international relations, will be discussed. The aim here is to discuss the dimensions of the concept of power in the context of public diplomacy.

Before moving on to the concept of soft power, which is frequently used in public diplomacy, it will be revealed how the concept of power is interpreted and conceptualized in international relations theories. In this framework, the conceptualization of public diplomacy as soft power will be analyzed as the first level of our conceptual framework.

Looking at the literature in the discipline of International Relations, the first study affecting the concept of power and its discussions was Robert Dahl's study "The Concept of Power" in 1957. Dahl's views, which are referenced in many power debates and analyzes in the International Relations discipline and influenced later power conceptualizations, have greatly influenced the International relations literature. According to the famous definition affecting Dahl's power conceptualization in the International Relations discipline, power is defined as the ability of the A actor to have power over the B actor, and in this way make the B actor do what the A actor does not (Dahl, 1957: 203). Accordingly, Dahl's approach represents the power understanding that can be measured on one side and is actor-oriented and related to the talents possessed by the actors on the other.

Hans Morgenthau has identified the main purpose of international politics with the search for power and the struggle for power, and after defining the national interest with the concept of power, he placed this concept at the center of the realist approach's explanations. However, he could not reveal exactly what this concept, which was supposed to be so determinant. He criticized Morgenthau's use of this concept in different and ambiguous ways, both as a type of relationship, as a basic purpose in international politics, and as a goal-oriented tool to achieve what is desired (Holsti, 1964: 179). Holsti, in his article published in 1964, explains the influence a country has; It is defined as the ability of the other party to change their behavior in line with their own interests by using methods such as punishment, reward, threat and persuasion (Holsti, 1964: 253).

According to Ashley (Ashley, 1984: 272), in the realist tradition, this concept is both the ability to influence other actors ("to have power") and the actor who possesses these abilities ("to be power") is used to mean.

There were some who tried to define power by revealing its elements (Morgenthau, 1985: 127-164), as well as to fill the content of this concept by looking at the results of the policies followed (Dahl, 1957). Accordingly, power interpretations can be made by looking at the possessed qualities such as natural resources, geography, population, diplomacy, industrial capacity, quality of the government, and the quality of the government, as well as explaining which actor can direct which one's behavior, in other words, how power is used.

Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz, in their article titled "Two Faces of Power", developed the concept of two faces of power as a response and criticism against Dahl's concept of power, revealing the second dimension of power. For them, agenda creation and control that cannot be directly observed is the second dimension of power (Baldwin, 1979).

In *Power: A Radical View*, Steven Lukes explains that Dahl and Bachratz's conceptualizations of power include the understanding of potential power and actual power, and the difference between them, in this sense, is possession of power and exercise of power. He developed a three-dimensional power conceptualization by criticizing as based on them (Lukes, 1974: 5). According to Lukes (1974: 32-33), it is not enough for an actor to influence the behavior of another to speak of power. In order to speak of a power relationship, one of the parties (the party using the power) must direct the other's actions against their own interests (Lukes, 1974: 32-33).

According to the constructivist approach, the basic elements that shape the behavior of states are opinions and interests. Here, the concept of interest is not an objective concept. In contrast to realism, interests are related to ideas rather than material power in constructivism. Interests cannot exist objectively and are shaped around specific ideas and perceptions. Material elements of power mean something in line with these defined interests. Power alone does not make much sense without being used in line with interests shaped around certain ideas, relationships, perceptions and preferences (Wendt, 1999: 96-120).

In the discipline of international relations, Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall realized Lukes' conceptualization of power within the constructivist framework, which is a social theory of international relations, in the article "Power in International Politics". According to them, the concept of power produced in social relations is two-dimensional, which are interactional and constructive. Power generated as a result of interaction relations in social relations is interactive power, while power relations that are socially constructed and realized between subjects within the framework of social processes are constitutive power (Barnett & Duvall, 2004). In short,

Barnett and Duvall presented a power conceptualization that is produced and worked as a result of the interaction and construction of social relations that form the basis for understanding soft power.

In the main, the concept of power is a concept that defines the International Relations discipline, and therefore power relations are the main feature and field of study of international relations. The meaning of power, which is believed to be the most descriptive concept in international relations, is not clear. Due to the variable nature of the game according to the rules, environment, actors and problematic contexts, a universal definition of power that is valid for all time, place and subjects could not be made.

2.3 Public Diplomacy in the Framework of Traditional Theories: Power in Realist Theory

According to the classical realist view, the concept of power is associated with deterrence. Emphasis on military power over the concept of power stands out. Behind the definition of the concept of national interest through power is the assumption of deterrence over power. While stating that the main element that relates other material elements of power (such as industrial capacity, natural resources and geography) with power is the degree of military preparedness, Morgenthau (Morgenthau, 1985: 139) actually emphasizes the significance of deterrence capacity in terms of power.

Realists have used the concepts of power and interest as an analytical tool to analyze international politics and to classify states according to their power and to make sense of the behavior of states. As a matter of fact, realism sees international politics as a field of power and interest (Donnelly, 2000: 9). According to realism, power and national interest are the two basic parameters. Power is defined here as national power, and the elements of this power are geography, natural resources, economic power, national morale, national character, population, military readiness, the nature of diplomacy and the quality of government (Hans J Morgenthau, 1973).

Continuing the same approach framework, Edward H. Carr puts the policy as power politics. According to him, there are three different power elements and types: military, economic and ideological-cultural (Edward Hallett Carr, 2001). Carr conceptualized the third type of power as power and opinion and saw propaganda, the first version of public diplomacy, as a source of power over ideas (Edward Hallett Carr, 2001: 132).

In this context, it can be thought that Carr and Morgenthau touched on the non-material elements of power, defined diplomacy and public opinion as an element of power and formed the conceptual basis of public diplomacy. These elements actually show similarities with the elements of the first period public diplomacy on some issues. Economic power is a very important element here in traditional public diplomacy and even in new public diplomacy practices. A country with a good economy does a good practice of public diplomacy. Economic power is a very important factor in high culture-based change practices, having a strong communication network and creating an image in international peoples by taking advantage of all the possibilities of technology. In traditional public diplomacy, where the main actor is the state, public diplomacy develops in direct proportion to economic power. Because the more economic support the state provides to the implementing actors of public diplomacy, the more effective and developed public diplomacy (Arsenault, 2009).

Although Carr and Morgenthau make a broad power conceptualization and define power according to its sources in this definition of power, they did not exclude both material and non-material elements of these resources. It is seen that the realists who came after him reduced the concept of power to only material brands.

Kenneth Waltz's work "Theory of International Politics" written in 1979 is considered as the emergence of Neorealism. Waltz explains the similar behaviors of states when it comes to international relations with an international structure (Arı, 2008: 157). While defining power, the neorealist view emphasizes the international system rather than influencing the behavior of actors. Kenneth Waltz suggests that *"anarchy, which causes an ontologically existential insecurity in the international system, leads to a power struggle between states"* (Waltz, 1979: 113).

In the realists' imagination of the international order, the anarchy of the human ego and the international system is essential. According to realists, it is the coexistence of these two realities that drives states to power politics. The power politics for neo-realists is because the international system is in anarchy. In classical realists this is because of the egoist nature of man. In summary, the fundamental differences in the theory based on these two same roots appear in the emphasis (Heywood, 2013: 86).

As a result, the concept of power of realism has been conceptualized according to material resources, generally state-based and hard-military power-oriented, and all politics has been evaluated as a power policy (Schuman, 1933: 44).

2.4 Public Diplomacy within the Framework of Traditional Theories: Power in Neoliberal Theory

Although the liberal theory is experiencing its golden age after the Cold War, its intellectual roots that emerged in international relations in the 1970s date back to the emergence of the liberal modern state or the modern constitutional state (Jackson & Sorensen, 2007: 98). In the 1970s, the thinkers of the pluralist (pularist) view laid the foundations of the neo-liberal movement (Brown & Ainley, 2005: 45).

The understanding of international relations of the Liberal / Neoliberal theory is different from the understanding that international politics consists only of states, as in realism. Liberalism, as the basic level of analysis, also takes the internal units as actors. It questions the unitary and monophonic understanding of the state and instead evaluates the non-state elements that constitute the state itself as actors (Bozdağlıoğlu et al., 2004).

While the neoliberal current accepts the basic arguments of the classical liberal approach as data, it has adopted a more pluralist understanding based on the thesis that states will have to look after the interests of others because of "complex interdependence." The most important difference of neo-liberalism from classical liberalism is that it is not based directly on a dominant state, but on an international system consisting of an international network of regimes (Waltz, 1979).

According to neoliberalism, the actors of international politics are mainly international organizations, multinational companies, non-governmental organizations, states, and individuals. In this framework, the liberal understanding of power includes both material and non-material elements of power. While realism gives priority to military power, liberalism gives priority to economic power. In the international environment where the globalizing world becomes mutually dependent and transnational relations increase, the nature of power is also changing. In this context, it also constitutes the theoretical basis of the soft power conceptualization of power such as diplomacy, negotiation, agenda setting.

In this section, which deals with the understanding of public diplomacy on the basis of traditional theories, it is also understood that which theories the public diplomacy is historically related to. Especially the pre-Cold War era is better understood with the realist paradigm, and the post-Cold War era is better understood with the liberal paradigm. Today, the new understanding of public diplomacy is generally handled with soft power in studies.

Constructivist theory, on the other hand, critically examines the applications of traditional theories and questions the underlying reason. Although China's public diplomacy policy, which will be examined in the study, is a policy that develops in a traditional understanding, we need a different approach to investigate its aims and means. For this reason, the approaches of constructive theory are important. Because when a phenomenon is examined with constructivist approaches, the reasons behind it and how are better understood.

2.5 Public Diplomacy in the Framework of Traditional Theories: Power Concept in Constructivist Theory

The basic discourse of constructivism is the position of human consciousness in world politics. Constructivism focuses on the sociological perspective in international politics, rejecting the realist, liberal and rationalist theory (Price & Reus-Smit, 1998). According to Nicholas Onuf, who first used the concept of constructivism in terms of international relations theory, "*Constructivism is a method of studying social relations.*" In this sense, "constructivism as a concept and system of propositions" can be applied to all areas of social research (Onuf, 1998: 58).

While many theories of international relations, especially Neorealism, have a materialist approach and emphasize the distribution of material power as military power and economic capacity, Constructivists reject the one-sided material emphasis. This view argues that the most critical factor in international relations is not material but rather social. Because the political world is social and not a physical material. From this point of view, international relations should focus on the factors affecting thoughts and beliefs in the global political arena (Jackson & Sorensen, 2007: 162).

It is understood that the social construction of power in the constructivist sense, the abandonment of the essentialist approach of realism in terms of epistemology, and thus the concept of constructivist power has a dynamic and continuously reproduced quality that changes over time. In addition, power in constructivism is conceptualized as relational (Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse-Kappen, Thomas Risse, 2002: 250). However, in the power approach of constructivism, it is understood that the material dimensions of realism are not neglected and the concept that is difficult to be included is conceptualized within the framework of realist constructivism as stated by Samuel Barkin (Barkin, 2002). Constructivists also overlap with Morgenthau's idea that power is omnipresent (Hopf, 1998: 181).

On the other hand, the most basic feature that distinguishes the constructivist power concept from realist and liberal approaches is that constructivism focuses on the understanding of power produced as a result of mutual social construction. Constructivists conceptualize power mainly from intellectual, social, normative and discursive perspectives. Constructivists, by incorporating ideas into the concept of power, have made the conceptualization of power as constructed by ideas (Guzzini & Lender, 2006: 26) and that ideas are a source of power.

Weber defines power as an opportunity and chance to convince an actor's wishes in social relations by evaluating the concept of power within the framework of social relations. In addition, Weber emphasized that power can be seen as a result of relations between subjects (Berenskoetter, 2007: 3).

Anthony Giddens saw power as a component of social structure in construction theory. Giddens evaluates power within the framework of duality as it is both a resource, a feature of people and a position in the social structure also that social factors affect both (Giddens, 1984: 169, 258).

In constructivism, inspired by Weber and Giddens, the concept of social power has been made as the generation of power through interaction between subjects, in and through social relations (Barnett & Duvall, 2004: 3).

Peter van Ham, in his work titled "Social in International Politics", evaluated the concept of social power as synonymous with the concept of soft power from a constructivist perspective, however, he also considered soft power as public diplomacy in terms of its application (Ham, 2010).

As a result, the concept of power in constructivism has been conceptualized as norm, idea, identity, culture, ideology, social construction and intersubjectivity. Nye's conceptualization of soft power also coincides with the conceptualization of constructivist power as the social construction of attraction and persuasion (Hayden, 2012: 36).

2.6 Soft Power Concept

Soft power entered the academic literature for the first time in *Bound To Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, written by Professor Joseph S. Nye in 1990, and defined as, it is not all economic and military power, that the ability to get what they want and attract should be used (Joseph S. Nye, 1990a). In the same year, in his article titled "Soft Power" in *Foreign Affairs* magazine, Nye opposed the claims that the power of the United States of America was

weakened and the USA started to decline since the 1980s and developed the content of the concept (Joseph S. Nye, 1990b).

Nye argued that he introduced the concept of soft power in order to respond to claims that American power is in decline, disagreeing with the idea that just as people have a definite lifetime and states have a certain lifetime, he disagrees with the evaluations that such a fate awaits the United States and that changes in the powers of states are a collapse. He explained that it should not be perceived by giving examples from history (Nye, 2010: 5). Against the claims that the relative military and economic power of the USA is weakened, Nye states that American power is not just hard power. The USA has stated that its relative importance has increased in the post-Cold War information age with its "universal" values, appeal, institutions, policies, culture and ideology in international regimes and institutions (Layne, 2010: 52).

In fact, this analysis has also criticized the realists' viewpoints that put classical power at the center. It has been interpreted as an indication that the armed forces cannot be the only factor in ensuring success and that states' policies are not the only determinant in the changing international system, and that interdependence has gained importance. As a matter of fact, the new version of the realist theory has started to take shape by approaching some assumptions of liberalism in this sense. In this respect, it can be said that the end of the Cold War is a jumping off point for the development of soft power.

As can be seen, the historical background of the concept of soft power, which was put forward in an environment where the US's power is weakened, is based on the context of US foreign power and foreign policy. Its academic and theoretical context is based on the concept of "complex interdependence" of the globalizing world, which was developed by Nye together with Robert Keohane in the work named *Power and Interdependence* published in 1977 (Zahran & Ramos, 2010: 13,28).

Later, Nye in *Power in a Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization*, published in 2004, connects the global system context of the concept of soft power from interdependence to the information age paradigm and argues that soft power has increased in importance in the 21st century communication and information age (Joseph S. Nye, 2004a).

Nye, published in 2002, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Super Power Can't Go It Alone* (Joseph S. Nye, 2002), *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (Joseph S. Nye, 2002), 2004b), *The Powers to Lead* (Joseph S. Nye, 2008) published in 2008 and *The Future of Power* (Joseph S. Nye, 2011), which was published in 2011, while responding

to the criticism of the concept of soft power has tried to improve and elaborate constantly. As can be understood from the titles of the works, Nye introduced the concept of soft power in 1990 against the claims that the power of the USA was weakened, but in her later works, he based the concept of soft power on the thesis of how to maintain the US hegemony.

In the post-Cold War period, the communication and information-based new power of globalization, the increasing importance of non-state actors, and the effects of power distribution and change between states and new actors have radically transformed the understanding of power (Joseph S. Nye, 2011: 113-118).

After setting out this context, Nye first classified international relations in three dimensions, where military, economic and soft power are mostly prevalent. Depending on this classification, he divided the concept of power into economic power, soft power, and military power (Joseph S. Nye, 2011: 25,51,81).

Defending that adaptation to the changing nature of power is one of the most important issues for states to achieve their goals, Joseph Nye points out that it is necessary to focus on the soft dimensions of the concept of power.

	Behaviors	Primary Currencies	Government Policies
Military Power	coercion deterrence protection	threats force	coercive diplomacy war alliance
Economic Power	inducement coercion	payments sanctions	aid bribes sanctions
Soft Power	attraction agenda setting	values culture policies institutions	public diplomacy bilateral and multilateral diplomacy

Table 1: Three Types of Power (Joseph S. Nye, 2004b: 31)

After presenting the concept of soft power as a separate category in this way, Nye defined the concept of soft power as shaping the preferences of others based on three sources: political values, foreign policy and culture without brute force and coercion, thus making others want what you want (Joseph S. Nye, 2004b: 11-14).

Despite the material, material, physical and nature of hard power, Nye presented the concept of soft power as an abstract concept like the invisible hand of Adam Smith, based on values and ideas (Joseph S. Nye, 2004b: 7). The invisible hand regulates the supply and demand balance in the market and shapes people's preferences. Soft power likewise affects people's preferences. In other words, they do not deal with any threat or exchange.

Nye argued that the attraction and attraction aspect of soft power occurs between international relations actors. Basing the functioning system of soft power on attraction completely, Nye suggested that soft power works with attraction mechanism (Joseph S. Nye, 2011: 84).

While Nye initially neglected the dimension that soft power is social construction, as constructivists suggest, in *The Future of Power* published in 2011, he admits that the ontological status of soft power is structurally based on social construction, and even defines soft power as the power to attract (Joseph S. Nye, 2011: 243). In addition, Nye has added soft power as an aspect of attracting the positive image and prestige of countries to be a desirable value in international politics in the age of communication. In this context, according to Nye, soft power as an attractive power is to attract others to you in the direction you want, to make others want your goals in terms of cooperation, and in short, to win the mind and hearts (Joseph S. Nye, 2011: 130).

2.6.1 Soft Power Supplies

The sources of soft power are divided into three. These are the political values, foreign policies and culture of a country. The most used grouping in the literature is made by Nye:

- Culture (where it appeals to others)
- Political values (when appropriate to others' local and foreign policy)
- Foreign policy (when seen by others as a legitimate and valid authority) is divided into three (Joseph S. Nye, 2004b: 11).

Among the power factors that countries have, the most important emphasis is usually placed on culture. The codes, knowledge, values and norms of society are built through culture. Culture has become a very important soft power factor, especially with the development of communication technologies. The importance of culture for soft power regardless of place and time. For example, the rapid spread of a cultural content within the borders of a country to the whole world with the help of internet technology and becoming ready for consumption can be associated with the trivialization of space and time.

The cultural foundation presents a multi-layered structure. Cultural values can exist both locally and nationally, also globally. These achievements in life style, living standards, literature, art and science are evaluated within the scope of cultural impact. The culture, which has a highly variable structure, is in constant interaction and it is evaluated that its relationship with power still needs research (Joseph S. Nye, 2011: 84). As a soft power source, Nye divides culture into high culture and popular culture. Cultural resources such as art, literature and education mostly appeal to the elite. The reduction of soft power to popular culture is accepted by researchers who think that soft culture is not enough to explain events (Joseph S. Nye, 2004b: 12).

Due to its nature, cultural policy can be a part of countries' policies and at the same time emerge as a more independent and manageable field. In the field of culture, the processes that contribute to the formation of popular culture are often formed by the initiatives of non-state actors. In the following parts of the study, we will take a closer look at China's public diplomacy studies with culture as a soft power element.

As one of the resources, political values are values such as democracy and human rights. However, the fact that these values are not only in discourse but also in practice increases the soft power of a state (Joseph S. Nye, 2004b). Considering the political values; In addition to the image created by the country's domestic policy outside, its actions and operations in the international arena are effective. Especially the values defended by countries in international organizations open the way for directing other countries at the official level (Demir, 2012: 63).

As another source of soft power, Nye claims that a country's foreign policies will generate soft power. However, what is important here is that for a country's foreign policies to create a soft power source, it must be seen as legitimate by other countries (Sancak, 2016: 101). At this point, the attitude adopted especially in international issues and organizations plays an important role in influencing the international public opinion. Increasing importance of countries to humanitarian and development aid is actually one of the ways of using soft power. Humanitarian aid provides an environment for ensuring the legitimacy of the state's foreign policy and for other actors to contribute voluntarily (Erzen, 2012: 126). In this context, China's attitude in the international arena and its position at the global level will be discussed in the following sections.

2.7 The Concept of Intelligent Power

The concept of soft power, developed by Joseph Nye, contains some analytical problems as a multivariate and multidimensional concept that goes into every mold. Criticisms made on the concept of soft power in the literature gather on the sources of soft power and how to apply it. After a long period of discussions over the concept of soft power, criticisms have been made that Nye has too much meaning to the concept, and it has been argued that soft power is not a powerful tool to affect and effectively direct all foreign policy, and that it cannot be an effective tool to direct foreign policy. In particular, Baldwin and Ferguson appear to be critical of Nye's conceptualizations. Ferguson said that it would not be correct to explain power with a single source; he argues that economy, oil, military, financial centers, political alliances, moral values and the power of ideology cannot be effective alone in being the only global power (Ferguson, 2009). However, opposing Ferguson's reduction of soft power to cultural power, Nye emphasized that cultural resources are only an important dimension of soft power (Joseph S. Nye, 2011: 22).

In addition, the population, area, natural resources, size of the economy, wealth, the army and technological developments, which are specified as a hard power source, can also be a soft power source. In a broader sense, as Lukes points out, the concept of power, its sources and its consequences should be handled together (Hayden, 2012: 53). In this context, it is understood that hard power and soft power are interrelated. As a matter of fact, Nye realized in his later studies that it was wrong to distinguish soft power from hard power and accepted that these two powers are inevitably interconnected with the concept of smart power and finally reconceptualized it as smart power (Armitage & Jr., 2007; Joseph S Nye, 2011: 207-234).

2.8 Public Opinion in International Relations Theories

In this part of the study, the term public, which is at the center of the concept of public diplomacy, is evaluated as a public opinion in terms of its meaning. Public opinion is considered as the third concept of the conceptual framework of public diplomacy after diplomacy and soft power. The target audience of public diplomacy is public opinion. Therefore, it can be interpreted basically as a public-oriented diplomacy.

Jan Melissen, who has many works on public diplomacy and is specialized in this field, defines public diplomacy as the name of engaging with the public opinion (Melissen, 2013: 439). In addition, Hans Tuch, former Director of the US Information Agency (USIA), which is cited as one of the main works in the public diplomacy literature, also defined public diplomacy aimed

at public opinion. (Hans N. Tuch, 1990: 10). Nancy Snow, one of the editors of the book *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, which is one of the most frequently referencing sources for public diplomacy, explains that we consider public diplomacy as public to public (Cull & Snow, 2009: 6) which confirms that we consider the concept of public opinion as the main and focal point of public diplomacy and that we characterize public diplomacy as public opinion diplomacy.

In terms of public diplomacy, the concept of public opinion is handled in relation to foreign policy-diplomacy. Thomas Risse-Kappen evaluated the public opinion as policy making in the relationship between the public and foreign policy - domestic policy (Risse-Kappen, 1991). In this context, public opinion is considered to be an effective factor and actor in foreign policy making and diplomacy. In this framework, public opinion is considered both as a subject and an object in the field of public diplomacy. In fact, public diplomacy, as the name of engaging with the public, brings a public-oriented perspective to diplomacy.

The role of the public opinion as a factor affecting foreign policy in International Relations theory has started to be discussed especially since the 1980s. The influence of the public opinion in foreign policy within the discipline of International Relations is among the controversial issues.

On this issue, there are those who argue that individuals can analyze foreign policy in depth and evaluate the developments rationally and form their attitudes, while in another view, there are those who think that the complex developments of foreign policy cannot be understood by "ordinary" individuals and that the attitudes of citizens about foreign policy are only an outcome of the mood they are in. These two views not only examine the positions of individuals regarding foreign policy, but also define the role of the public opinion in the framework of foreign policy (Erdoğan, 2013: 38).

Although the theory of democracy stipulates that governments have responsibilities towards voters in all matters, the fact that foreign policy issues are "not easily understood" for individuals and the voters 'lack of competence to evaluate governments' policies is considered a general acceptance, especially for those who prefer to approach international relations from a Realist perspective (Erdoğan, 2013: 39).

However, in the liberal tradition that goes back to Kant, Rousseau and Bentham, public opinion was at the center of politics. While in Kantian thought, public opinion was seen as an obstacle to war, Bentham saw the public as the only solution to most problems of the state (O. R. Holsti, 2007: 5). Liberal theory sees the media as the representative of the public opinion and considers non-state actors as actors of international relations by opening up international relations (Savigny & Marsden, 2011: 155).

On the other hand, while realists treat the public as the pursuit of maintaining the security of the state and the pursuit of power security, neo-realists take a more rigid approach to the effect of domestic politics and internal factors on foreign policy and assume that the foreign policies of states are influenced by the anarchy system and the pursuit of security (Foyle, 1999: 278). Liberal theorists advocated the understanding that foreign policy should be formulated in line with the public demand (Page & Shapiro, 1983: 175-182).

CHAPTER 3: Building China's Public Diplomacy in the Context of the Belt and Road Initiative

With globalization in international relations, the great power rivalry between actors is becoming more and more evident. In this great power competition, China has become an important actor in the international arena with its rapid rise in many areas, especially in the economy, in recent years. As mentioned in previous chapters, globalization has contributed to the development of public diplomacy. Depending on the developments experienced, the rapid circulation of information has revealed the need for states to express themselves in the most accurate way outside and to receive the support of foreign public opinion. Especially the recent emergence of China as a rising power and the different interpretation of this situation by the states in the international arena has led to more intensification of public diplomacy activities in the country.

From this point of view, in this part of the study, one of the most important projects of our age, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and China's public diplomacy activities that are shaped by this will be discussed. The Belt and Road Initiative has become one of the most important agenda items of Chinese Foreign Policy in recent years. With this initiative, China promises great economic and infrastructural cooperation to the countries on the Belt within the context of its "Win Win" strategy. It will be examined how China consented the parties in this cooperation process and how this persuasion process developed within the scope of soft power.

3.1 The Rising Power China: One Belt One Road Initiative

With “Open Door Policy” in 1978, in other words “Reform and Opening to Foreigners” policy, China started to grow rapidly with the economic reforms that Deng Xiaoping, who started to rule the country after the death of the revolution and the country's leader Mao Zedong in 1976. 42 years later, China has become the locomotive of the growth of world economy (Doster, 2019: 8).

The modern "Silk Road", The BRI, was reconstructed by Chinese President Xi Jinping as a modern and comprehensive transit network connecting China to the world, including rail, road, seaway and even pipelines. With this initiative, China targets to both reconstruct the old "Silk Road" and to create the world's largest political, economic, energy, social and cultural partnership (Xue Li, 2017: 290). Currently, China is one of the countries with the fastest economic growth in the world. With its strong economy and large population, China has also been one of the countries that set the world agenda the most. With the Belt and Road Initiative, China plans to establish a full-fledged political, economic, social and cultural integration with Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

Chinese President Xi Jinping first spoke about the creation of the 'Silk Road Economic Belt' among the ancient silk road countries in his speech at Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan on September 7, 2013. In his speech at the Indonesian parliament in the same year, Xi Jinping stated that they are ready to strengthen cooperation with ASEAN countries and jointly build the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

The project aiming to connect Asia, Europe and Africa to each other by land and sea; It covers multi-billion dollar infrastructure initiatives that include railways, highways, ports and energy transmission systems. The Belt and Road Initiative, which stands out as the biggest development project of the 21st century; It is aimed to build infrastructure such as transportation and energy and to work in harmony with each other. With this initiative, it is expected that trade and investment opportunities will be revived with the provision of credit support for new projects, exploration of capital opportunities, and development of interregional customs cooperation.

The Belt-Road Initiative consists of land (Silk Road Economic Belt) and sea (21st Century Maritime Silk Road) parts (Parliament, Speech by Chinese President Xi Jinping to Indonesian, n.d.) (Figure 1). The first line to be built is the "Silk Road Economic Belt" line, which will connect China, Russia, Central Asia, and Europe by land. With this line, developing

infrastructure facilities in the Central Asian countries on the route, increasing domestic and foreign investments and ensuring freedom of trade are among the priority targets. The project includes roads, high-speed railways, airports, ports, natural gas lines and other infrastructure projects (James McBride, n.d.). The second line is the "Maritime Silk Road" line that will connect China to the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean via the Indian Ocean. It is planned to develop trade by sea through the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean through this line. Considering that China, the second largest economy in the world, conducts most of its trade by sea, the relevance of these initiatives is revealed. Both the cost of the existing routes and the emergence of security problems arising from the existence of the Gulf of Aden and the Strait of Malacca have been effective in the prominence of the Maritime Silk Road.



Figure 1: China's Proposed New Silk Roads

Source: (*The Modern Silk Road Project: Expectations and Doubts*, n.d.)

Established on basic foundations such as connectivity of opportunities, policy coordination, unblocked trade, financial integrity and diplomacy, Maritime Silk Road aims for a faster trade network (Vision and Activities on Promoting the Joint Construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, nd). The sea route, which is expected to develop areas such as tourism in connection with regional trade and development, appears to include rail and road networks. Maritime Silk Road, which will connect the continents of Africa, Asia

and Europe with the sea trade network, will enable different cultures and geographies to get to know each other better.

Compared to the 20th century, the world's largest commercial ports in the 21st century are located in the Asian region. Increasing its share in world trade by more than 900 percent in the last 40 years, China has also become the world's largest foreign trade country. Explaining that it aims to import 15 trillion dollars (Li, n.d.) by 2035, China wants to expand its foreign trade network. As a country that has understood the importance of regional development initiatives, China has blended integration and cooperation initiatives with a peaceful development model.

Making good use of the gaps and vital needs in infrastructure and other areas in the participating countries and regions, Beijing has invested approximately \$ 1 trillion in 900 deals under the Belt and Road Initiative. The initiative goals put forward to revive the historical silk road have an economic potential of \$ 8 trillion (Chatzky & McBride, n.d. ; Devonshire-Ellis, n.d. ; Shen, 2018: 133). China's effort to revitalize the old trade route from Asia to Europe has the potential to have a greater economic impact than the Marshall Plan or the enlargement of the European Union. The project is expected to revitalize the economic and cultural life of approximately 70 countries on the belt route, whose economies reach 21 trillion dollars. With the potential to touch 4.4 billion people and about 40% of the world economy, the "Belt and Road" Initiative is 12 times larger in dollar terms than the Marshall Plan, which aims to rebuild Europe after the Second World War, and the value of the project It is estimated to be \$ 4 trillion (Curran, nd). One Belt, One Road Initiative is a strategic initiative in terms of creating China-based organizations and mechanisms as an alternative to the Western-centered global corporate structure. It can be said that the first main target is to produce new Eurasian transport and trade infrastructures, and the second main goal is to remove the obstacles to free trade.

Thanks to the initiative, multi-dimensional and compound connection networks will be formed along the line extending from Europe to Asia and logistics costs will be significantly reduced. Coordinated development plans will be prepared between the relevant parties through multilateral agreements between the countries within the scope of the initiative and a diversified, balanced and sustainable development can be achieved. The Eurasian hinterland will become the heart of the world market, with the marked increase in commodity transport, and thus inter-regional integration will develop further.

According to statement of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in April 2019, a total of 126 countries and 29 international organizations have signed cooperation agreements with China within the framework of the BRI. Also, Yi underlined that between 2013 and 2018, the total trade volume between China and participating countries exceeded \$ 6 trillion and that China invested more than \$ 80 billion in these participant countries. According to the Wang Yi, 82 economic and commercial cooperation zones have been created in the countries through Belt-Road Project with the participation of Chinese companies within the scope of the initiative. Foreign minister stated that these special economic zones created by China and related participant countries created approximately 300,000 jobs (Second Belt and Road Forum to Be Held April 25-27 in Beijing, n.d.).

China is trying to achieve some priority goals through the "Belt and Road" initiative. Firstly, it targets to accelerate the growth process of the country's economy by spreading economic development to the world through infrastructure investments and new trade routes. Second, it will develop the interdependence relationship between China and other countries and regions through global networks of partnerships, thus securing the country's foreign trade. Third, China will get the opportunity to focus on Asia as part of its Neighborhood Diplomacy. Fourth, it will try to internationalize the yuan by encouraging its use in financial transactions (Lo, 2015). China is the main lender for Belt and Road projects. Many projects undertaken by Chinese companies are financed by Chinese financial institutions. This situation provides an important opportunity for yuan to rise to global status from China (Yanzhuo, 2018: 60). Thus, the process of yuan becoming reserve money, which started with its inclusion in the Special Drawing Rights (SDR) basket in October 2016, will also accelerate. Of course, China wants to accelerate the development of its country and increase the welfare of its people. However, it is also based on mutual benefit and long-term development for all countries. The "win-win" strategy, which forms the main vision of the One Belt One Road Initiative, is also in line with the China Open Development policy. China's One Belt One Road Project is a new focus on infrastructure investments and human development at a historical moment where the sustainability of neoliberalism in the post-2008 crisis period. It enabled the development understanding to be on the agenda of both developed and developing countries. It will make a positive contribution to the development of developing countries located on this economic and cultural line. Because in the current global institutional structure, developing countries cannot develop their local infrastructure and industrial capacities on their own by using international organizations and mechanisms. This situation obstructs physical and human development in many developing

countries. Western-based financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank remain inadequate in financing the development of many developing countries, as they focus on risk aversion and protecting the interests of investor countries (He, 2017: 54). For this reason, the corporate architecture based on new global organizations and mechanisms such as "One Belt, One Road" and "Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank", which China is trying to build against the US-led Western hegemony, offers great opportunities for developing countries. This initiative also seems to contribute to the formation of a "Multipolar World" by paving the way for China to become a dominant player in solving world problems due to the economic and cultural cooperation established with other countries. The One Belt, One Road Initiative is key to the global expansion of fair, inclusive and sustainable development.

China, which constantly emphasizes common interest, shared responsibility and common destiny within the scope of the initiative (Liu, 2019), which includes 70 countries, 4.4 billion people and 40 percent of the world economy; It emphasizes many areas such as infrastructure, trade, financial resources, transportation, communication, energy, tourism, agriculture, technology, logistics, joint investments, scientific cooperation. Chinese leader Xi frequently states that the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road projects, which are called Belt and Road, are projects that bring mutual benefit and mutual benefit. He emphasizes that with the implementation of the projects, a closer bond will be formed between the economies of all countries on their routes, innovations will be brought in structures and mechanisms with the construction of infrastructure, new centers that increase growth and employment will be created, and the internal dynamism of all countries' economies will increase and their ability to resist risk (Doster, 2019: 14).

3.2 China's Public Diplomacy

With globalization, developments in the field of technology have brought a different dimension to the understanding of public diplomacy. Depending on the developments experienced, the rapid circulation of information has revealed the need for states to express themselves in the most accurate way outside and to receive the support of foreign public opinion. Especially the recent emergence of China as a rising power and the different interpretation of this situation by the states in the international arena has led to more intensification of public diplomacy activities in the country. In this part of the study, the motivations on which the "Chinese threat" perception is based, and the historical and current background of the public diplomacy studies produced by China will be discussed. From this point of view, China's soft power policies will be

discussed through "culture", "foreign policy" and "political values", which Nye evaluates as three dimensions of soft power, by determining Chinese public diplomacy goals.

3.2.1 Perception of the Chinese Threat

Established in 1949, the People's Republic of China opened up to the outside world with the reforms made by Deng Xiaoping, who came to power after Mao's death, and achieved significant success in many structural reforms, especially in the economy. With the economic reforms, China has become the fastest growing economy in the world. This rapid growth of China worried many powerful states, especially the USA, and caused articles and articles titled "China threat" to be written.

The "Chinese threat" perception was first expressed by South Korea, Japan and the USA in the early 1990s. In particular, the law issued by the Chinese National People's Congress on February 25, 1992 on the East and South China Seas and its rights claim in these seas were interpreted as China's expansionist policy and wanted to be a hegemonic power in the region, thus creating a basis for the 'Chinese threat' theory. prepared (Ateba, 2002).

One of the most important sources on which the discourses on Chinese threat are based is the power transition theory (power transition theory), which is analyzed in depth in the book "World Politics" published by Abram F. M. Kenneth Organski. According to this theory; In the international system, states are hierarchically divided into four different groups: dominant power, great powers, medium-sized states, and small states. According to this hierarchy, rising powers that are not satisfied with the status quo will eventually rebel against the hegemonic power (A.F.K. Organski, 1968).

The Clash of Civilizations is the thesis by Samuel Huntington, which states that since the 1990s by corresponding to the post-Cold War, the determinant factor in international unions or disputes is not political or economic ideologies, but civilisations, and that this trend will go on in the 21st century. It supports the Chinese threat theory. In Huntington's dissertation, which he covered in an article published in Foreign Affairs magazine in 1993 and then expanded his work in 1996, there is Confucianism and Islam as opposed to Western civilization. China will also seek hegemony in East Asia due to its history, culture and traditions (Jing, 2014).

Based on the discussions from these definitions, when the Theory is evaluated through China, it can be thought that as China, which has developed its political, economic, cultural and military influence area, will not be satisfied with this, regional and global actors, especially the United States, will develop different methods of struggle to prevent this. Mearsheimer states

that if China shows impressive growth performance for a few more decades, there will be an intense security competition between the USA and China and this situation has war potential (Mearsheimer, 2005: 19).

We can think that Mearsheimer's prediction, which made this claim in 2005, is relatively true today. The US's response to trade wars against China, which has expanded its sphere of influence through the Belt and Road Initiative, and the cyber struggle between the two countries getting more and more intensified can be evaluated as an indicator that the areas of conflict are widening. Even though the hot conflict between the two countries has not occurred yet, the US strategy to encircle China over the countries of the region and the raising of the arms race, especially Taiwan, point to the justification of this claim.

In addition, China was defined as a "strategic challenge" for the first time at the NATO summit held in December 2019, whose necessity was discussed in the post-cold war period. China's economic increase in the international system, its re-activation of global hegemonic competition can also be considered as a strategic transformation in NATO's post-Cold War threat perception (Korkmaz, 2020).

China's official newspaper, People's Daily, first responded to the Chinese threat theory in 1992 and stated that the US used this theory as an excuse to sell weapons to Taiwan. The reason for this is that the USA decided to sell fighter jets to Taiwan and an article written by Ross Munro on the "Chinese threat" theory. However, after 1996, China's response to the threat theory became harsher (Yee & Zhu Feng, 2004). Chinese President Jiang Zemin on the subject in 1997; He stated that China's economic capacity and the Chinese threat theory were exaggerated, that they were unfounded, also China's reform and modernization needed a long period of stability and peace, and even if it got stronger, it would not threaten other countries (Yee & Zhu Feng, 2004). Hu Jintao, who came to the fore after Jiang Zemin, during a meeting he held in Washington in 2011; He stated that they will adhere to the peaceful development line, they will not enter any arms race, they are not a military threat to any country, and China will never follow an expansionist policy (Hu Jintao: China Not a Threat to U.S. Power, 2011). Chinese President Xi Jinping, on the other hand, sends countless messages for world peace and cooperation. For example, in the congratulatory message he published on December 31, 2019 for the 2020 new year, he repeated the emphasis on global peace and cooperation. *"Human history, like a river, runs forever, witnessing both peaceful moments and great disturbances. We are not afraid of storms and dangers and barriers. China is determined to walk along the road of peaceful development and will resolutely safeguard world peace and promote common*

development. We are willing to join hands with people of all countries in the world to build together the Belt and Road Initiative, and push forward the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, and make unremitting efforts for the creation of a beautiful future for mankind.”(Full Text: Chinese President Xi Jinping’s 2020 New Year Speech, 2019). Finally, in 2018, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi stated at the press conference held within the scope of the First Meeting of the 13th National People's Assembly that those who do not have prejudice or do not apply double standards will face many opportunities in China, not threats. Yi also stated, "With the development of China, the 'Chinese Collapse Theory' also collapsed and became an international mockery. Meanwhile, the 'Chinese Threat Theory', with its various sensational versions, no longer finds buyers,” said Yi (Time to Bury. China Threat Theory ”: FM, 2018) .As can be seen, China has made various initiatives and discourses in order to break the perception of the 'Chinese threat. In the following sections, the instruments used by China in public diplomacy against this perception will be discussed.

Another discussion on China's public diplomacy efforts is made with reference to the periodic conjuncture in which the concept of soft power became popular. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there have been extreme discussions on the reasons for the increase and collapse of super powers in China. These discussions point out that the Soviet Union, which once struggled for worldwide hegemony against the USA, lost the struggle because it did not consider the soft power. Therefore, Chinese administrators and intellectuals articulate the issue that China, as a rising power in international politics, should give importance to soft power as well as hard power in order to continue its position as a international actor (Glaser & Murphy, 2009: 12-13). In this context, one of the important reasons underlying China's interest in the concept of soft power is, as Joshua Kurlantzick, the author of the book "Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power is Transforming the World", the world public opinion about China in 1970, 80 and to change the perception of a country that was prevalent in the 1990s, not dealing with regional problems or being aggressive and difficult to relate to (Kurlantzick, 2007).

3.2.2 China's Soft Power Policy in Public Diplomacy

Although China has increased its public diplomacy activities and activities especially in recent years, the origin of such activities goes back to China. The concept of "Diplomat Brides" (diplomat brides) is an interesting example for China's public diplomacy history. During the Tang Dynasty, China sent Chinese princesses known as diplomat brides against enemies that threatened its borders, ensuring peace and strong alliances. It is known that during the Tang Dynasty, relations were developed by sending 20 diplomat brides to enemies (Lejli, 2011: 5).

With its deep-rooted history and state experience, China has shown various practices of public diplomacy throughout its history. However, the history of soft power applications in public diplomacy, which is the main topic of the research, corresponds to the 1990s. When we go back a little more than those years, the public diplomacy policies of China in the 1970s shape the use of soft power in today's public diplomacy.

Deng Xiaoping spoke about the theory based on the "Three Worlds" order at the sixth UN General Assembly Meeting held in 1974. In his speech "There are three world orders in global politics and China is among the third world countries." He said that only the United States Of America and the Soviet Socialist Republics Union represent the first world countries, the rich countries in the second world and the undeveloped or developing countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa constitute the third world. Within the framework of this theory, he stated that China has similar problems with third world countries, therefore it will stand by the countries in the first and second world against their threats (Speech By Chairman of the Delegation of the People's Republic of China, Deng Xiaoping, At the Special Session of the UN General Assembly, 2003). These discourses were effective in obtaining the trust and support of third world countries, and Beijing had the opportunity to articulate itself in the international arena as the representative of the countries in this group.

In the 1970s, China established important friendships with Third World countries. In addition to these, it started publishing journals such as "China Reconstructs, China Pictorial, Beijing Review" that talk about such activities abroad (Peking Review and Global Anti-Imperialist Networks in the 1960s, 2018). The wide publication and distribution of these magazines has made it easier to produce an image of a "Peace-loving Country".

Towards the end of the 1970s, various reforms were carried out during Deng Xiaoping's period. With the developments in the military and economic field, China has started to be perceived as a threat to regional peace. The attempt of China to establish regional hegemony by using its power and the possibility of Japan to expose the East Asian countries to a new bipolar conflict in response to this increase of China caused anxiety in the countries of the region. Aware of this, Deng Xiaoping maintained the understanding of "hide the vitality and support the unknown" in foreign policy in order to eliminate this concern and to continue its economic rise.

Maintaining stability and peace at home and maintaining economic growth abroad has been determined as the main objective by Beijing. Discussions on how domestic and foreign policy should be determined for the "comprehensive national power" that includes natural resources,

economic structure, military facilities and social development brought along soft power discussions (Lee, 2009: 3).

Public diplomacy has become an fundamental part of foreign policy for China, which aims to maintain a positive image while maintaining its economic growth. Joshua Kurlantzick takes Beijing's refusal to devalue its money to contribute to the development of Asia despite the financial crisis in 1997 as the date when China's soft power began to become visible (Kurlantzic, 2006: 2).

This decision was welcomed very positively, especially in the ASEAN countries (Indonesia-Malaysia-Brunei-Cambodia-Laos-Philippines-Burma-Singapore-Thailand-Vietnam). Since 1997, Beijing's soft power strategy has been a win-win policy. The Southeast Asia Friendship and Cooperation Treaty was signed with the countries of the region, and joint codification studies were carried out on traffic in the South China Sea (Schmidt, 2008: 25). After that, China focused primarily on the policy of developing trade relations with its neighbors, Asian countries, and followed a policy that tried to make them take the Chinese-style development model as an example.

Soft power was mostly on the agenda of China, when Hu Jintao became president in 2002. After Jintao came to power, the issue of peaceful development was emphasized and the necessity of "harmonious society and harmonious world" was mentioned as a guide in domestic and foreign policy (Sun, 2011: 55).

Indeed, many Chinese strategists see the benefits of soft power as its ability to make the external environment possible for China to increase its military and economic power, and consider soft power to be one of the strategic elements behind the country's rise. Therefore, soft power is seen as a necessity for China to continue its development by removing the perception that it is a threat (Lee, 2009: 3).

Chinese scientists and analysts have defined the concept of soft power as material and non-measurable power. Especially, they defined it as the ability to convince others using the 'moral' element (Lu & Wang, 2008: 427). This concept has gained immense popularity in China. The main reasons for this are that soft power is not far from China's Confucian-based mindset and the harmony between soft power and Confucian philosophy is great. One of the most important common points between Confucianism and the concept of soft power is that the main purpose of both is to maintain order in the state and spread peace throughout the world (Bell, 2009: 27-

30). In this context, the traditional Confucian philosophy of China and the concept of soft power have common approaches.

There are two basis interpretation for the increasing approval of Nye's "soft power" concept among Chinese administrators and academicians. In the approach that refers to the Chinese history and cultural background, it is stated that Confucianism glorifies the understanding of the king, which ensures its sovereignty through moral power rather than physical power, therefore the emphasis on the concept of "soft power" is not far from the Chinese mind structure (Glaser & Murphy, 2019: 12). Huang and Ding also pointed to the attraction dimension of soft power, emphasizing the development of a "soft" relationship with the neighbors and in this context, it is more appropriate to develop relations with these peoples by taking advantage of the civilized culture and values of China rather than using force even against the hostile attitudes. He states that he recommends that there will be a strategy (Huang & Ding, 2006: 29).

Wang and Lu, on the other hand, associate the concept of "harmony", which has recently become very famous in foreign policy of China, with Confucianism and claim that it is an attractive alternative to the West's egocentric value system and confrontational diplomacy (Lu & Wang, 2008: 428). Similarly, it is pointed out that the ancient Chinese foreign policy strategy was based on diplomatic maneuvers rather than military conflict, and the understanding of winning the struggle without conflict is inherent to Chinese strategic culture. Thus, the approach put forward by the famous military strategist Sun Zi in his book "The Art of War" that "the best military strategy is an attack on the enemy's mind and plans, not on the enemy positions" is evaluated in line with the present soft power concept (Ding, 2008: 196-197).

Accordingly, China has put the principle of "living together in peace" at the basis of its foreign policy. Especially in 2003, Zheng Bijan, who put forward the concept of peaceful ascension in the China-Asia Forum, made statements stating that states using hard power in foreign policy cannot achieve their desired goals, whereas states that display a peaceful and stable attitude in foreign policy can easily achieve their goals (Thornton, 2005: 7). In addition, China started to emphasize "peaceful rise" and "peaceful development" in foreign policy.

3.3 Goals of Chinese Public Diplomacy

3.3.1 Development-Based Public Diplomacy Goal

One of the important targets of Chinese public diplomacy is to spread the economic model of China built on development to neighboring countries and then to the whole world. In the face of the marketing it has made through the culture industry, which is one of the most important soft power instruments of the USA, and the attractiveness element created through it, China aims to create an attraction by putting an economic model such as national development and poverty reduction. Because many countries from Asia, Africa and the Middle East have started to be interested in the Chinese model (Shih, 2013: 35). Especially with the rise of the Chinese economy and steadily surpassing the world's largest economies, the Chinese model has become the center of attention of the world. China has become the world's second biggest economy after the USA, surpassing the United Kingdom and France in 2005, Germany in 2007 and finally Japan in 2010. In addition, China is estimated to be the biggest economy in the world, surpassing the USA in 2032 (Frank Tang, 2020). In addition, according to the poverty standard, which the World Bank defines as living on less than \$ 1.9 a day, China has saved more than 800 million Chinese, who constitute 70 percent of the world's poor population, from poverty since it started implementing its outward opening policy (Omoruyi, 2019). The World Bank describes this success story as follows: *“China's progress in poverty reduction over the last 25 years is enviable. One cannot fail to be impressed by what this vast nation of 1.3 billion people has achieved in so little time. In terms of a wide range of indicators, the progress has been remarkable. Poverty in terms of income and consumption has been dramatically reduced. Progress has also been substantial in terms of human development indicators. Most of the millennium development goals have either already been achieved or the country is well on the way to achieving them.”* (World Bank, 2017).

For these reasons, the Chinese-style development model has become the most important public diplomacy goal. China, especially the countries contacted by the BRI, succeeds in developing multidimensional relations through the development model. According to a study published by the World Bank, the Belt and Road Initiative will enable 7 million 600 thousand people in the relevant countries to escape from extreme poverty and 32 million people from moderate poverty in the medium term. Thanks to the project, the trade volume of the participating countries will also increase by 2.8 to 9.7 percent. In global trade, there will be an increase of 1.7 to 6.2 percent (World Bank, 2019). In other words, it can be argued that the primary priority of Chinese public diplomacy is the marketing of the Chinese model.

3.3.2 Image-Based Public Diplomacy Goal

Second, one of the primary aims of Chinese public diplomacy is to build a positive and attractive Chinese image by eliminating prejudices against the criticism of Chinese image by western states for many years.

Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Tibet, Taiwan problems, Tiananmen Square protests in 1989, which are seen as major problems, are the priority issues in negatively affecting the Chinese image. Because there is a contradiction between the peaceful images and actions identified with the above-mentioned confucian philosophy. In the face of these problems, which constitute the most important problematic of Chinese public diplomacy, China aims to develop policies that promote Asian values, Chinese culture and civilization against the criticisms of the western world.

For this reason, China has been structuring in the field of media in public diplomacy since the 2000s. First English-language CCTV News channel was opened in 2000. Subsequently, two more channels broadcasting CCTV in French and Spanish were opened. In 2009, CCTV opened two new channels that will broadcast in Russian and Arabic (Brief Introduction to China Central Television (CCTV), 2009). Thus, international CCTV channels have become one of the most important communication tools of Chinese public diplomacy. In addition to these channels, the Chinese News Channel, Xinhua, has managed to become a global news agency by opening more than 170 offices (Xinhua News Agency, n.d.). In addition, around 20 newspapers and magazines published in eight languages were launched within Xinhua. On the other hand, China Radio International (CRI), broadcasting 24/7 in 43 languages, was opened.

Thus, China has gained an important place in the international press by showing its presence in the media field since 2000. In this way, China started to follow a policy of using media tools within the framework of public diplomacy. The effect of the relations it has developed with the Belt and Road countries in China's access to such a wide range of broadcasting cannot be denied.

3.3.3 Culture-Based Public Diplomacy Goal

Culture is an element that China has just begun to use in the field of diplomacy compared to America. The fact that China is a civilization of thousands of years and its unique culture make China advantageous in the field of cultural diplomacy. Realizing the importance of soft power and especially emphasizing the cultural element of soft power, China has started to take important steps in this regard. Developing its cultural contacts and dialogues through the

countries of the BRI, China aims to develop mutual understanding and dialogue in civilizations where it contacts with the rich and deep-rooted Chinese culture against the American culture industry. It continues its studies through printed and visual publications in which Chinese culture is introduced in many countries, especially in the Confucius Institutes. In addition, it is another important element in the events and organizations that are planned annually between states. These activities will be discussed more extensively in the following parts of the study.

3.4 Chinese Public Diplomacy within the Framework of Soft Power

Joseph Nye, who introduced and enhanced the soft power concept, emphasizes three main soft power sources. These are foreign policy, political values and culture (Joseph S. Nye, 2004b: 11). In order to discuss the soft power applications in Chinese public diplomacy in more detail, it would be useful to look at Chinese public diplomacy through the three main soft power sources mentioned by Nye.

3.4.1 Culture

Since the establishment of China, cultural diplomacy has also been part of the country's general diplomacy, and Traditional Chinese culture has become an significant source of modern Chinese diplomatic consideration and theory. Today, as a strategic tool, cultural diplomacy continues to serve traditional diplomacy, and at the same time carries an important mission in shaping China's international image, creating a national identity and developing a positive international public environment in the new era.

Culture, one of the most significant sources of soft power, is one of the areas where China has an advantage over other global powers. With its 5000-year cultural heritage and its wide geography spread over South and East Asia, China benefits from cultural diplomacy to achieve the goals it has set within the framework of its soft power policy. It is not surprising that China, which has focused on cultural diplomacy activities since the 2000s, ranked 8th in the 2019 cultural sub-index (Soft Power 30, 2019) in the Softpower 30 ranking, thanks to its cultural heritage and cultural diplomacy breakthrough in recent years.

Culture is evaluated as a special tool for China to rise its soft power, which aims to show the world as a civilized, responsible and believable nation through cultural changes (Becard & Filho, 2019: 3). So much so that Minister of Culture in China, Sun Jiazheng stated that culture is the third pillar of Chinese diplomacy after economy and politics. Li Changchun, on cultural affairs in the Politburo Standing Committee, stated that China should aim to create big brand names in cultural exchange between countries and reduce large deficits in the trade of cultural

products (Lai, 2012). At the 12th Meeting held by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in December 2014 on the consolidation of the state's cultural power, Chinese President Xi Jinping insisted on the development of the socialist culture unique to China, deepening the cultural system reform, accelerating the development of the culture industry pointed out that it is necessary. Emphasizing that China's contemporary value judgment should be expanded in order to strengthen the cultural power of the state, Xi Jinping stated that this is the socialist value understanding unique to China, reflecting the progress of China's advanced culture (*Xi Jinping: Cultural Power Should Be Strengthened*, 2014)

Many instruments have been used that highlight the attractiveness of China's centuries-old civilization dimension. In the context of cultural instruments, the policies that were first established within the framework of the attractiveness of the state's historical background were developed by the Chinese administration. In the Cultural Development National Plan of 2006, the strategy of "opening up to the outside" was adopted in order to introduce Chinese culture to the world and to increase the effectiveness of the impact of Chinese cultural products and promotion against other global products (Mingjiang, 2008: 302-303). In this context, the plan set targets such as increasing the recognition of Chinese culture in the international arena, ensuring the transportation of Chinese cultural products to international markets, and encouraging the participation of Chinese products in international festivals. In this context, cultural dialogues have been established by declaring the Chinese Cultural Years in many countries in recent years. In addition, it is planned to provide cultural contact through touristic activities by selecting a different country every year within the scope of the "Tourism Year" announced in China in recent years. Indeed, in 2012, was declared the Chinese culture year in Turkey (Year 2012 China Culture Year in Turkey, 2011), in 2018 had also been declared Turkey Tourism Year in China (China's "Turkey Tourism Year" Boosts Number of Chinese Visitors to Turkish Cities, 2018).

Important cultural and intellectual developments in the history of ancient China continued to be valid in the modern age and created "Cultural Diplomacy" by articulating the soft power of contemporary China. Philosophies such as Confucianism also form the basis of contemporary China's cultural policies. "Confucianism" has taken an important place in the discourse of Chinese leaders. In parallel with this, we can say that the "Confucius Institutes", which were established since 2004 and spread rapidly around the world, are the transformation of these discourses into action. While institutes were established in many countries of the world and even in more than one university in the same country, "Confucian classes" were also opened in

many schools from primary school to high school. China has focused on cultural diplomacy aimed at promoting the Chinese language, culture and civilization to the world through the Confucius Institutes.

Headquarter of Confucius Institutes (Hanban) The Chinese Language Council has been working to open Confucius Institutes around the world since 2004. First, in 2004, the first Confucius Institute was established in Seoul-South Korea. According to the official statistics from the Hanban, till November 13th of 2020, 541 Confucius Institutes and 1,170 Confucius Classrooms have been established in 162 countries (regions) around the world. Among them there are, 39 Asian countries (regions), 135 Confucius Institutes and 115 Confucius Classrooms; 46 countries in Africa, 61 Confucius Institutes and 48 Confucius Classrooms; 43 European countries (regions), 187 Confucius Institutes and 346 Confucius Classrooms; 27 countries in the Americas, 138 Confucius Institutes, 560 Confucius Classrooms; 7 countries in Oceania, 20 Confucius Institutes, 101 Confucius Classrooms (About Confucius Institute, n.d.). China, which opened 128 institutes in the world in 2007, increased its presence more than 4 times by increasing this number to 541 (About Confucius Institute, n.d.) in 13 years. Based on this, we can infer to what extent China attaches importance to and accelerates cultural diplomacy activities.

The "Bridge of China" China Qualification Competition, which is carried out with the support of Hanban, is also a large-scale international competition and is recognized worldwide in cultural and educational terms. The "Bridge of China" event targets to awaken the eagerness of students in several countries to learn Chinese and to strengthen the world's understanding of Chinese language and culture. It also provides a communication and develop cultural relations between young people (About Confucius Institute, n.d.).

One of the important elements affecting China's soft power in terms of culture is China's education programs, scholarships and exchange programs. Exchange programs have an important place in the recognition of a country's culture by other countries. Nye stated that change programs have an effect on the adoption of the values and principles of a country by other countries and the spread of the soft power of the country in the world (Atkinson, 2010: 2-3).

The opening and demand of Confucius Institutes, which have undertaken the task of introducing and teaching Chinese language and culture to the world, is one of the most important achievements of China in soft power practices. Overall, the Confucius Institutes are programs

designed to boost China's soft power and are a useful component of China's international cultural diplomacy. China has revealed its cultural strategy through the Institutes and aimed to increase its image and prestige. Thus, it aimed to achieve such goals as increasing its credibility in the foreign market, developing friendship with developed countries, creating cooperation with developing countries and starting these relations with countries that have not yet created diplomatic relations. The work of the Confucius Institutes is to build a harmonious world in order to apply Chinese discourse and at the same time help "peaceful rise" (Yang, 2018: 630).

3.4.2 Political Values

Political values, which are one of the important sources of soft power, are effectively highlighted in China's foreign policy. Nye pointed out that the soft power of a country is significantly related to political values in line with the practices carried out at home and abroad (Joseph S. Nye, 2004c: 11).

Regarding the political values that Nye has stated as another element of soft power, the emphasis in the literature shows that China is the weakest. Criticisms such as human rights, democracy and the authoritarianism of the regime are directed against China. In Kurlantzick's words, China is far from giving the normal person an overarching vision of how to build a free and people-based political system and economic structure that is very popular in the rest of the world (Kurlantzick, 2007: 229). Based on Kurlantzick's criticism, China's soft power policies are not only able to generate attraction for other societies in the context of political values, but also the domain of Beijing's policies that generate positive perception narrows.

When looking at China and other East-Eurasian countries in line with Western-style values and judgments, this view can be justified. However, evaluating the Chinese system within the framework of the western-style democracy understanding may push us to reach a wrong conclusion.

There is a broad consensus that China's administrative structure is one of the factors that played an important role in the rapid growth of the country's economy in the past decades (Oktay, 2016: 123).

When we look at the central state structure of the country, the state structure of the People's Republic of China as defined in the constitution does not seem much different from the countries governed by representative democracy. However, the structure and functioning is more complex beyond formal definitions. According to the Constitution, the administrative system of the country consists of legislative, executive and judicial components. The legislative

function is carried out by the National People's Congress (NPC), whose up to 3,000 members are elected every five years. According to the Constitution, the NPC has the authority to supervise the government, make laws, elect the president and other senior officials (Oktay, 2016: 124).

The Chinese Communist Party, the largest political party in the world with more than 90 million members, elects its representatives by popular assemblies at all levels from villages to states, states to national governments, and sends them to the National People's Congress. There are the smallest administrative units, village committees in rural areas, and neighborhood committees in cities. There is no requirement for being a member of the CCP to be a candidate in these committees. "People's Political Consultative Conferences" are held in the provinces and states as well as the people's assemblies. The majority of the members of the People's Political Consultative Conferences are people's leaders who are not members of the CCP.

The CCP has 4.5 million organizations across the country. 4.5 million organizations convene their own congresses before the General Meeting, as well as holding consultation meetings for the delegates of the General Assembly. Thus, the number of meetings from local organizations to NPC can reach up to 20 million.

Also, there is not a single political party in China. Although the Chinese Communist Party is the country's largest political party, there are also 8 different political parties in the country. All of them have the constitutional right to organize and hold meetings. In addition, people in charge of these parties are also in the top management of the state (CGTN, 2017).

Finally, it has the authority to make local laws in states and provinces in China (Oktay, 2016: 132). In other words, local administrators have the right to enact laws in line with the decisions taken in regional councils in line with regional needs and demands.

From this perspective, it would not be correct to claim that there is no democracy in China. But we can say that it is different from the western type of democracy model. At this point, China remains weak in its power to attract other countries created by political values. There has not been sufficient success in explaining the Chinese type of democracy. In addition, the fact that the Chinese-style management model is not universal is a disadvantage for China.

In addition, the long-term problems experienced in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, especially the re-education camps with the change of China, or internment camps with the mention of critics, and the anti-China campaigns of the Uyghur diaspora in China is another

factor that adversely affects the soft power of China over the political values in public diplomacy.

In addition, it is stated in many sources that oppressive policies towards ethnic minorities are increased in Tibet and Inner Mongolia (Watch, 2012).

In addition, the street protests in Hong Kong, which have remained on the agenda for a long time, and the disproportionate use of force by the police forces against China and the allegations that they put pressure in the region are another negative effect which negatively affects the image of China (Purbrick, 2019).

If we make a comment on these developments, in the face of all the criticisms against China, China has fallen short of its potential to explain its political system to the international public. In order to close this gap, it continues to focus on media organization and international broadcasting policies mentioned in the previous sections.

3.4.3 Foreign Policy

Foreign policy which is another source of soft power, is one of the fundamental building blocks of China's soft power strategy. While implementing its foreign policy strategy, which is a source of soft power, China carries out policy construction on four foundations: Increased dialogue for peaceful resolution of conflicts, peaceful coexistence, peaceful development and economic relations based on mutual interest. The expansion of this approach also includes an emphasis on norms such as the struggle against international crime and terrorism, disarmament and arms control, which are widely adopted discursively in international relations. In this discourse, constructive approach to global and regional problems, developing good relations with global powers and neighbors; a stable world view that minimizes problems is emerging. Such a strategy becomes meaningful in line with China's development targets (Gill & Huang, 2006: 21).

Joseph Nye emphasized that economic and military tools can also be used as a soft power source. In this regard, Nye stated that development aid can be used as an element of soft power. This is within the framework of the government's policies, using aid and investment as a tool to achieve political goals (Joseph S. Nye, 2007: 165-168).

China has attached great importance to development assistance in line with its aim to use foreign policy, which is a source of soft power, effectively. Accordingly, although China did

not have sufficient funds in the 1950s, it provided economic and technical aid to many countries (Robinson & Shambaugh, 1995: 561-563).

Since the 1950s, the Chinese state has focused on development investments in the international arena by constantly raising gears in foreign aid. China distributed RMB 256.29 billion (US \$ 41.4 billion) aid, grants and loans between 1950 and 2009 in the White Paper published by the Chinese Government in 2011, which is the first important document regarding these aids. According to the information in the White Paper 2011, the money was paid by RMB 106.2 billion (US \$ 17.1 billion) in grants (consisting of grants) and RMB 76.54 billion (US \$ 12.4 million) in interest-free loans.) and RMB 73.55 billion (US \$ 11.9 billion) government concessional loans (Kitano & Harada, 2016: 1051). In addition, the White Paper does not include contributions made by the Ministry of Finance to international development agencies such as the World Bank and the Ministry of Education's scholarships for foreign students from other developing countries (Kitano & Harada, 2016: 1052).

In the White Paper published in 2014, the total amount of foreign assistance provided by China between 2010 and 2012 was stated as RMB 89.34 billion (USD 13.7 billion). Of this amount, RMB 32.32 billion (US \$ 5.0 billion) consists of grants, RMB 7.26 billion (US \$ 1.1 billion) from interest-free loans, RMB 49.76 billion (US \$ 7.6 billion). consists of concessional loans (Kitano & Harada, 2016: 1052).

Thanks to the Belt and Road initiative announced to the world by Xi Jinping in 2013, a comprehensive development strategy was created as mentioned in the above section. It carries out development-based public diplomacy activities by providing infrastructure investments and low-interest credit opportunities to countries located on the China Belt. The initiative foresees infrastructure investments in the range of four to eight trillion dollars in 70 countries by 2049, the 100th anniversary of China.

The influence of China, the increasing power of the world, in the international era is increasing day by day in almost every field. Its influence is increasing every single day in Europe, Africa, Australia and Latin America. Also China is dominant in SCO and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa). It is one of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. All this reinforces China's position in Afro-Eurasia (Doster, 2019: 8).

In addition to all these, anti-colonialism in China's foreign policy discourse, the importance of relations between equals, and a just world order are a constant discourse. China is the status quo in foreign policy. It favors stability. Although it has a revolutionary idealism in discourse,

it acts rationally, realistically, in a utilitarian and self-interested manner. It is aware that there is no global superpower yet. It does not have as many and various tools as the US has. For example, in addition to organizations such as NATO, IMF, World Trade Organization, World Bank, NAFTA, under the influence and direction of the USA, China's influence is still in the EU, European Council, Arab League, Islamic Cooperation Organization, Gulf Cooperation Council. It is behind the USA (Doster, 2019: 10).

However, the hegemony of the USA that started to be shaken by the invasion of Iraq and finally the policies of the USA to withdraw more in the Trump period pave the way for China. By taking this opportunity, China has a stronger presence in the areas where the USA has started to withdraw. Simultaneously with the USA's withdrawal from the World Health Organization (US Officially Notifies World Health Organization of Its Withdrawal, 2020) and the Paris climate agreement (McGrath, 2020), China's efforts to take a more active role in these areas draw attention.

As a result, China's current development will both feed and feed on the One Belt One Road Initiative. China's political, economic, military, scientific and technological steps will make the USA, which sees it as its biggest rival, more anxious. While China and Russia defend a multi-polar world order, the US's opposition to it will keep the struggle for influence among the great powers on the agenda in different parts of the world (Doster, 2019: 19).

CHAPTER 4: Relations between Turkey and the People's Republic of China: China's public diplomacy activities in Turkey

Although China has frequently mentioned its name in Turkish foreign policy through recent years, relations between the two countries are not new. The relationship, which has been the subject of controversy due to the cultural differences they have and their remote geographical location, dates back to the 1970s. Diplomatic relations between China and Turkey were established in 1971. Cooperation between Turkey and China has gained momentum since the 1980s. Relations between the two countries were raised to the "Strategic Cooperation" level in 2010 (Ministry, n.d.).

China's "Belt and Road Initiative" aims to integrate the economies of the countries along the route into the Chinese economy. The BRI has the huge potential in China-Turkey binary

relations. The initiative offers opportunities that can enable relations between the two countries to reach a higher level.

The Belt and Road Initiative is a development project developed and implemented under the leadership of China based on the vision of “sustainable growth and development”, which is the first in the history of the world. China, which sets out a vision of globalization through development finance, demonstrates through this initiative that it is a global player. Turkey, home to Anatolia, one of the most critical transit routes of the Silk Road in history, is one of the important countries of the project, which will extend from China to the interior of Europe. Located at the intersection of Europe, Asia and Middle East geography, Turkey is the Part of the project's Silk Road Economic Belt Line to Europe, which includes land and railways. The Modern Silk Road project, which is expected to provide an important support within the scope of developing relations with China in its efforts to become a trade center of Turkey, will also bring important opportunities for Turkey to achieve its future economic goals.

In this part of the study, Turkey and the People's Republic of China will evaluate economic relations strengthened by the Belt and Road Initiative, based on political relations. In this context, China's public diplomacy activities in Turkey will be discussed through Nye's soft power concept. These activities will again be evaluated through “political values” and “foreign policy”, elements of soft power that Nye has stated.

4.1 Political Relations Between The Republic Of Turkey And The People's Republic Of China

The first official relations of the Republic of Turkey with China took place in 1920, and in 1940 it was requested to establish a diplomatic mission in Turkey. After World War II, Turkey joined NATO and recognized Nationalist China because of its place in the Western bloc. Until Henry Kissinger's attempts in 1970, relations between the USA and the China were almost nonexistent. In 1971, immediately after the United States officially recognised the China, Turkey initiated the first official dialogue with China with a meeting in Paris. On August 4, 1971, diplomatic relations between the two countries were established by a joint declaration signed between Turkish ambassador to Paris Hasan Esat Işık and Chinese Ambassador to Paris Huang-Chen. Turkey and China's “independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual interests within the framework of the principle of the protection of diplomatic relations” framework (Ekrem, 2015: 7). During the Cold War, the world had a bipolar US-USSR-based system. China made a significant gain by bringing the US option to the table due to its problems with Russia during this period. Due to the security axis of NATO

membership, Turkey had economic and political relations with China in a limited framework during this period. During this period, China was trying to become a regional power while pursuing a less reactive foreign policy in World Politics.

In 1981, President Kenan Evren officially visited China for the first time in the year following Foreign Minister İtler Türkmen. In 1985, prime minister Turgut Özal paid a visit to the Chinese market with a delegation of businessmen. Again, during the same period, many high-ranking statesmen visited Turkey from China. Minister of culture Zu Muzhi (1983), Chinese President Li Xiannian (1984), Chinese President Zhao Ziyang (1986) visited Turkey during the years (Akçay, 2017: 76).

When relationships go very well at a high level, there has been a development that raises blood pressure. Mohammad Niyazi, a Uighur native who was a commercial advisor of the Chinese Embassy in Ankara, defected to Turkey in September 1986 on the grounds that there was no safety for life. This development was the beginning of events that brought relations between China and Turkey to a standstill. In the 1980s, the activities of Xinjiang opposition leader Isa Yusuf Alptekin caused problems between Turkey and China (Çolakoğlu, 2012: 55).

But by the end of the 90s, on February 15, 1998, Turkish Foreign Minister İsmail Cem went to Beijing to officially visit the People's Republic of China, and the visit lasted five days. During the visit, it was decided to develop economic cooperation between Turkey and China (Ucarol, 2015: 1437).

After Foreign Minister İsmail Cem, Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit visited China in June 1998. During the visit, Ecevit noted that for Turkey, the world is not just Europe, and Turkey is entering the process of rediscovering its own roots in Asia (Adibelli, 2016: 244). Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit also met with President Jiang Zemin in Beijing in May 1998. After the Chinese side conveyed its discomfort to the Turkish delegation about the demonstrations in Turkey in support of Uighurs at the meeting where more economic cooperation was discussed, Ecevit emphasized the importance that Turkey attaches to China's territorial integrity (Çolakoğlu, 2012: 56).

In 1998, a secret circular signed by then Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz was published about Uighurs living in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region, which caused serious problems between the two countries. In the circular, it was stated that this region should be evaluated within the territorial integrity of China, and that any minister or government official should not participate in the meetings of foundations and associations operating in Turkey on behalf of East

Turkestan. It was noted that some activities of the East Turkestan Foundation and East Turkestan immigrant associations established in Turkey by those from the Xinjiang Autonomous Region, which constitute a sensitive point between the two countries, caused serious discomfort to the Chinese government (Adibelli, 2016: 244). These decisions by the government on Xinjiang were an important turning point in the normalization of economic and economic relations with China.

With the visit of Chinese President Jiang Zemin to Turkey in April 2000, bilateral relations entered the 2000s in a very good environment. During the visit, agreements were signed on economic, energy and political issues. In a joint statement, "Human Rights, territorial integrity to be respected in internal affairs, globalization and political polarity within the scope of many to contribute to the Prevention of crises, arms control, disarmament be in coordination, terrorism, separatism and religious extremism to be made in the joint fight against" consensus has been reached on issues (Çolakoglu, 2012: 56). Chinese President Jiang Zemin's visit to Turkey in April 2000 was a turning point for the development of bilateral relations. Jiang, who was welcomed by President Suleyman Demirel at an official ceremony in Ankara, was awarded Turkey's highest medal, the State Order of Merit. Jiang, the first Chinese President to visit Turkey after a 14-year hiatus, received a very warm welcome as an indicator of the transformation in relations between the two countries (Adibelli, 2016: 252).

Visits at the ministerial level in Turkey-China political relations are the most notable. Since the mid-90s, on average, mutual minister visits have occurred every year. However, the most intensive period at ministerial level between 1971-2011 was between 2000-2002 and 2009 - 2011. This, in turn, shows that Turkey's government in its period cares about China. 58th state, which was formed as the Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power alone in the November 2002 general elections. The government's program includes the phrase "care will be taken to improve our relations with the People's Republic of China in a multifaceted way " (Ekrem, 2015: 11).

President Abdullah Gul made an official visit to China on June 23-29, 2009 with a large community of business people, which was a jumping-off point in relations between the two countries. It is the third time a Turkish President has visited China since Kenan Evren in 1984 and Suleyman Demirel in 1995 as President.

The development of economic relations between the two countries has also been reflected in the political sphere. An interesting development was that only China was invited in September

2010 to the “Anatolian Eagle” air exercise, which was held in Konya and was called by NATO and friendly and allied countries until that period. Turkey has prepared the ground for accelerating rapprochement in the political sphere by inviting China to the Anatolian Eagle military exercise (Akdağ, 2019: 51). October 20 September – October 4, 2010 in Konya, Chinese warplanes arrived in Turkey using Pakistani and Iranian airspace and conducted exercises with Turkish Air Force F-4 warplanes. Thus, China conducted its first military exercise with a NATO member in Turkey (Akdağ, 2019: 51). Thus, political relations between the two countries have moved to a different point. Turkey's participation in the event, which it has held so far with NATO member and NATO ally countries, with China, a non-NATO country, has been an important development that shows the degree to which Turkey attaches importance to political relations with China.

Especially with the coming to power of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2002, more intense relations were established with China and more careful attention was taken on controversial issues to avoid rhetoric that could damage relations. (Akçay, 2017: 76). Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao's official visit to Ankara on October 7, 2010 raised the relations of the two countries to the level of “strategic partnership”. During this visit, 8 agreements were signed between the two countries and these agreements were aimed at improving trade and economic relations between the two countries. Among these agreements, the most notable part was the acceptance of the use of the Turkish Lira and the Chinese currency yuan in trade between the two countries (Turkey becomes a strategic partner with China, 2010).

Murat Esenli, Turkey's Ambassador to Beijing, assessed Wen's visit to Turkey as follows:

"The most important high-level visit in 2010 was the visit of Prime Minister Mr. Wen Jiabao to our country. The arrival of Mr. Wen Jiabao, after an 8-year hiatus, was with the identity of a Chinese Premier. And that was very important for us. The most important thing during this visit was that our Prime Minister, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, met Wen Jiabao for the first time. They got along very well with each other, had very useful negotiations. Of course, as two prime ministers, as Executive people, they made very important decisions. One of them was to increase Turkey-China relations to a strategic dimension on the occasion of this visit. "Strategic cooperation" was the first time. This is a milestone, a very important step in our 39-year bilateral relationship. Beyond that, a total of eight agreements have been signed" (CRI, 2011).

Increasing bilateral relations to the level of strategic partnership was an extremely important development with the visit of Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao to Turkey. Until the 2010s,

Turkey-China relations were neither seen as of strategic importance nor considered to have great potential. But as recent developments have shown, relations between the two countries have great potential, economic, military and political (Honghui, 2016: 102). Bringing relations with China, which has become the second largest economy in the world, to the level of strategic partnership has been an important success for Turkey. At a time when competition in international politics is becoming increasingly intense, it is also of great importance for Turkey to diversify its foreign policy options.

In 2012, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Turkey, and in the same year, Prime Minister Erdogan visited China. In 2015, Erdogan visited China, this time as President. The increase in mutual high-level visits has been indicative of its strategic turn in bilateral relations (Adibelli, 2016: 380).

Various cooperation mechanisms have been developed for the further development of relations between the two countries. On 3 November 2016, the first meeting of the Turkey-China Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee was held in Ankara (Adibelli, 2016: 394). Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited Turkey to attend the “Turkey-China Foreign Ministers Consultative Mechanism meeting” on 13-14 November 2016. On the years 2017-2020 cultural exchange program between Turkey and China” and China bilateral trade and investment cooperation between the Ministry of economy and the Ministry of Commerce for the development of the action plan was signed (Adibelli, 2016: 396).

China's Belt and Road initiative, launched in 2013, will further expand the opportunities for cooperation between the two countries (ZAN, 2016: 56). The initiative provides an important framework for the further development of relations between the two countries. Turkey has shown an active interest in the initiative by participating at the presidential level in the Belt and Road Forum held in Beijing, the capital of China, in 2017. The second generation and Road International Cooperation forum was held on 25-27 April 2019. Turkey's very good reception at the first generation and Road Forum held in 2017 has been an indication of the importance China attaches to Turkey within the scope of this project. In 2019, Turkey participated in the forum at the ministerial level, not at the presidential level.

President Erdogan makes an official visit to China on July 2, 2019 after the G-20 summit in Osaka, Japan. During the meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, further reinforcing reliability and strategic cooperation between the two countries was emphasized. It was underlined that any power will not be allowed to take divisive actions against China in Turkey

(CRI, 2019). 5th Conference on cooperation and confidence building measures in Asia held on 14-15 June 2019. At the summit of Heads of state and government, the leaders of the two countries met. After the G-20 Osaka Summit held on 28-29 June 2019, President Erdogan's official visit to China and the meeting of the two leaders for the third time in a month marked the importance of the two countries to each other.

4.2 Turkey in the Belt and Road Initiative

For thousands of years, the commercial route starting from the east of Asia and extending to Europe has been called the Silk Road. But this road was not only a line where commercial goods were transported, but also a meeting point where religions, languages and cultures in general were transported, and in a sense civilizations embraced each other.

According to a statement made by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative aims to revive the ancient Silk Road and strengthen cooperation against the backdrop of economic relations by striving to stay away from political conflicts of interest. This initiative is inspired by the historic Silk Road, which connects the continents of Europe and Asia to create innovative ways of cooperation that will focus on “political coordination, plant connections, unhindered trade, financial integration and human-to-human connectivity”. The word “belt”, which gives its name to the initiative, refers to the land and railways connecting China to Western European countries, and the word “road” refers to the sea route connecting Asian countries to Mediterranean countries. Through this initiative, China aims to expand its trade network from Central Asia to Europe, including the Middle East, Arab geography and Turkey.

The Mediterranean region is both the historical and current intersection point of the land and sea Silk Road. Located in the middle of Asia, Africa and Europe, the Mediterranean serves as a major waterway connecting the three continents and an important gateway to the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian Ocean. The Mediterranean region is therefore a region of high transport value and strategic importance. In this way, the Mediterranean has become a crossroads of both the land and sea Silk Road (Yimin, 2017: 33-34).

As can be seen from the Belt and Road routes officially announced by China, an important trail on the Silk Road Economic Belt starts from China and crosses Central and Western Asia and ends in the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea. Another important route begins in China's port cities and extends to Europe, crossing the South China Sea and Indian Ocean. In this way, the Mediterranean region becomes a crossroads and final destination (Yimin, 2017: 33-34).

Turkey is almost the country with the longest route after China. In this context, Turkey's contribution plays a vital role in the success of the project. The Belt and Road Initiative launched to revive the historic Silk Road is extremely important for Turkey's trade with the countries of East Asia, the Caucasus and Central Asia, especially China. China's Middle-Belt Corridor, which will extend to Europe through Turkey, provides an important basis for further development of Turkey-China relations. In addition, the Middle-Belt corridor will both increase trade and deepen economic integration between all countries on the route. When the project is completed, Turkey will play a key role in the delivery of Chinese goods to Europe. In order to accelerate and complete the development of the project, Turkey's presentation of concrete projects and the use of the financial resources provided by China will be the most important gain. The initiative will lead to the further development of existing relations by revealing new investment areas and cooperation opportunities between the two countries.

May 14-15, 2017 the most important dates through contribution of the modern Silk Road project, which was implemented with the summit attended by President Erdogan and is considered the largest transportation project in the world, to Turkey is that it will increase Turkey's export potential by opening new market areas. The fact that the shipment time between Turkey and China, which forms the "Middle Corridor" of the Modern Silk Road, is reduced by 3 thousand kilometers from the highway, from 30 days to 10 days, and the products and goods delivered in two months by sea from Beijing will be delivered to Istanbul in less than two weeks, makes the project even more important for Turkey (BloombergHT, 2017).

The Belt and Road Initiative is very compatible with Turkey's geopolitical strategy. Turkey is at the intersection of the Balkans, the Middle East and the Caucasus, and is the center of Eurasia. It would not be wrong to describe Turkey, located in the middle of borders stretching from the Mediterranean to the Pacific Ocean, as the mainstay of Eurasia. As the crossroads of Eurasia, Turkey's relations with the European mainland, along with strengthening its ties with Eurasia, are also prominent. (Erşen, 2013: 30, 2014: 185-188).

Turkey has geopolitical and geo-economic importance with its connection to the Black Sea and Mediterranean. Therefore, Turkey is an important part of Belt and Road Initiative.

Turkey is one of the key countries along the Belt and Road with its crucial geopolitical position and rooted infrastructure, trade and transport elements. Bilateral agreements between Turkey and China reveal Turkey's part as a unification point and a crucial Center for the Belt and Road (Nan, 2017).

4.3 Middle Corridor and Turkey

Officially, China, India, Middle East, Western Asia, the Economic Corridor of China, known as the middle aisle, the main artery of the historic Silk Road through Eurasia, Asia, the Caucasus and the Middle East through economic cooperation, to promote by linking distant markets Europe and China as well as an old power, culture, and Commerce aims to revive the ties. It also provides opportunities to strengthen China's global political and economic influence, connect China to regional economies, and help facilitate China's rise in the global value chain (Stevens, 2018).

As mentioned in the previous sections, the BRI basically consists of two separate projects. The first of these projects is the “Silk Road Economic Belt”, which is mainly land and railway. The project, focused on Central Asia, Russia and Europe, starts from the city of Xi'an in northwestern China and reaches Turkey via the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Iraq and Syria. From Turkey to Russia, the belt connects to the European continent via Belarus and ends in Italy. The second project within the scope of the initiative is “21. Century sea Silk Road” is. The project, which was developed with the aim of establishing an intercontinental cooperation in the field of maritime affairs, consists of two different routes. The first of these starts from the coast of China and extends to Europe via the South China Sea and Indian Ocean, while the other starts from the coast of China and reaches the South Pacific via the South China Sea. (Figure: 2)

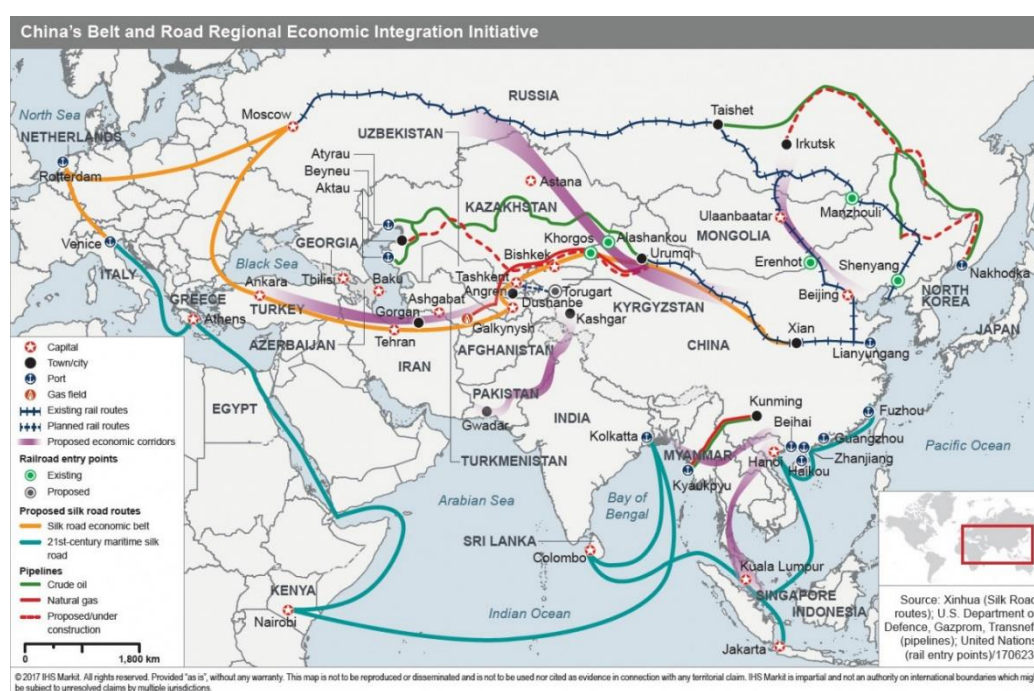


Figure2: China's Belt and Road Regional Economic Integration Initiative

Source: (Rajan, 2018: 83)

One of the significant lines within the scope of the Silk Road Economic Belt is the “middle line”, which leaves Kazakhstan's Atrav port and follows the route of the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. This project, also called the “Middle Corridor”, was developed by Turkey with the aim of establishing close trade relations with Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and finally China. Aware that Anatolia occupies an important place in the historical Silk Road, Turkey has taken an active role by deciding to include the Middle Corridor initiative it has developed in the Belt and Road Initiative after a series of meetings with China (Ergunsu, 2017).

In 2016, presented and adopted to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, envisioning a budget of \$ 40 billion in the first phase and planned to spend \$ 750 million for investments every year, signed between Turkey and China within the scope of the ‘Middle Corridor’, the 21st Silk Road Economic Belt. The memorandum of Understanding on the harmonisation of the Silk Road and the Middle Corridor Initiative in the century sea’ and ‘Turkey-China Railway Cooperation Agreement Draft ’ are as follows (Yilmaz, 2016):

- **Political coordination:** Dialogue and exchanges between the two countries regarding their main development strategies, plans and policies will be held on a regular basis. Communication and coordination on adjusting the main macro-policies will be strengthened.
- **The Facilitator Link:** Highways, railways, civil aviation, ports, as well as oil and gas pipelines, power transmission lines, networks, and telecommunications networks, including in China, Turkey to cooperate in third countries and bilateral infrastructure projects will be made. Cooperation between ports on cargo transport will be strengthened, functional efficiency and capacity will be increased. It will collaborate on drinking water safety, Flood Control and disaster mitigation, water-saving irrigation and other water conservation projects. Traffic accessibility, transport network security and cross-border transport will be facilitated.
- **Financial Integration:** The use of local country currencies in trade and investment will be expanded, and the TL - Yuan currency swap agreement will be used. Interbank

investments of Turkey and China will be effectively encouraged. Financial institutions will provide financing support and service incentives for investment and commercial cooperation.

- **Human-to-human Bonding:** Human-to-human changes will be encouraged. A medium-and long-term cultural exchange cooperation model will be created. Sister city networks will be established. Cooperation agreements will be signed on issues such as media, Environmental Protection, education, health, culture, cultural centers, art tourism, poverty relief, Social Welfare. The exchange between the two countries ' media, think tanks, students and young people will be accelerated.
- **Fund Cooperation:** Cooperative state and social capital, including especially in Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and Silk Road Fund and other governmental funds, market operations, aid funds, international funds, and social investment and financial support will be offered through these programs.

In the center of the Middle Corridor is the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway line. Founded in 2008, this line connects Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey via railways and provides transportation to the European continent through Turkey's investments in Marmaray and the third bridge (CNNTURK, 2018). The first official train service of the 826 km railway corridor was held on 30 October 2017 (TRTHaber, 2017). Between 2017-2019, 275 thousand tons of freight were transported over the line (Unal, 2019). China Railway Express, which departs from Xi'an, China, was the first train to reach Europe, passing through Turkey in November 2019. China Railway Express, the first freight train from China to Europe without interruption, crossed 2 continents, 10 countries, 2 seas, traveled 11 thousand 483 kilometers in 12 days and reached its last stop in Prague (TRTHaber, 2019). The line is intended to carry 17 million tons of shipment and 3 million passengers and by 2034 (Unal, 2019).

The Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway is expected to contribute to economic growth by increasing the volume of trade in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkey, and to increase social and cultural interaction with passenger transport (Yeganehshakib, 2019).

As part of the cooperation under the Middle Corridor Initiative, a “joint cooperation protocol” was signed between the Transport Ministers of the member states of the Turkish Council. In addition, a “Coordination Board” has been established at the level of Deputy Ministers, which

is supposed to bring practical solutions to problems that may arise in the field of transport between countries. A sister port relationship was established between the ports of Baku, Aktau and Samsun. At the Turkish Council, work is underway on the draft “international combined Freight Transport Agreement” between the member states. On the other hand, various studies are being carried out in order to establish a Silk Road Data Bank and to develop cooperation with the countries of the region in the context of the Silk Road (TurkicCouncil, 2020).

Looking at China's investments in Turkey, projects that reflect both the initiative and the win-win principle that Turkish foreign policy has followed in recent years are encountered (which will be discussed in more detail in the following sections). Among the projects in question, the most prominent is the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway line, also called the “Iron Silk Road” within the Middle Corridor developed by Turkey. The line, which allows trains leaving Beijing to pass through Turkey and reach London, has been designed to provide transportation by saving time without interruption with the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge and Marmaray projects implemented by Turkey. Another important feature of the line is that it will be used for both passenger and freight transport, thus playing an active role in the development of economic and commercial relations between the countries through which the line passes.

The Trans Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP), referred to as the “Silk Road of energy”, is the most prominent project in the energy field within the scope of the initiative. The pipeline, which was later included in Belt and Road, was provided with financial support through the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), in which Turkey is also one of its founders. Rich natural gas resources in the Caspian region to the European market developed for the purpose of transporting the Turkey leg of the Southern Gas Corridor which is to TANAP AIIB \$ 600 million credit allocating Energy Trade Center will bring Turkey one step closer toward the goal of the project, which has been given to contribute to the realization of (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank a credit of 600 million dollars from TANAP, 2016).

Although the Belt and Road Initiative has a structure covering the trade of goods in general, it also has significant potential in the field of energy. The fact that the project brings together countries that supply and demand energy opens the door to developments that can also occur in this area. Being the most advantageous route due to its geographical location at any step that can be taken in the energy field will position Turkey at the center of energy relations that can be developed between Asia and Europe. In this context, Turkey, which is involved in energy projects such as TANAP and Turkish Stream, which are expected to provide energy flow to Europe, also has an important position in the energy supply security point.

Due to its geographical location, Turkey, which will contribute to the energy supply security of the countries of the region, will make a significant contribution to the Modern Silk Road project with the Energy Exchange. The Energy Exchange, which will bring together regional actors with the steps to be taken within the scope of the project, will also attract global actors to the Turkish market. In this way, the functionality and domain of the Turkish Energy Exchange will increase and it will be in a position to compete with the developed energy exchanges of the world.

According to the studies conducted, the Belt and Road Initiative will make a significant contribution to Turkey in three important areas (Twin, 2019: 1697).

- **Ease of Transportation:** The power center of the international system is shifting from the Atlantic axis to Asia. The realization of the newly established railway line and the “Eurasian bridge ”will create a giant market in which the rich resources of the East and West will be brought together. Turkey will take advantage of being on this line. Due to the fact that there are serious decreases in transport costs, there will be an increase in prosperity on the axis of production and consumption in many products imported with raw and semi-finished products in Turkey.
- **Development of Mutual Economic Dependence:** Within the framework of the BRI, an increase in the level of economic growth and prosperity is expected between the two countries within the framework of the common interest with the countries on their route. It will be able to reach a “Silk Road of information” with cross-border optical networks. Production process efficiency will increase with the transfer of new computing technologies industry 4.0 applications will be able to be used more effectively.
- **Ensuring Financial Integrity:** It is expected to ensure the flow of capital as well as goods and services. As one of the founding members of the AIIB, Turkey will provide an infrastructure that can attract foreign capital by increasing the financial integrity of the Silk Road project during its walking time. Foreign credit support for infrastructure spending that Turkey is making and planning to make now and in the near future will be provided by this country.

The new world order has moved from the Western system supported by The Atlantic side to the Eastern axis based on the AsiaPacific. The concentration of world economic power in this area is the most basic indicator that China has become a global power in many areas, from industrial production to banking. In this process, China planned to create a new trade corridor both to ensure the security of energy resources and to improve the volume of trade with the European continent. In this study, the one-generation single road project, which was raised by the Chinese administration after 2013 and included Turkey with the agreements in 2017, and its possible effects on Turkey were discussed. This project, which is currently on the agenda with the mentioned infrastructure works in Turkey, also includes cultural and financial cooperation beyond the trade corridor. This project, which is located in countries that dominate about half of the world's GNP, will make a significant contribution to Turkey.

Cooperation based on peace and stability can form the basis of long-term and strong relations. In line with the BRI, Turkey is modernizing its railways from the east to the West, adding new railways and high-speed trains to Turkey's important port cities, as well as modernizing and increasing the capacity of its ports (Yıldırım Çakar, 2019: 3899). In order to strengthen the relations it has established with Turkey in China, it provides partnerships with financial, infrastructure and development-supporting projects. As a result of the fact that China has ceased to be a regional power and manifested itself in the international arena as a new global power, it has been a necessity to seek new markets and partnerships. Conducting public diplomacy activities in the geographies where it contacts the BRI is important to ensure the permanence of relations. So, it is necessary to examine the political and economic contacts between Turkey and China through the BRI, as well as China's public diplomacy activities in Turkey.

4.4 China's Public Diplomacy Activities In Turkey

In previous chapters, we discussed public diplomacy works of China in international relations from a general framework. The concept of soft power coined by Joseph Nye of soft power by Nye three over again that has been the main source that is specified as “political values, foreign policy and culture” in our discussions over China's foreign policy public diplomacy activities has been discussed.

In this part of the study, based on the three sources of soft power that we have used to study the public diplomacy activities realized by China on the global level; the public diplomacy activities carried out by China in Turkey will be examined. In the special review of Turkey, an

assessment will be made on the axis of culture and foreign policy, which are among the main sources of soft power.

4.4.1 Foreign Policy Element In China's Public Diplomacy Activities In Turkey

In addressing the public diplomacy activities realized by China in the international arena through the foreign policy element, Nye's emphasis was drawn to the fact that military and economic instruments can also be used as a source of soft power. Based on this, again, Nye's development assistance can be used as an element of soft power (Joseph P. Nye, 2007: 165-168), focusing on public diplomacy activities of China over development. In our review through Turkey, public diplomacy activities developed through the development strategy will be studied.

President Of China Institute Of International Relations Prof. Yiwei Wang forced, 2016 that was released on "Generation and Path Initiative" in the book titled, The New Silk Road describes in the following words: "Now made in China in place of the phrase 'Built by China' era we are entering." Western levels of prosperity and common rise of Asia and Africa as a whole that aims to public this idea, as mentioned in Wang's book American hegemony is unsustainable based on the strength instead of a huge development project that will allow the integration of people (vodinal, 2018: 152). "The New Silk Road Initiative, covering more than 60 countries around the world, is a very important project with an area of about 40 million square kilometers and 4.5 billion of the world's population, " President Erdogan said at the Belt and Road Summit in 2017. It is of great importance that this initiative, which will benefit from bilateral, multilateral and regional cooperation, is implemented with a win-win understanding"(Sputnik, 2017). The win-win emphasis in this speech draws attention to the promise of development and prosperity in the countries covered by the initiative throughout the generation and along the way. Based on this, it would be useful to evaluate Chinese investments in Turkey with the motivation of the Belt and Road and the developing commercial cooperation between the two countries.

Economic relations, which are the most important dimension of Turkey-China relations, have started to develop since the 1980s, when the two countries entered the process of economic liberalization and integration with global markets. Trade volume has grown dramatically since 2000, when it reached US \$ 1 billion for the first time (Tuncel, 2017). China, which is the 18th country in which Turkey exports the most in 2019, has an important place as the 3rd country in imports. Turkey, which exported a total of 13 billion 179 million dollars to China in the last 5

years, made 112 billion 902 million dollars in imports from this country. The trade volume between the two countries reaches 126 billion 80 million dollars in 5 years. Turkey and China in 2019, 21 billion 84 million dollars trade volume was formed. In 2018, 18 billion 497 million dollars of imports were made from China, while exports to this country were recorded as 2 billion 587 million dollars (TurkStat).

Looking at the course of Turkey-China trade relations, it can be said that it has not reached the desired level for a long time, especially with regard to investments, and it is still below the potential. However, Chinese enterprises, generation and Road countries in the \$ 14.1 billion investment (Huaxia, 2020) as a significant share in Turkey attracts attention. In line with the goals of change in Chinese Foreign Policy and transformation of the economic structure, a significant increase in foreign investment has been recorded. Given that Turkey has the potential to attract more investments within the framework of the BRI in the following years, it is possible to increase investments by diversifying.

TABLE2: CHINA'S INVESTMENTS IN TURKEY (2005-2019)

Year	Chinese Entity	Quantity in Millions	Sector	Transaction Party
2005	China Railway Construction, Genertec	\$ 1.270	Transport	Cengiz and IC Ictas
2007	Sinomach	\$ 610	Energy	Eren Group
2008	China National Building Material	\$ 110	Real estate	
2008	Datong	\$ 760	Energy	Hema Enerji
2009	China National Chemical Engineering	\$ 440	Metals	European Nickel
2010	Sinomach	\$ 360	Energy	
2010	Sinoma	\$ 780	Real estate	Eren Group
2011	China National Chemical Engineering	\$ 640	Energy	
2012	Chery Auto	\$ 120	Transport	
2012	China Electric Equipment	\$ 600	Energy	
2012	Harbin Electric	\$ 130	Energy	Hattat
2013	China National Chemical Engineering	\$ 1.100	Chemicals	Ciner Holding
2013	Genertec	\$ 460	Energy	Aksa Enerji
2013	Harbin Electric	\$ 2.400	Energy	Hattat Holding
2013	Sinomach	\$ 220	Energy	
2014	ICBC	\$ 320	Finance	Tekstil Bankasi
2015	Sinomach	\$ 380	Energy	OEDAS and OEPSAS
2015	Sinoma	\$ 160	Real estate	Limak Holdings
2015	Sinoma	\$ 100	Real estate	Votorantim Cimento
2015	China Merchants, CIC, China Ocean Shipping	\$ 920	Logistics	Fina Liman
2016	Dongfang Electric	\$ 660	Energy	Hattat
2016	Bank of China	\$ 110	Finance	

2016	ZTE	\$ 100	Technology	Netas
2017	Power Construction Corp	\$ 1.090	Energy	Teyo
2019	State Power Investment, AVIC	\$ 1.320	Energy	
2019	China Electronics Technology	\$ 110	Energy	Kaylon
2019	China Merchants-led consortium	\$ 690	Transport	

Table 2: China's Investments in Turkey (2005-2019)

Source: *China Global Investment Tracker*, 2020)

Table 2 contains details of Chinese investments in Turkey, both by sector and by year. China's investments in Turkey include mainly the energy sector. The roughly \$ 16 billion investment is concentrated especially in energy and transport, similar to investments in other countries under the Belt and Road Initiative (China Global Investment Tracker, 2020). Because energy is a strategically important investment area for China. Between 2005 and 2020, the share of China's investments in energy and transport in Turkey in total investments is 74%.

Turkey, which is in an important position with its geographical proximity to the countries that supply and demand energy, is attracting investments in this area, strengthening its hand in terms of the security of both national and international energy transmission lines. In addition, railways and energy equipment, which are strategically important for China, are among the priorities that will determine the country's course in terms of future strategies. China, which has a competitive attitude, especially in the construction of Railways within the scope of the initiative, may be one of the alternatives that can fill Turkey's investment gap in these areas.

China's investments in Turkey are increasing every day with the BRI. In 2014, the second phase of the high-speed train line, which will reduce the distance between Ankara and Istanbul to three hours, was completed with a \$ 720 million loan issued by Exim Bank of China. In 2015, China's the biggest bank, ICBC, acquired the entire 75.5% stake of Turkish GSD holding in Tekstilbank for \$ 314 million. Turkey's 3rd in 2015, a 65% stake in the major port of Kumport was purchased for \$ 940 million by Cosco Pacific's subsidiaries CMHI and CIC Capital, forming a joint venture group. In 2016, ZTE, China's largest listed provider of telecommunications equipment and Network Solutions, acquired a 48.4% stake in Netas for \$ 101.3 million (Guo & Fidan, 2019).

China's technology giant Huawei has established the largest R&D center outside China in Turkey. In addition, most of the employees in this R & D center consist of Turkish engineers. Huaewi Turkey R&D center, which has been operating in Turkey for 10 years, has invested 520 million TL in the past time. 5G usage scenarios, AI and Huawei Mobile Services (HMS) are

the most important areas of activity of Huawei Turkey R & D Center. Currently, more than 100 local partners and content providers are collaborating in the HMS area to expand the local ecosystem. The center serves mainly mobile operators in Turkey. It also continues to support academics on ICT projects. In 2019, the center cooperated with 15 universities and 28 academicians. Huawei is also among the most active contributors to Turkey's 5G transformation process (Huawei, 2020; Turan, 2019).

China's largest bank, ICBC, has made critical investments and services since it entered service in Turkey in 2015. Turkcell agreed with the Development Bank of China for a loan of 500 million euros in 2019 to finance infrastructure investments, and it was decided to make these transactions through ICBC (Haberturk, 2019). In accordance with the swap agreement signed between the central banks of Turkey and China in 2019, the first swap transaction was carried out between VakıfBank and ICBC in 2020. In 2020, the first use of Chinese yuan funding was made within the framework of the renewed swap agreement between the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey and the Central Bank of China. On the same day, Turkcell and Huawei Turkey also announced that they have agreed to make all forward-dated contracts in China's local currency, Yuan (Dünya, 2019; Nuroglu, 2020).

In addition to these investments, China's planning to build 3 nuclear power plant in Turkey in the Thrace region and the project is under completion. In addition, the Chinese company CETC is the project partner of Kalyon Enerji, which will establish Turkey's first integrated solar panel plant worth 1.5 billion dollars. The factory's technology infrastructure will be fully established by the Chinese company CETC (Işık, 2019; Sabah, 2019).

When we look at China's infrastructure investments that put development and growth in Turkey at the center, we see that it has gained great momentum in recent years. In 2019, China's Ambassador, Li Deng, in an interview with Bloomberg, around 50 large-scale Chinese companies have come to Turkey by stating that the company in question mainly operates in the field of infrastructure and energy, but stated that it would be expanded to cover all sectors of cooperation in the next period. Li stated that China intends to rise Turkey's exports to China to 8 billion dollars by 2021, and its direct investment stock in Turkey to 6 billion dollars, and the number of Chinese tourists visiting Turkey to 1 million (BloombergHT, 2019).

Cooperation between the two countries based on a win-win strategy continues to increase. China's multibillion-dollar infrastructure investments and public diplomacy activities are conspicuously conspicuous. In addition to these investments, China also strives to strengthen

its cultural relations with Belt and Road countries. It is of importance to examine the cultural activities carried out by China in Turkey through both the “development of cultural relations”, which are among the goals of the Belt and Road, and the concept of “culture”, which Joseph Nye has demonstrated among the elements of soft power, to assess the activities of Chinese public diplomacy.

4.4.2 Cultural Element In China's Public Diplomacy Activities In Turkey

Culture in general is the order of life in which people try to produce meaning through symbolic practices. In the economic sense, this generalization relates to how individuals produce and consume goods; in the political sense, it relates to what practices Power focuses on, spreads and uses in societies. From this point of view, culture is important in that it relates to the processes by which people make sense of their lives by communicating with each other, both individually and collectively (Tomlinson, 1999: 33).

Today, cultural diplomacy as a strategic tool continues to serve traditional diplomacy, but also carries an important mission in shaping China's international image, creating a national identity and developing a positive international public environment in the new era.

One of the essential goals of the Belt and Road Initiative is to strengthen cultural ties. This goal parallels China's motivation to shape its image and create a positive public environment in countries along the Belt and Road. For this reason, seeing the dimensions of cultural diplomacy conducted between Turkey and China and evaluating the momentum of development will illuminate one of the influential factors in shaping the perception of China in the Turkish public.

In recent times, there have been important developments in the field of culture and tourism between Turkey and China. The history of cultural relations between the two countries is very old. But in the name of cultural diplomacy, we can take the declaration of the Chinese Cultural year in Turkey in 2012 and the declaration of the Turkish Cultural year in China in 2013.

In 2013, the events of the Turkish Cultural year began with a live performance of the Anatolian Fire Dance Group in a special Eid program on CCTV in celebration of Spring Festival, which is considered the beginning of the Year in China. It is estimated that 800 million people watched the Spring Festival celebrations from CCTV, about 10 times the population of Turkey (CRI, 2013). During the event, more than 150 projects were implemented; 5 thousand Turkish and Chinese artists made mutual visits (CRI, 2014).

Thanks to these events, Turkish culture and Turkey in China have been explained and the foundation of ‘2018 Turkey Tourism Year in China’ has been laid. As a result of Tourism Year activities and promotional activities, the number of Chinese tourists who came to Turkey in 2017 was 247 thousand, while in 2018 this figure increased to 394 thousand (TUIK). This increase continued in 2019 and increased to 426 thousand. Turkey's Ambassador to Beijing, Abdulkadir Emin Önen, described 2018 as a record year in Turkey – China relations. "There have been more than 1000 meetings between the Turkish and Chinese authorities from the lowest level to the highest level. In 2018, the number of tourists visiting Turkey is approximately 400 thousand, while it is aimed to find one million. While the current number of flights between Turkey and China is 27, it is aimed to double" (Kabakci, 2019).

Tourism undoubtedly occupies a very important place in strengthening cultural relations. Another important dimension of China and Turkey's tourism relations is that Turkey gives a current account deficit from trade relations between said countries. In the last 5 years, Turkey exports roughly \$ 13 billion; it imports \$ 113 billion. Given the current conditions, it seems difficult for Turkey to balance its current account deficit. One of the actors who can compensate for this is tourism. The UN World Tourism Organization ranks Chinese tourists as the fourth most spending society in the world, while Global Fund reports that Chinese tourists spend more than the average of other nations (Shambaugh, 2016: 279). In the near future, the number of Chinese tourists visiting Turkey is expected to be expressed in millions. Tourism will play an important part in reducing the foreign trade deficit against Turkey.

In 2017, a cultural memorandum of understanding was signed that cultural centers will be opened in the two countries. In this context, Confucius Institutes were established in Turkey and Yunus Emre Institutes were established in China. Confucius Institutes, as mentioned earlier, occupy an important place in Chinese public diplomacy. China attaches great importance to Chinese education in foreign countries. As part of these activities, Chinese departments or courses were opened in 10 universities and 3 high schools. There are also 4 Confucius Institutes (Middle East Technical University, Boğaziçi University, Okan University, Yeditepe University) and a special Chinese Education Center approved by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Turkey. Istanbul is the only city in the world where 3 Confucius Institutes are located in the same city. In addition, in 2018, 1500 on-duty personnel were trained in Chinese in classes specially created for the police headquarters at Istanbul Ataturk Airport (Wei, 2019: 4-5).

Another important soft power actor in China is the Chinese media. China International Radio, One of the CCTV, Xinhua and CRI media groups, which we mentioned in general in previous sections, operates in Turkey. CRI multi media contacts the Turkish public through many channels. It also worked as a news agency in Turkey and became a reference source for Chinese news in the Turkish press. CRI also publishes Modern İpek Yolu magazine, published in collaboration with Kırmızı Kedi publishing house.

In addition to Chinese macro culture studies, it aims to promote Chinese culture in the public opinion of Turkey and to positively improve the image of the country by periodically organizing numerous events. In between these activities it helds for 4 years “My Dream China” in Turkey named High School Art Competition, organized on an annual basis, again at the University of “Chinese Bridge” Competition, 2016 and 2018 with China in the years of Maltepe municipality by the joint Organization of the embassy of the People's Republic of “Happy Spring” Celebration of the year, in 2019, China Suzhou ballet performance Besiktas Istanbul, 2019, and Chinese pianist Wang Yang's joint Presidential Symphony Orchestra concert, there are gastronomic festivals in 2018 and 2019, also in 2019 China's 70 anniversary as part of the foundation, examples of events that will lay the groundwork for the development of cultural relations, such as cultural events in Ankara and Istanbul, can be reproduced.

As one of the most efficient sources of soft power, culture is effectively used by China. Compared to the US cultural industry, China has participated in this struggle in recent years in the marketing of culture. In particular, the Chinese image is negatively affected due to the controversy regarding the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in Turkey. In order to correct this image, the philosophy of “Confucius” is put forward in Chinese cultural diplomacy.

CHAPTER 5: Aim and Method

The study aims to answer the question of how the perception of China transformed in Turkish media and the public opinion since Turkey officially joined The Belt and Road Initiative in 2017.

Official participation of Turkey in The Belt and Road in 2017 is considered as a milestone for the relations between two countries. China's public diplomacy activities, which gained momentum with the country's international expansion policies, took on a different dimension with the BRI. China aims to create a positive public opinion at the international level through soft power oriented development based diplomacy activities, particularly in public diplomacy activities. From this point of view, the study aims to develop an interpretation by evaluating the

perception of China in Turkish media and public opinion during the period just before Turkey joined The Belt and Road Initiative in 2017, that is the second half of 2016, and how this perception transformed in the years 2017-18 and 19.

Media analysis, which constitutes the first section of the empirical study, addresses the periodical change and transformation of how China is perceived by analysing the news published in Turkish media about China in positive/neutral/negative categories.

The study has descriptive characteristics. In the media analysis section of the study, content analysis approach is adopted and evaluative analysis techniques are used for processing the data. For content analysis, the research uses the perspective suggested by Wimmer et al (2011). Content analysis approach, which is posited by Wimmer et al based on the opinions of Kerlinger, consists of three fundamental components: systematicity, objectivity and quantitateness. In this sense, the use of evaluative analysis technique and tools in the process of analysing the content collected made it possible to pursue a systematic and standard methodology. On the other hand, evaluative analysis techniques played an important role for remaining objective in the process of positive/neutral/negative trend. In this regard, content analysis and evaluative analysis technique fits the purpose of contributing to the evaluation of "China" news content, which is a current issue in media coverage.

Content analysis constitutes the core of this section. This type of analysis is used for measuring the positive and negative attitudes in a message. Theoretical framework of this method, which was developed by Osgood et al (1959), is based on a representational understanding of language, and assumes that human emotions, thoughts and such characteristics are reflected to the language used, therefore, information can be obtained about the transmitter through the analysis of the message. By analysing the words of the message source about a particular object, the direction (positive, negative) and intensity (the level of opposing or advocating for the attitude object) of the attitudes towards the object are determined (Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001: 99).

There are also popular researches carried out with this type of analysis. One is the research conducted by Jordan and Page (1992) on the factors that affect foreign policy views (Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001: 100). The study addressed 32 foreign policy cases and Vanderbilt news summaries were subject to content analysis. Based on this approach, "China" news contents featured in Turkish media in the above-mentioned time period were each categorised as positive / neutral / negative.

China news featured in Television, Printed Media and Internet Media on a daily basis from the period between May, 2016 and December 31, 2019 were collected for the research on the perception of China in Turkish media. This data was collected by scanning approximately 3.000 printed media outlets, approximately 10.000 internet news sites and 155 Television Channels through artificial intelligence supported media monitoring system of Ajans Press, one of the biggest media monitoring agencies of Turkey. The key words "China", "Xi Jinping", "Wang Yi", "Hong Kong", "Xinjiang", "Uyghur", "East Turkistan" were used in the searches made through Ajans Press.

In the collected contents, the news, which are not related to China, were excluded from the data set. After data extraction, a data set consisting of 2.187.712 news was created. In data organization stage, the data was categorized according to the contents, date, the source of coverage (television/printed publication/internet media) and mood of the news (positive/neutral/negative).

Also, out of 2,187,712 data processed, 5.000 news were extracted as stratified sample by taking annual news distribution percentage into account. This sample was obtained from the big data by using IBM SPSS Statistics 24.0. This data was categorised according to the relevant subject of the news. These categories were foreign policy/economy-investment-commerce/science-technology/culture-art/sports/tourism/xinjiang/China-agenda.

The reliability of descriptive and content analysis is determined especially by the coding process in qualitative researches. One of the important properties, which the categories must have, is that the same document should be clear enough to allow another researcher using it for the same purpose to reach to similar results to a large extent (Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001). Therefore, the interpretation of categories must not change from one researcher to another or for two different time periods. In this context, within the scope of the study, coding reliability was tested to determine the extent to which the researcher (coder) performs the coding consistently. For this purpose, all the data collected within the scope of the research was processed by sharing equally with another researcher (coder). Out of this data, 5% of the news randomly selected on a weekly basis were exchanged between the researchers and recorded. Coding reliability was calculated by using intra-class correlation coefficient. As a result of this calculation, coefficient of concordance was determined as 0.85. Intra-class correlation coefficient, which is used for determining interrater reliability, is expected to be minimum 0.8 (Graham et al., 2012: 9). As a result, it can be said that coding reliability is achieved at an acceptable level.

Positive news index used in the study was calculated according to the following formula:

$$\text{Positive news index} = (\text{number of positive news}) - (\text{number of negative news})$$

In the research, the effect of total number of news and critical developments on the number of positive, negative and neutral news was modelled with ordinary least squares (OLS) regression model. Calculations were made on STATA 13 software. Critical developments were determined based on the increase in the total number of news, sharp increase in the rate of positive news, and sharp increases in the rate of negative news. In each month, if there was a critical development, it was coded as "1", and if there was no critical development, it was coded as "0". If the critical development is due to negative news contents, it was coded as "-1".

Second section of empirical study consists of opinion polls. The first of these researches was carried out before the date when Turkey officially joined The Belt and Road Initiative. Conducted in 2016, this research can be considered as a reference point for understanding public diplomacy activities undertaken around The Belt and Road Initiative.

Another public opinion poll conducted at the end of the year 2019 will help us to learn about the effects of China's public diplomacy activities on the public opinion in Turkey after The Belt and Road in these period.

Two public opinion polls conducted in the years 2016 and 2019 aimed to measure the perception of China in Turkish public opinion. The research in 2016 was carried out between the dates May 17 - July 29. The research in 2019 was carried out between the dates September 19 - November 28. The sample size was 2.400 in 2016 and 2.000 in 2019. Researches were conducted with Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) method. Distribution of city, gender and socioeconomic status as representative of Turkey was aimed in the studies. The research was carried out in 26 cities at NUTS2 (Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics) area level by taking Address Based Population Registration System (ABPRS) into account. Interviews were conducted in 26 cities at NUTS2 area level as representative sample of Turkey. Interviews were conducted with persons, who were selected according to "Stratified Sampling" rules. Researches were carried out at 95% confidence interval, with 2% margin of error. Reliability analysis of the survey questions was made; 0.726 Cronbach's Alpha value was calculated.

In the questionnaire, factor analyses were conducted for each of the questions "How much do you appreciate China as a country?", How much do you trust China as a country?, How much

do you like China as a Turkish citizen?" which were addressed in the years 2016 and 2019 in order to understand the status of the perception of China in Turkish opinion. Weighted average of these three questions were taken by using the factor scores, and sense index was calculated. Factors, which determine the sense index, were modelled with OLS method. Factor analysis results for 2016 and 2019 are included in appendix 1 and appendix 2.

In public opinion polls conducted for 2016 and 2019, "What comes to your mind when you think of China?", "What are the strengths of China?", "What are the weaknesses of China?" and "What are the topics of the news that you have heard about China in the last three years?" open-ended answers were received to these questions. Word clouds were created from these answers. Tables for the answers to these questions are included in Appendix 3,4,5 and 6.

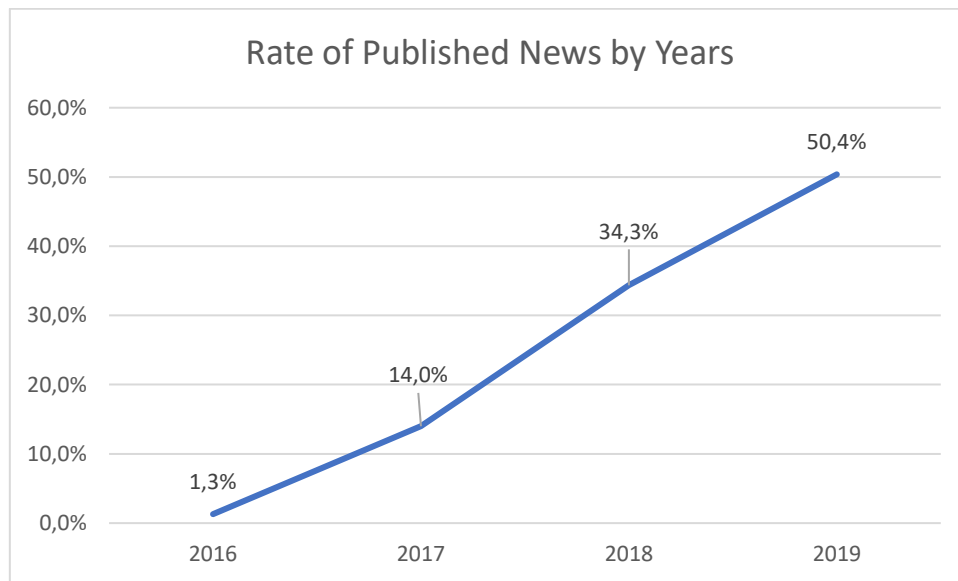
CHAPTER 6: Perception of China in Turkish Media

As suggested by Shaun Riordan in his work *The New Diplomacy*, as far as the relationship among media, public opinion and foreign policy is concerned, media and public opinion is now an actor and an agent in foreign policy calculations (Riordan, 2002: 4). In his work *Mediapolitik*, Lee Edward also positions media and international public opinion as the central actor of world politics and argues that there is a strong correlation and mutual interaction between the states, and media and public opinion (Edwards, 2001: 7). Beyond communicating the opinions of the public between the public opinion-foreign policy-diplomacy, media has such roles as creating public opinion and ensuring the support of the public to the policies of the government by serving to its efforts to set the agenda and framing activities. In this context, media is both a stakeholder to the diplomacy, and a tool that is used by it. States developed methods such as setting the agenda and framing for media and public opinion. Therefore, we can name the relations of the states with media and the public as public diplomacy. In other words, public diplomacy is a policy develop by the states in order to keep up with the transformation in the global system and its phenomena such as media and public opinion.

Based on this framework, one of the most important success criteria for the development-centred diplomacy activities carried out by China is improving the country image of China in the public opinion of other countries. The essential condition for the improvement of the image is the public's being aware of these activities. In this sense, the news in the media about China must carry a positive message. For this reason, media is one of the sources that may show the criteria of success in public diplomacy. In this section of the study, the transformation of the perception of China in Turkish media from the time short before Turkey officially joined The

Belt and Road Initiative, to the period after its participation will be addressed. The study will first present media content analyses, which cover the years 2017-18 and 19 starting from the second half of 2016. Based on this, the performance in the above-mentioned time period will be evaluated cumulatively.

In Turkish media, 28.303 news about China were covered in the second half of 2016, 306.071 news were covered in 2017, 751.301 news were covered in 2018, and 1.102.037 news were covered in 2019.



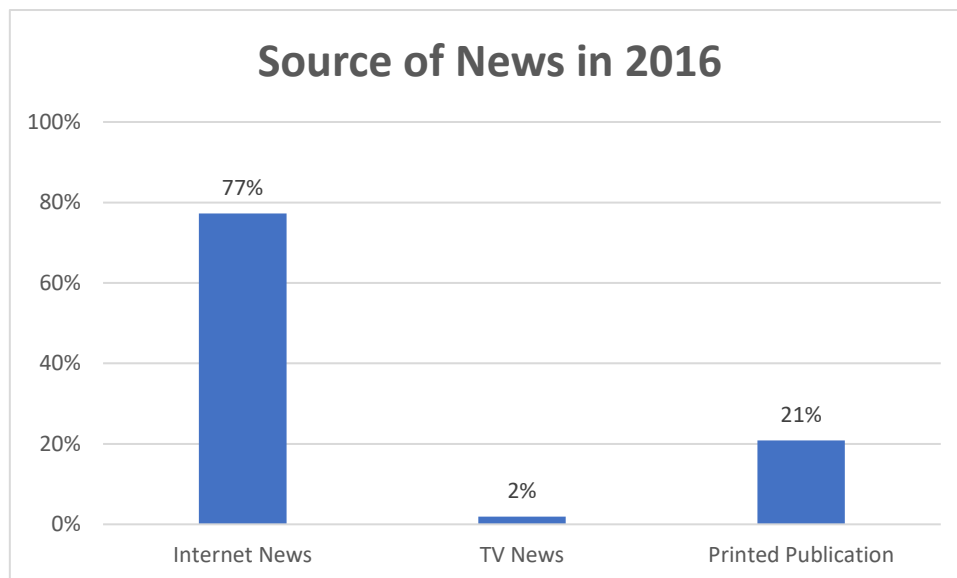
Graphic 1

As far as the number of news is concerned, a radical increase is noteworthy starting from 2017. It can be observed that the weight of Chinese news in Turkish media increased starting from the year 2017, when Turkey joined The Belt and Road Initiative. From this point on, news content about China becomes a current topic and enters the agenda of the public in Turkey.

For this reason, proceeding based on the analyses conducted for each year on a monthly basis will help us to observe the transformation of the perception of China during this time period.

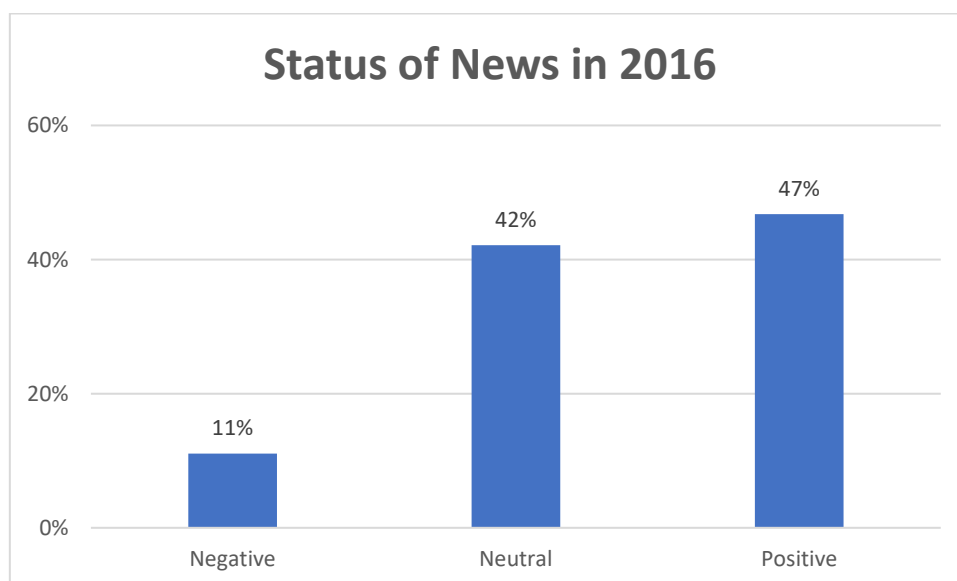
6.1 Perception of China in Turkish Media in 2016

The news covered in 2016 constitute a small portion of 1.3% in the total number of news. In 28.303 total news covered in the year 2016, 77.2% of them are from internet media, 20.8% of them are from printed media, and 1.9% of them are from television.



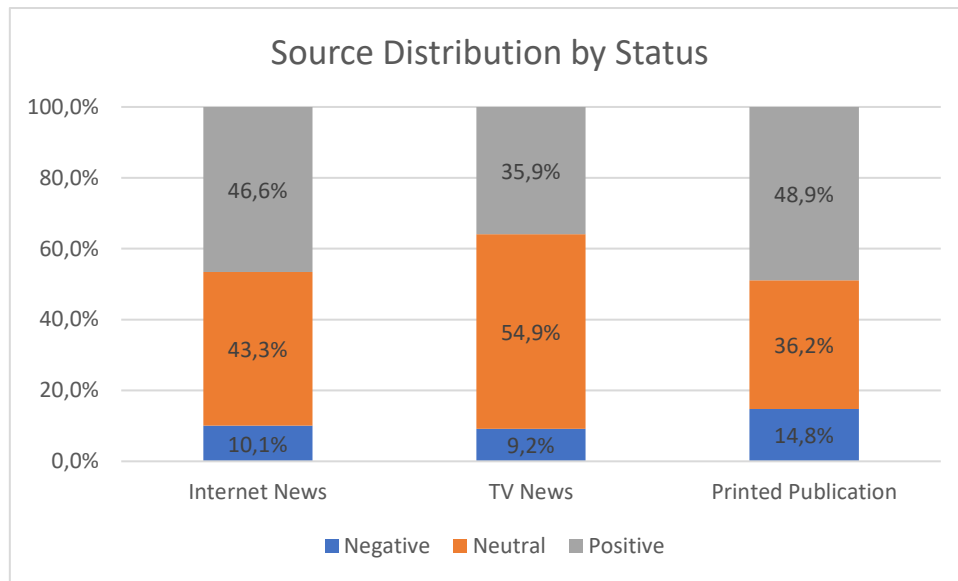
Graphic 2

42% of the news covered over the course of the year are neutral news, 47% of them are positive news, and 11% of them are negative news.



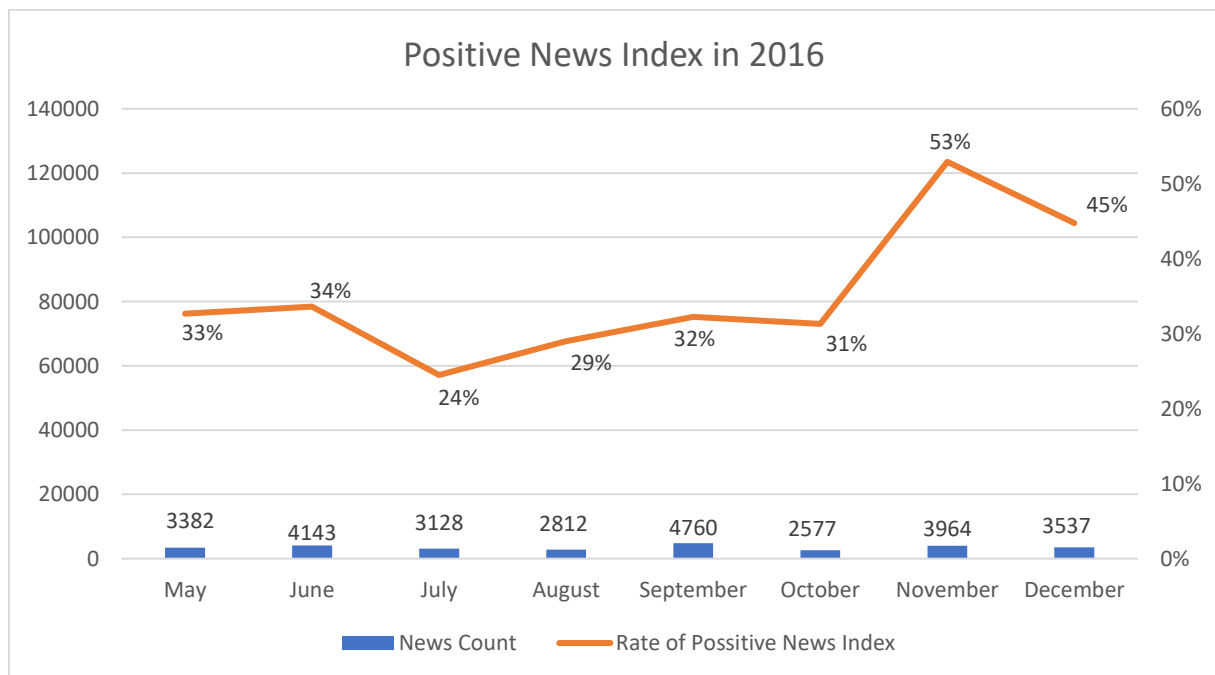
Graphic 3

When status analysis of these news was distributed according to the sources, the results presented in Graphic 4 were found.

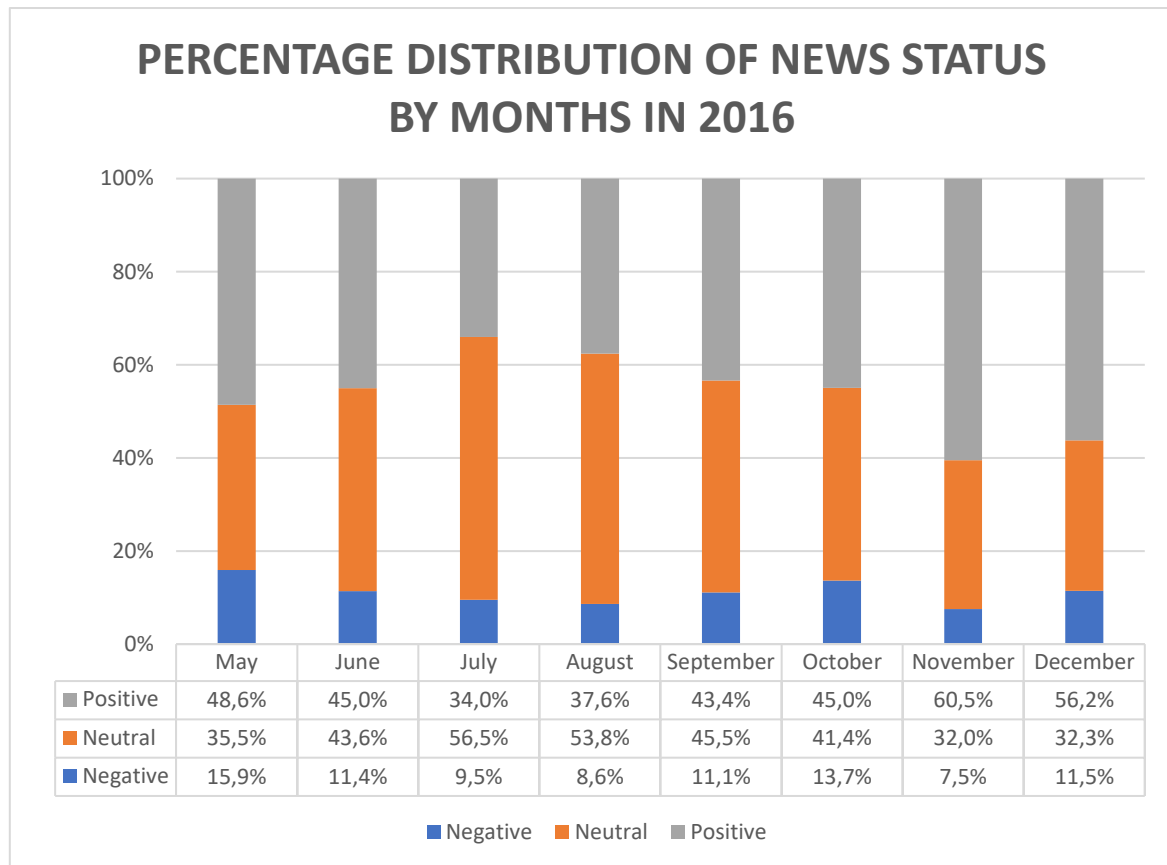


Graphic 4

Positive news index, which shows the transformation of perception of China in Turkish media in the second half of 2016 more clearly, is given in Graphic 5.



Graphic 5



Graphic 6

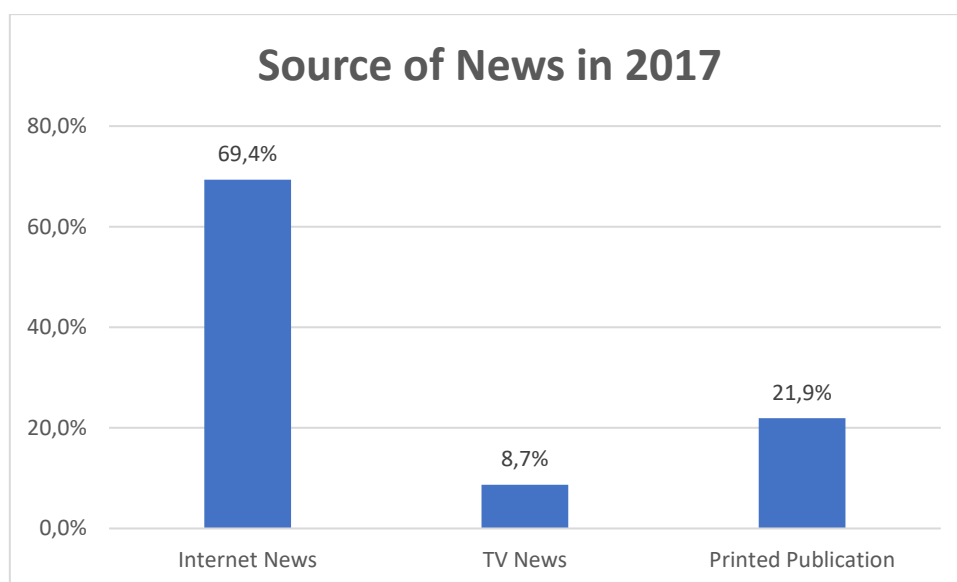
According to the positive news index for the year 2016, there is a predominant parallelism between the number of news covered monthly and positive news index ratio. In Graphic 5, a negative trend is observed in positive news index in June. According to the results given in Graphic 6, this trend is due to the increase of neutral news. While a decrease is observed in the rate of positive and negative news in July, the rate of neutral news increased from 43.6% to 56.5% compared to the previous month.

While a systematic increase was noted in the positive news index of 2016 in August, September and November, a dramatic increase was observed in November. In November, the number of news increased by 54% compared to the previous month, and the rate of positive news increased to 60.5%. When the news covered in this period were investigated to understand the effect that caused this significant increase, it was observed that after President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's statement, "Why shouldn't Turkey be included to The Shanghai Five", China responded to this by declaring "Turkey's application to Shanghai Cooperation Organization will be considered". It can be observed that comments like "A positive response from China to Turkey's initiative", "Turkey's willingness to closer cooperation with The Shanghai Five is welcomed by Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs" (BBC, 2016; DW, 2016) had an extensive coverage in the press

during this period. These news were also widely covered in the media under the headline “More than 1 million Chinese tourists will be coming to Turkey every year” (NTV, 2016; Sabah, 2016).

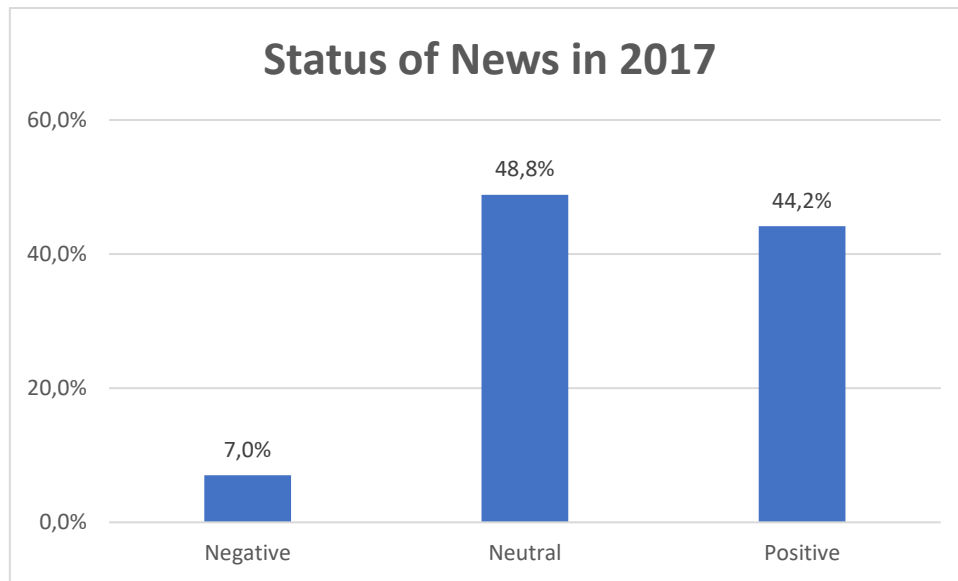
6.2 Perception of China in Turkish Media in 2017

The news covered in 2017 have a 14% share in total number of news. 306.071 Chinese news covered in the year 2017 in total indicates a 9.8 fold increase compared to the previous year. In the news covered over the course of the year, 69.4% of them were from internet media, 21.9% of them were from printed media and 8.72% of the news from television; another important factor for the increase in the rate of positive news in December is the fact that Turkish Delegation of 18 persons had a visit to China for improving the commercial and tourism relations between Turkey and China, and drawn up a preliminary agreement for attracting at least 1 million Chine tourists to Turkey every year.



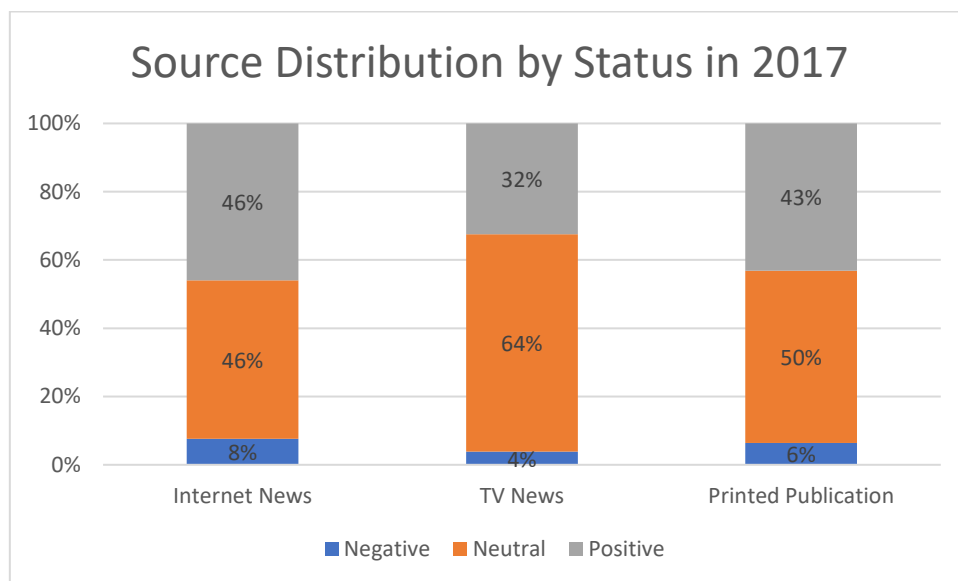
Graphic 7

48.8% of the news covered in the year 2017 were neutral news, 44.2% of them were positive news, and 7% of them were negative news.



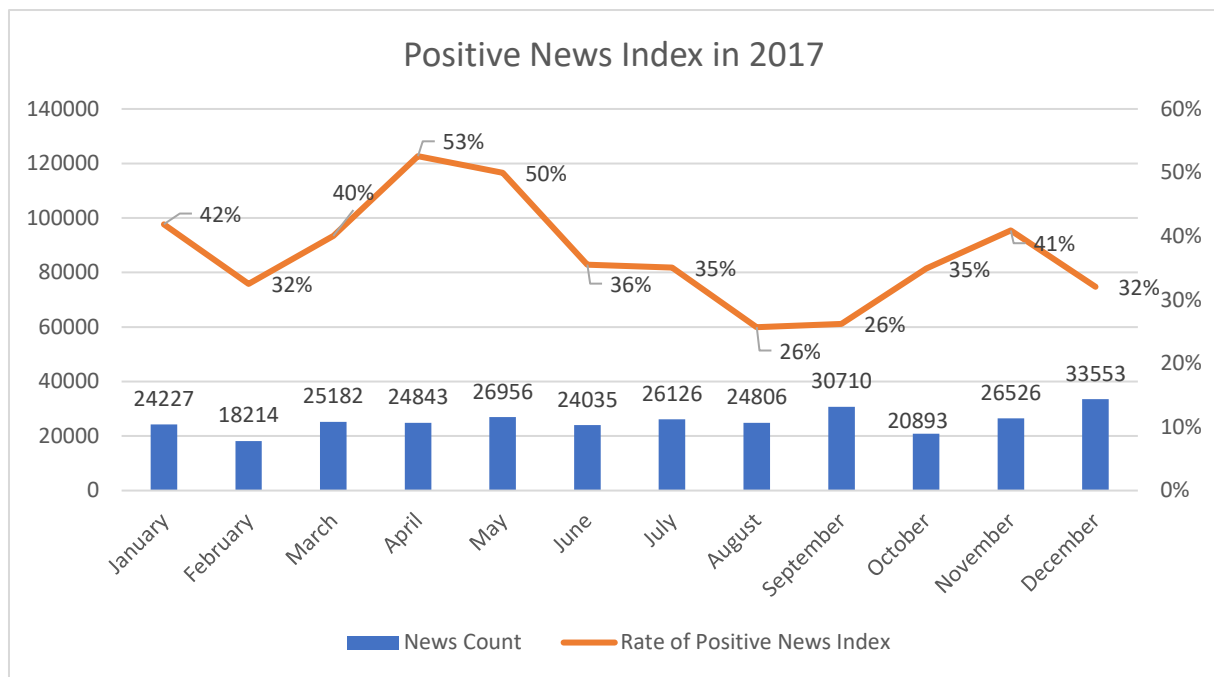
Graphic 8

When status analysis of these news was distributed according to the sources, the results presented in Graphic 9 were found.

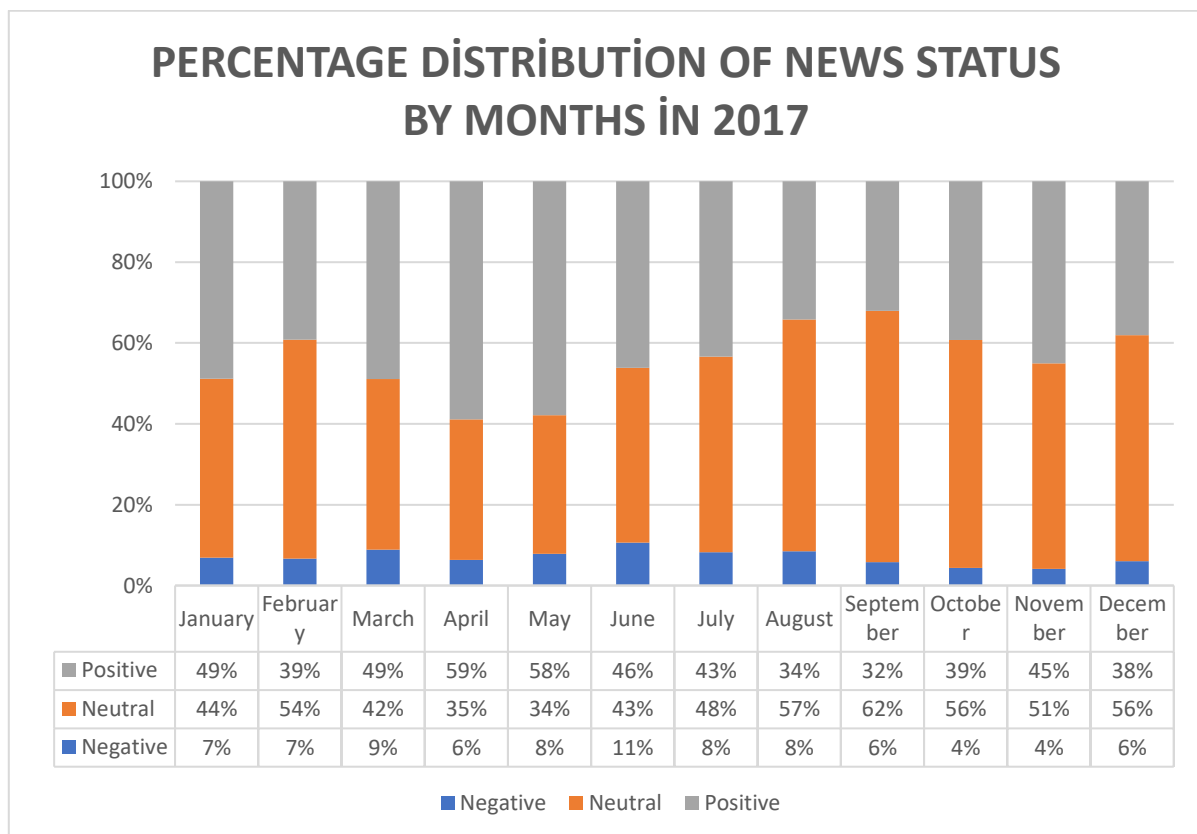


Graphic 9

Positive news index, which shows the transformation of perception of China in Turkish media in the year 2017 more clearly, is given in Graphic 10.



Graphic 10



Graphic 11

A radical increase is observed in the number of news since the first month of 2017 compared to the December 2016. Increases of the emphasis laid on the commercial protection against China in US President Donald Trump's rhetoric can be considered as the main factor that caused

this significant increase in January. Trump, who took office in January 2017, had repeatedly declared in his election campaign that he would cancel global trade agreements and protect and isolate American economy with customs tariffs. China's first responses to such statements came in January. Especially Chinese President Xi Jinping's statement "There is no winner in a trade war, we should say no to protectionism" (DW, 2017b) in the opening speech of World Economic Forum in Davos had become a main topic in the agenda.

Positive trend of positive news index in March, April and May is noted in the graphic. When news contents were analysed for making sense of the upward acceleration, it was observed that The Belt and Road Initiative started to enter the agenda of Turkish media. The fact Turkey would join the first The Belt and Road Summit to be held in May 15, and discussions around Turkey's being among the founding countries comes into the agenda of the media in March. It is observed that news such as "The distance between İstanbul-Beijing will decrease to 10 days!" (Can, 2017) were widely covered in Turkish media. Also in March, Denizbank became the first Turkish bank to grant rediscount credit in Chinese Yuan with the cooperation of CBRT (Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey) within the scope of commerce in local currencies (Dünya, 2017).

In April, The Belt and Road initiative was one of the priority topics in the agenda. The train departing from England arriving to China had its first trip in this period (BBC, 2017). China's first aircraft carrier was also launched in April. In several sources, China's military technology capabilities is mentioned and it is claimed that USA's hegemony is shaken (DW, 2017a).

May draws attention as the period in which Turkey officially joined The Belt and Road Initiative. 58 of the news covered in this month are positive news. One day before The Belt and Road Forum held in May 15, a bilateral meeting was organized between Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Xi Jinping, and the parties entered into some agreements (YeniSafak, 2017). It is observed that several positive news about The Belt and Road were covered in the press. Headlines such as "Turkey and China join in the 'Belt and Road' (Durul, 2017), Silk Road: China's global development perspective" (Özay, 2017) and contents which provide information about Belt and Road, and suggest that it will contribute to the development of Turkey, were among the first agenda topics in the press.

As it is shown in Graphic 10, in June, a decrease is observed in positive news index. In Graphic 11, an increase is observed in the rate of negative news. June 2017 coincides with the month of Ramadan. During this period, it is observed that several negative contents about Xinjiang were

covered in the agenda of Turkish press. News such as “They are changing Islamic names by force” (Sabah, 2017), “The plan to murder Uyghur Turks revealed” (YeniAkit, 2017) were frequently featured. In addition to this, Yulin Dog Meat Festival was featured by the media with negative criticisms. Allegations of dog meat trade in China despite being illegal, and several images were covered by the press in this period (AmerikanınSesi, 2017).

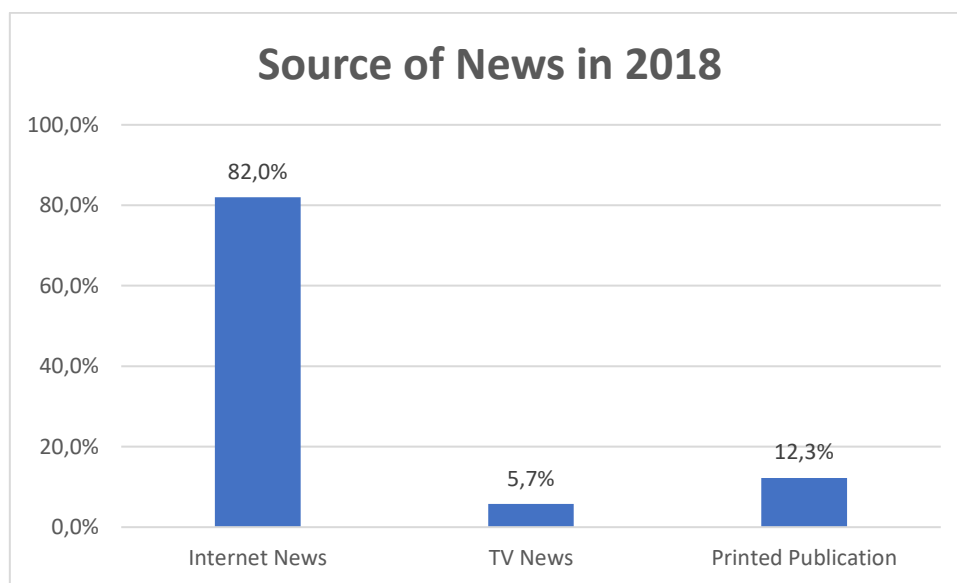
It is observed that positive news index decreased also in August and September. As shown in Graphic 11, there was an increase in the number of neutral news.

In November, more than one theme, which affect the increase in positive news index, are observed. Among these, news on technology, innovation and investment had wide coverage in the press. In this period, Russian Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev stated that Russia and China may extent their cooperation in the field of artificial intelligence applications (NTV, 2017b). Upgraded version of China’s first electric plane RX1E had its first flight (TRTHaber, 2017). It was declared that China completed 22 thousand km high-speed train railway line in one year, and this is more than 50 percent of the complete length of the whole line (Hürriyet, 2017). The sponge city project in China to prevent floods became a main topic on the agenda. This project aims to absorb and reuse rain water with permeable surface and green infrastructure in urban areas (Sözcü, 2017). A 3-year loan agreement to the amount of 250 Million Dollar was signed with Commercial Bank of China Limited under the coordination of Garanti Bank, ICBC Turkey Bank (Aslanhan, 2017).

In December, there was a significant increase in the number of news, and a decrease is observed in negative news index. According to the data presented in Graphic 11, while there is an increase in the rate of negative news in December compared to the previous month, there is a decrease in the rate of positive news. Also, the rate of neutral news increased compared to the previous months. When content of the news in this period were addressed in order to explain the increase in the number of news, it was observed that there are various remarkable negative news about China in Turkish media. Such news include the headlines "The Late Leader of East Turkistan cause, Alptekin, was commemorated" (Habertürk, 2017), "China labelled 11 million Uyghur Turks" (NTV, 2017a), "They imported not toys, but hundred thousands of poison from China" (CNNTURK, 2017). As far as the news contents are concerned, criticisms about Xinjiang and the emphasis on the fact that Chinese products are unhealthy come to the forefront. Negative news contents about Xinjiang and Chinese goods were widely covered in the press.

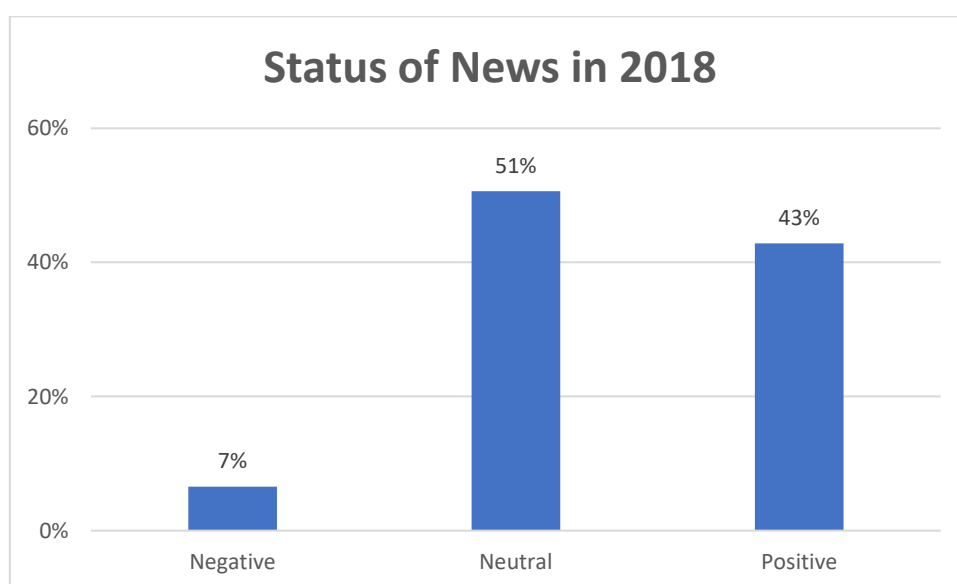
6.3 Perception of China in Turkish Media in 2018

The news covered in 2018 have a 34.3% share in total number of news. 751.301 Chinese news covered in the year 2018 in total indicates a 1.5 fold increase compared to the previous year. Of all the news covered over the course of the year, 82% of them were featured in internet media, 12.3% in printed media and 5.7% in television.



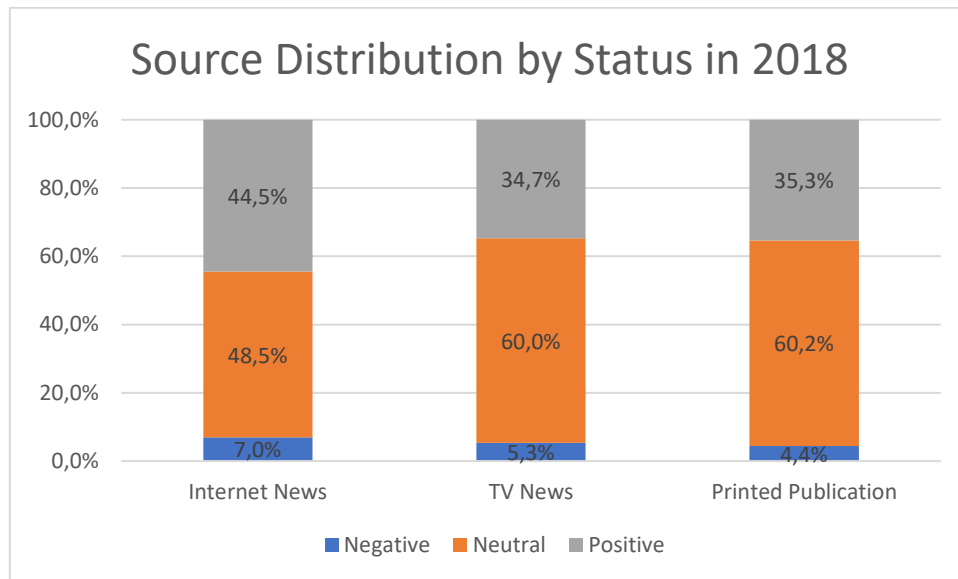
Graphic 12

51% of the news covered in the year 2018 were neutral news, 43% of them were positive news, and 7% of them were negative news.



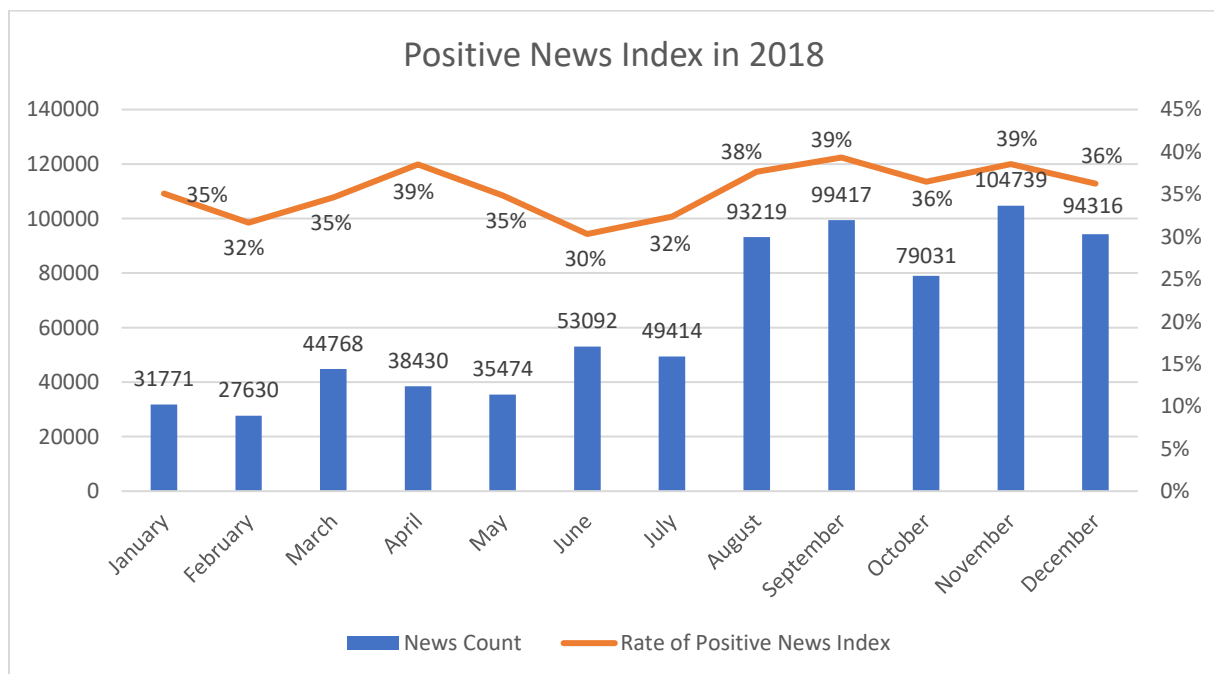
Graphic 13

When status analysis of these news was distributed according to the sources, the results presented in Graphic 14 were found.

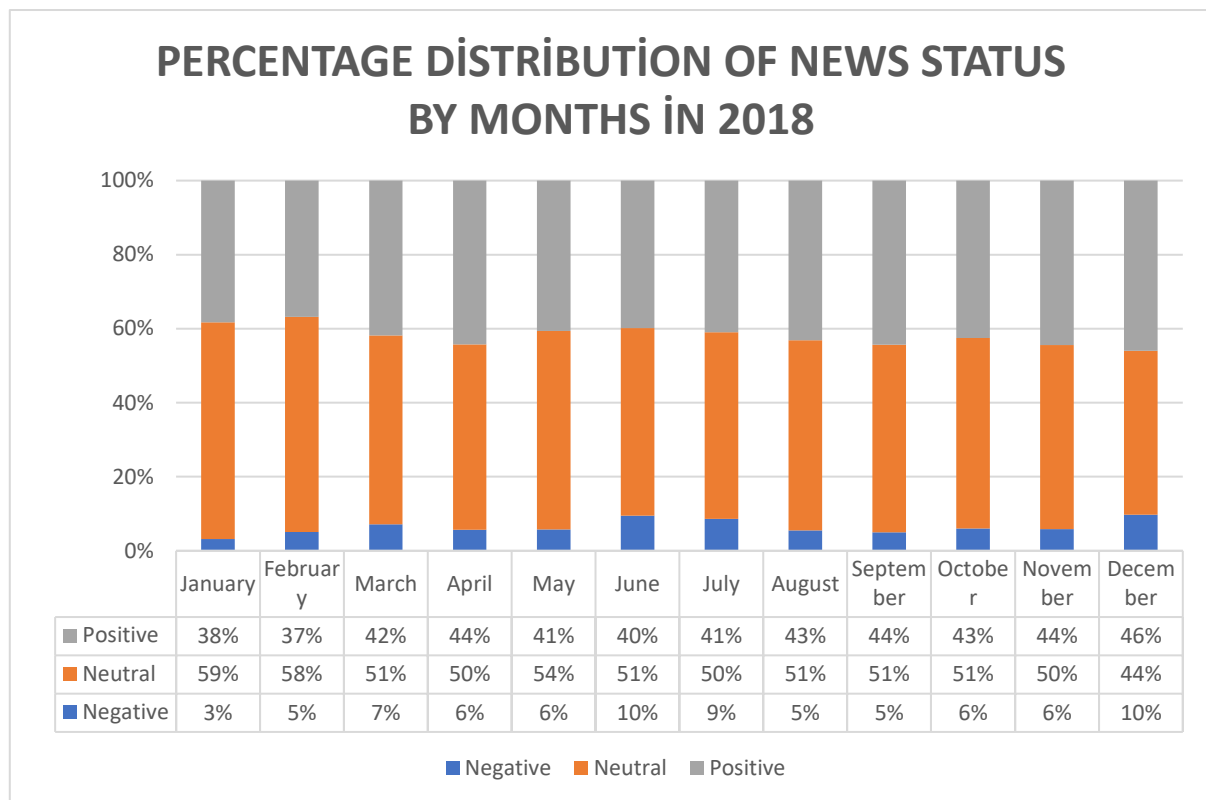


Graphic 14

Positive news index, which shows the transformation of perception of China in Turkish media in the year 2018 more clearly, is given in Graphic 15.



Graphic 15



Graphic 16

As shown in Graphic 15, in the positive news index for the year 2018, it can be observed that the increase in the number of total news monthly, and positive news index are mostly correlated. Over the course of the year, the first remarkable development in the number of news is observed in March. While there is an upward trend in the number of news in March, also an upward movement is observed in positive news index. When contents of the news during the period were analysed to make sense of the developments in the number of news and positive news index, it was observed that this was the period when trade war actually started. In this period, USA President Trump signed a circular that imposes new customs duties on China. With this circular, it was stated that the customs duties, amount of which could reach 60 billion dollars, target more than 100 products produced by China (DW, 2018a). In the news coverage of the period, headlines such as "Trump initiated the trade war against China" (Hürriyet, 2018b) also draw attention. China's responses to Trump's sanctions were also covered in Turkish press. News such as "Chinese Ministry of Commerce called on USA not to jeopardize the relations between two countries and act reasonably with regard to USA President Donald Trump's signing the circular that imposes additional tax duties on China." (Kabakcı, 2018). "Beijing declared their plans to impose 3 billion dollar tax on UAS products as retaliation to USA President Donald Trump's decision to impose 50 billion dollar customs duty on Chinese products" (BBC, 2018) were also widely covered in the press.

In March, developments of trade war are observed to be the most important fact for the increase in the amount of news. However, developments, which define the upward trend in positive news index, can be evaluated based on the bilateral cultural and commercial relations developing between Turkey and China. In this period, a cooperation agreement was signed between İş Bankası and China Development Bank (Yakışan, 2018). 23 Chinese students, who were students at the Turkish Department of the School of Foreign Languages at a university in China, came to Bahçeşehir University in Turkey to advance their Turkish education. Due to increasing tourism relations between the two countries, the press started to cover Chinese tourist news frequently. News such as “Chinese tourists' interest in Pamukkale” (Hürriyet, 2018a) were featured in agenda topics almost every day. News like a Chinese pop singer's pop song called "I want to take you to the romantic Turkey my love" being among the most listened songs in China (CNNTURK, 2018) had a positive effect on the upward trend of positive news index.

In April, there was an increase in the total amount of news. As indicated in Graphic 16, while there was a decrease in the rate of neutral and negative news, there was an upward trend in positive news index. When the coverage during the period was analysed to make sense of this situation, it was observed that news about the beginning of ‘2018 Turkey Tourism Year’ in China became a current issue in this period. In January 2018, Turkey Tourism Year was declared in China; however, tourism year gala was officially organised in April (AnadoluAjansı, 2018a).

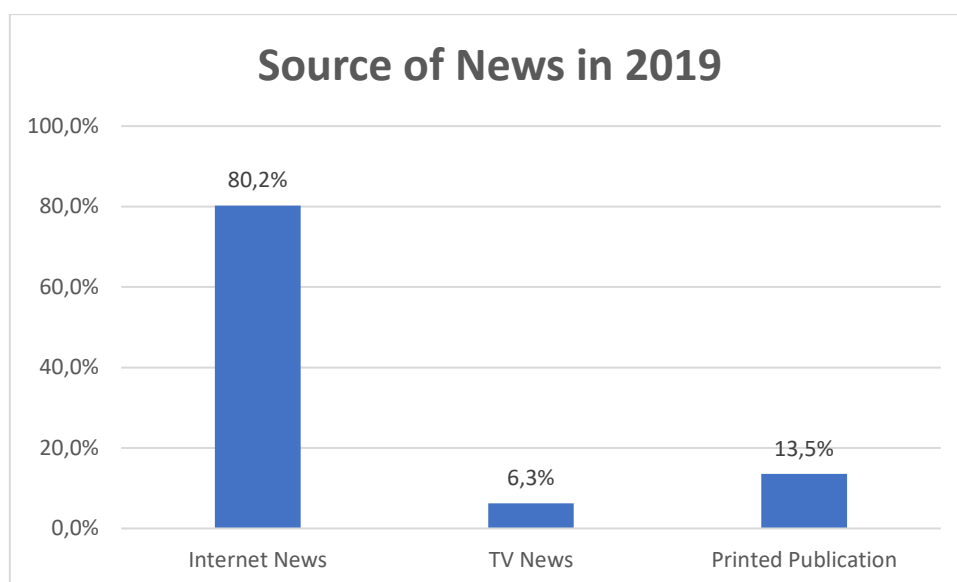
While there was a significant increase in the number of new in June compared to the previous months, there was a remarkable decrease in positive news index. When developments in June were analysed to explain this fluctuation in the index, it was observed that a new process started in the trade war between USA and China. In the news coverage of the period, USA President's accusations and damping threats to China draw attention. In the news coverage of the period, headlines such as “Trade war breaks out between USA and Chine” (Sancak, 2018), “Trade Wars are Beginning” (AmerikanınSesi, 2018) comes to the forefront.

In June 2018, while about 50.000 news about China were featured in Turkish media, this figure increased to about 93.000 in August. While there was a radical increase in the number of news, the rate of negative and neutral news decreased, and the rate of positive news increased. As far as news content in this period is concerned, it is observed that there is a serious improvement in the relations between Turkey and China at economic level. As far as news content in this period is concerned, it is observed that there is a substantial improvement in the relations between Turkey and China at economic level. (Sabah, 2018a). China's e-commerce giant

Alibaba made an important investment and acquired Trendyol (Sabah, 2018b). Turkey's Beijing Ambassador Abdülkadir Emin Önen became a topic in the news agenda with his statement "I call on Chinese businessmen to make investments in Turkey, where Asia and Europe intersect, and which is located at the heart of The Belt and Road Project" (AnadoluAjansı, 2018b). Attracting Chinese investment with Build-Operate-Transfer projects such as Nuclear Power Plant, 3 floored tube tunnel projects in İstanbul also started to be a part of the agenda in Turkey (DW, 2018b).

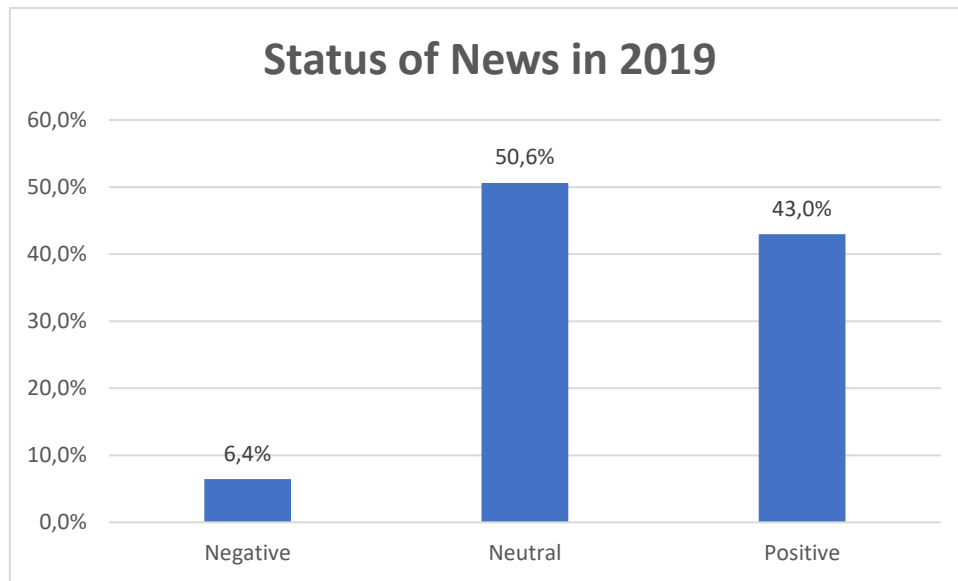
6.4 Perception of China in Turkish Media in 2019

The news covered in 2019 have a 50.4% share in total amount of news. 1.102.037 Chinese news covered in the year 2019 in total indicates a 46% increase compared to the previous year. Of all the news covered over the course of the year, 80.2% of them were featured in internet media, 13.5% in printed media and 6.3% in television.



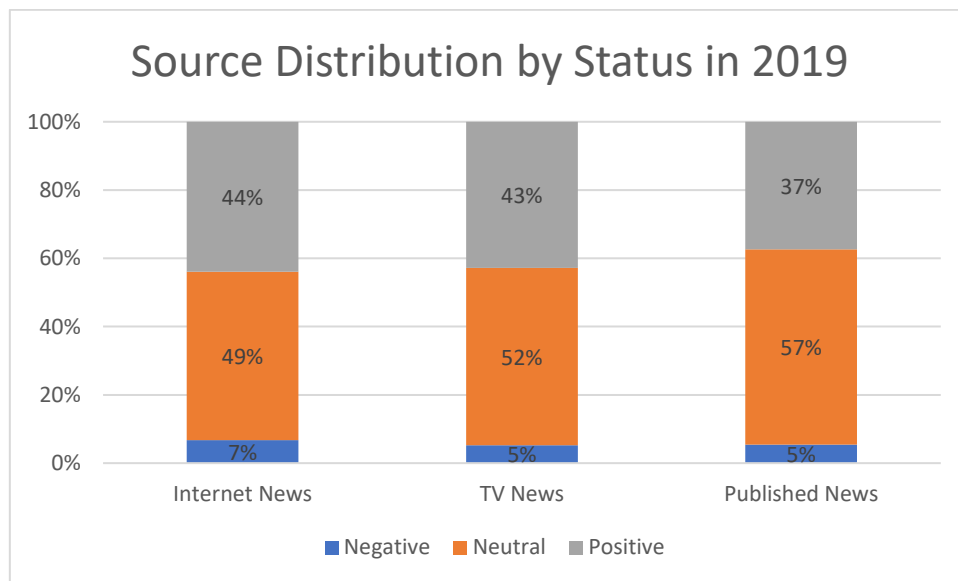
Graphic 17

50.6% of the news covered in the year 2019 were neutral news, 43% of them were positive news, and 6.4% of them were negative news.



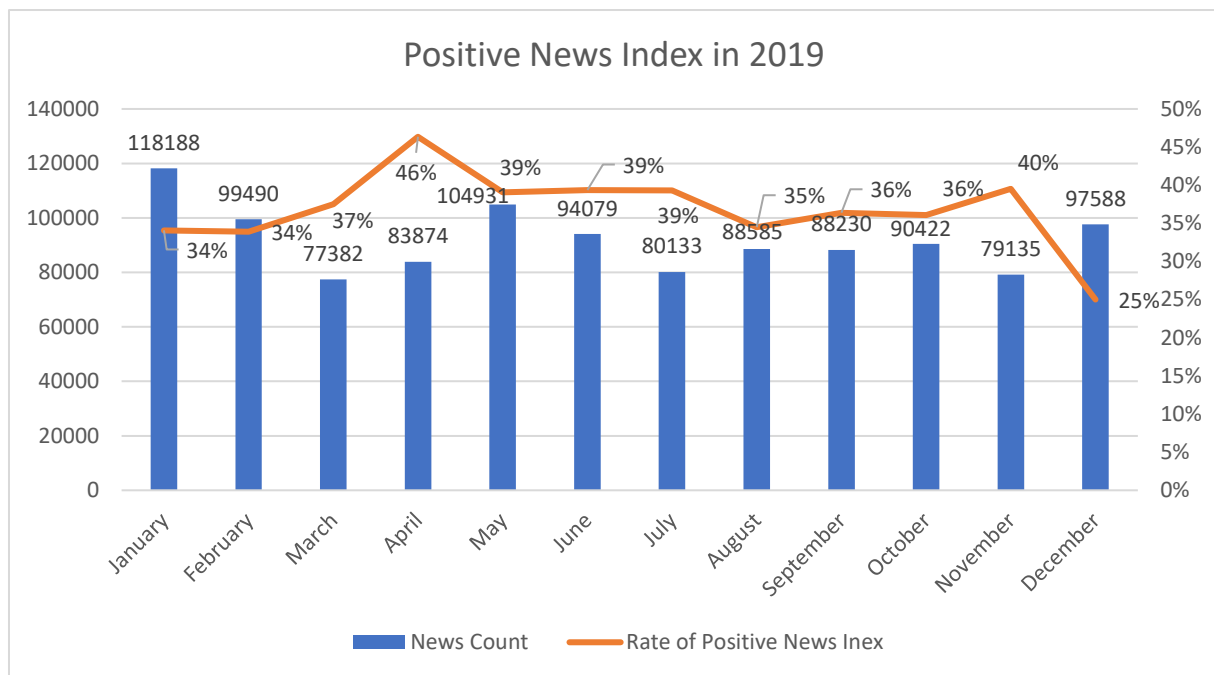
Graphic 18

When the results of the status analysis of these news were distributed according to the sources, the results presented in Graphic 19 were found.

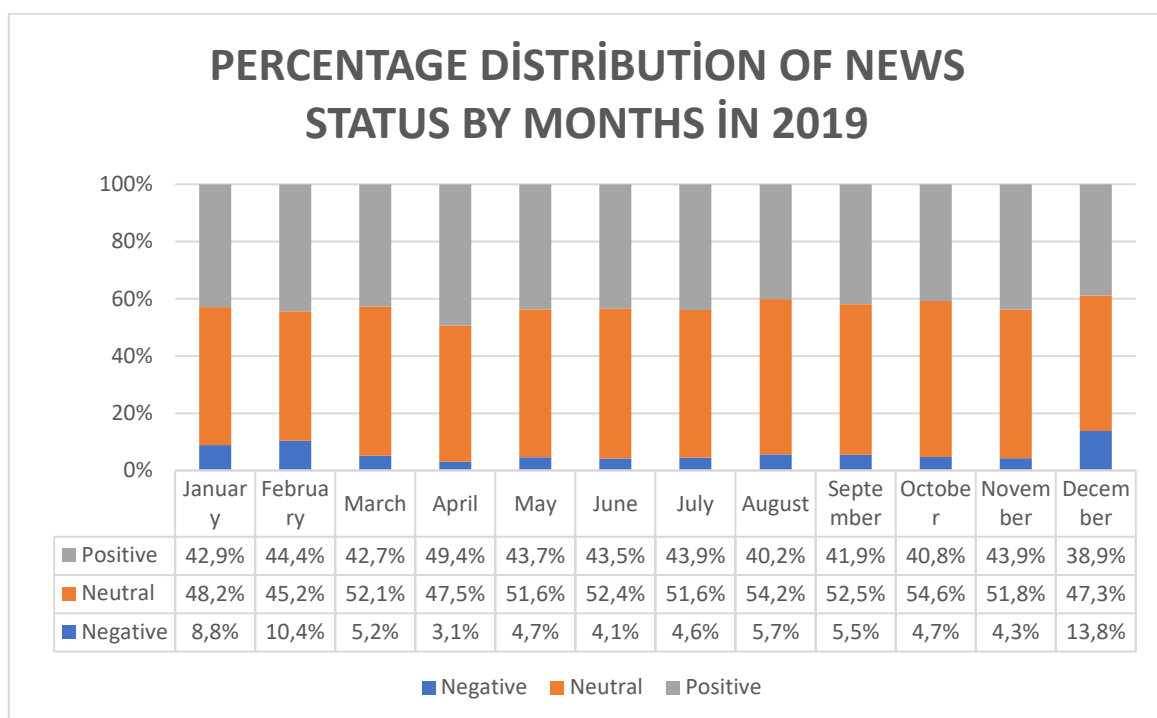


Graphic 19

Positive news index, which shows the transformation of perception of China in Turkish media in the year 2019 more clearly, is given in Graphic 20.



Graphic 20



Graphic 21

As shown in Graphic 20, in the positive news index for the year 2019, it can be suggested that the increase in the number of total news monthly, and positive news index are mostly correlated. January 2019 is the period in which the amount of news about China had the highest value compared to other research periods. There is no single agenda topic, which can help us to

explain this increase in January. News that affects the current topics of the agenda about subjects Technology, Foreign Policy, Economy and Xinjiang draw attention.

Firstly, under science and technology title, news about China's spacecraft Chang'e-4's and its successful landing on the invisible parts of the Moon (DW, 2019b) are among the positive contents featured in Turkish press.

In the field of foreign policy, statement of Chinese President Xi Jinping, who called Taiwan for unification under a single China, about their wish to unite in peace, but the fact that the right to use force is reserved (DW, 2019a) was among the developments that became a current issue in the agenda. The news about Taiwan leader Tsai Ing-en's rejecting this proposal by stating that the overwhelming majority oppose to "one country, two systems" order as a response to the above-mentioned statement is among the news that were widely covered in the press.

China's accepting a 5-year plan for warrants such as "Harmonising Islam with socialism, its Chineseization and encouraging patriotism" (BBC, 2019) comes to the forefront as the negative news of the period.

Statement by Murat Kolbaşı, the Chairman of DEIK, Turkey-China Business Council, "We are expecting the economic relations between Turkey and China" (Durak, 2019) is another remarkable development in January.

According to the results given in Graphic 20 and Graphic 21, April draws attention as a period when positive news show a significant increase. When news contents of the period were analysed, it was observed that second meeting of The Belt and Road Initiative was organized. Topics and contents widely covered in the press with headlines such as "Show of Power by Beijing for the Silk Road" (Hürriyet, 2019b), "The Belt and Road 2.0" (YeniSafak, 2019) were important sources for the increase of positive news. In addition to this, the fact that Sichuan Airlines started flights from Chengdu, the fourth biggest city in China, to İstanbul (Irtak, 2019), is among the positive news that were widely covered in the press as a development within the scope of tourism year. The subject was even introduced by Turkish press as a current issue in the agenda with enthusiastic headlines like "Good news from China... The Rush to Turkey begins" (Hürriyet, 2019a).

As shown in Graphic 21, while a decrease is observed in the rate of positive news in May and August, there is an increase in the rate of negative news. In December, it is observed that majority of the news, the number of which increased compared to the previous month, consisted

of negative news. December 2019 was a period in which the sharpest increase in negative news was observed in the whole period between 2016-2019.

When news contents were analysed in order to explain the periods in which positive news index showed a decrease, the remarkable negative contents in May were featured in a period when Huawei crisis, which can be considered as a new stage in the trade war between USA and China, started. Google's announcement that they stopped doing business with Huawei in the fields of hardware, software and technical services increase the tension between the two countries significantly. In this period, headlines like "Second stage in USA-China trade war: Technology war"(Günyol & Yanık, 2019), "Now the 'Huawei' Crisis Between USA and China" (AmerikanınSesi, 2019), "Huawei crisis: a diplomatic cold war of USA and China?" (Yıldızoğlu, 2019b) were featured in the agenda of Turkish media.

In August 2019, Hong Kong crisis was the main issue that increased the rate of negative news. In the third month of the protests against extradition, a chaos reigned over the streets. In this period, "Is Hong Kong becoming the 'New Cold War' platform?" (Yıldızoğlu, 2019a), "China's Hong Kong Predicament" (Korkmaz, 2019), "China's Hong Kong Representative:

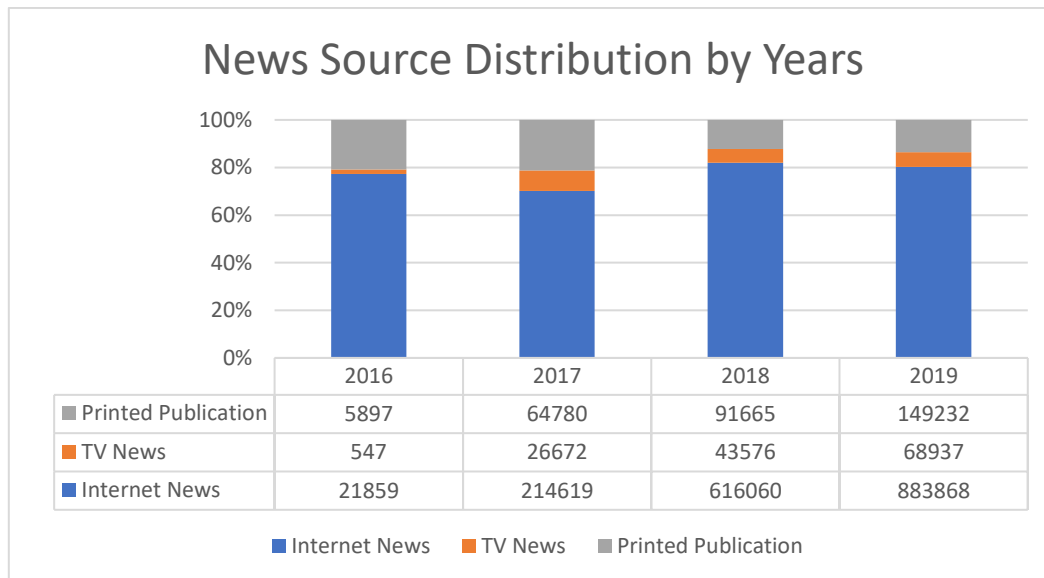
Hong Kong is going through the worst crisis since 1997" (Bağ, 2019a) were kept in the agenda for a long time.

In December, the tweet by Germany National Team footballer Mesut Özil about Xinjiang had a wide coverage in the press. News like "Mesut Özil's Reaction to the Muslims who keep quiet about China's East Turkistan policies" (Keleş, 2019), "Mesut Özil's post about East Turkistan frustrated China: Arsenal match will not be broadcast" (Bağ, 2019b) were widely covered in the press. Also, discussions on this subject continued throughout the month, and caused a radical increase in negative news contents. In addition to this, successive statements by USA Department of State about Xinjiang subject contributed to the increase of negative news contents. These news were covered in Turkish media under the headlines such as "Pompeo: Chinese Communist Party is trying to assimilate the culture and beliefs of its own citizens" (Allahverdi, 2019)

6.5 A Comparison of Perception of Chine in Turkish Media by Years

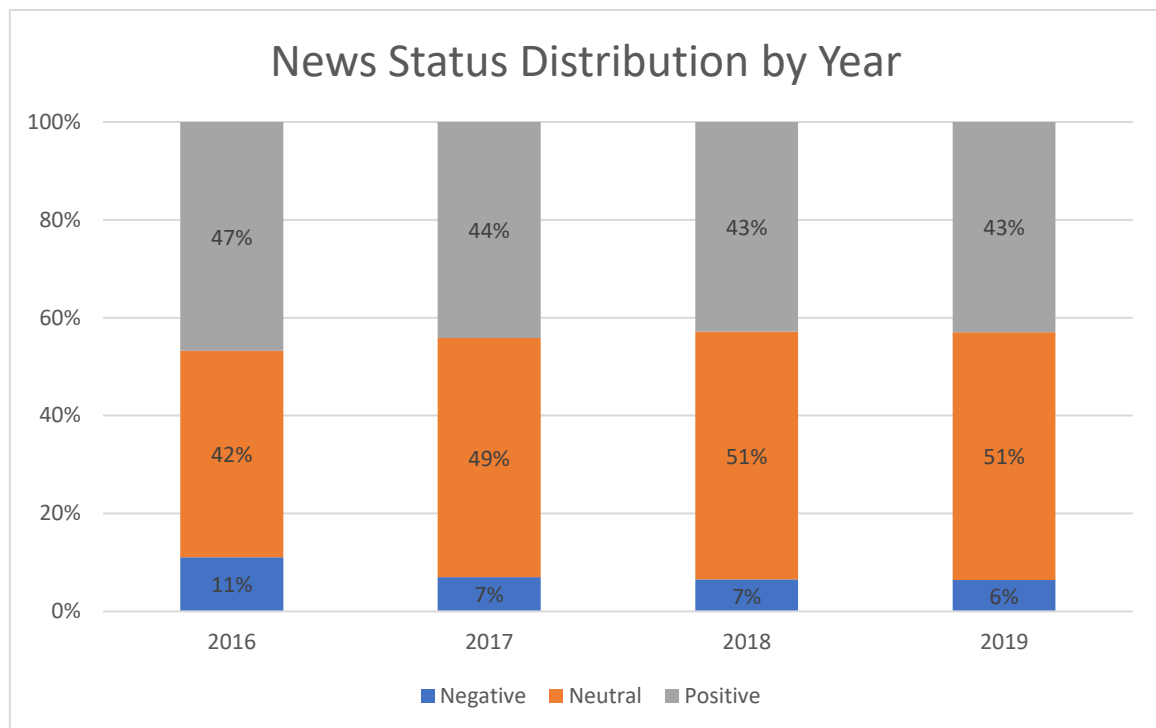
In this section of the study, how the perception of China in Turkish media transformed over the course of the years will be addressed following the analysis conducted for each year on a monthly basis.

Increasing trend in the number of news in the years 2017-18 and 2019 starting from the second half of 2016 was addressed in the previous section of the study. When the number of news was distributed according to the sources in the monthly analyses, high number of news from the internet came to the forefront. When the number of news by years was distributed according to the sources, as shown in Graphic 22, it is observed that news about China featured in internet media showed a radical increased over the course of the years. On the other hand, an increase is also observed in television and printed media by years.



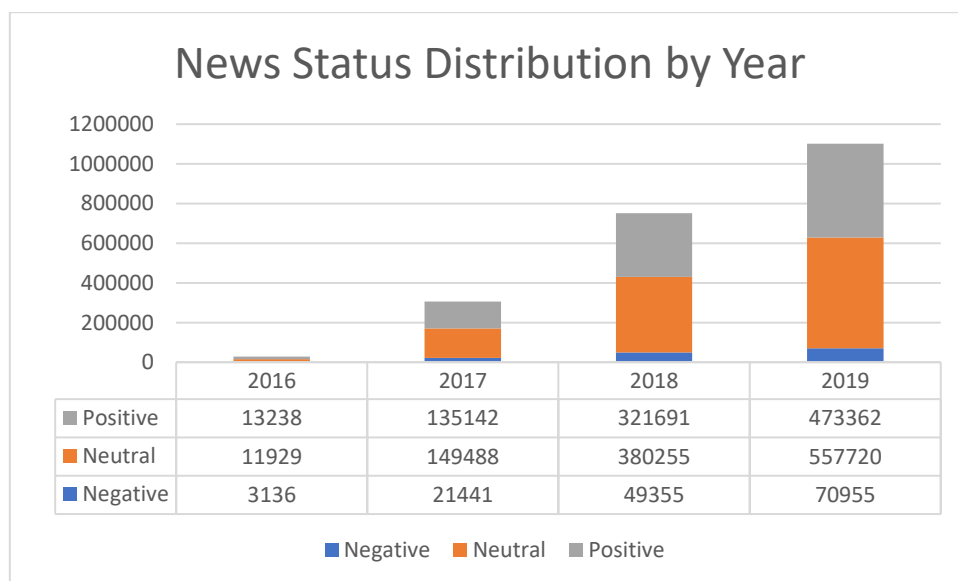
Graphic 22

In annual news status distribution graphic given in Graphic 23, a proportional similarity is observed in 2017, 2018 and 2019. We can suggest that the percentage share of neutral, positive and negative news for each year remained roughly the same between 2017, 2018 and 2019.



Graphic 23

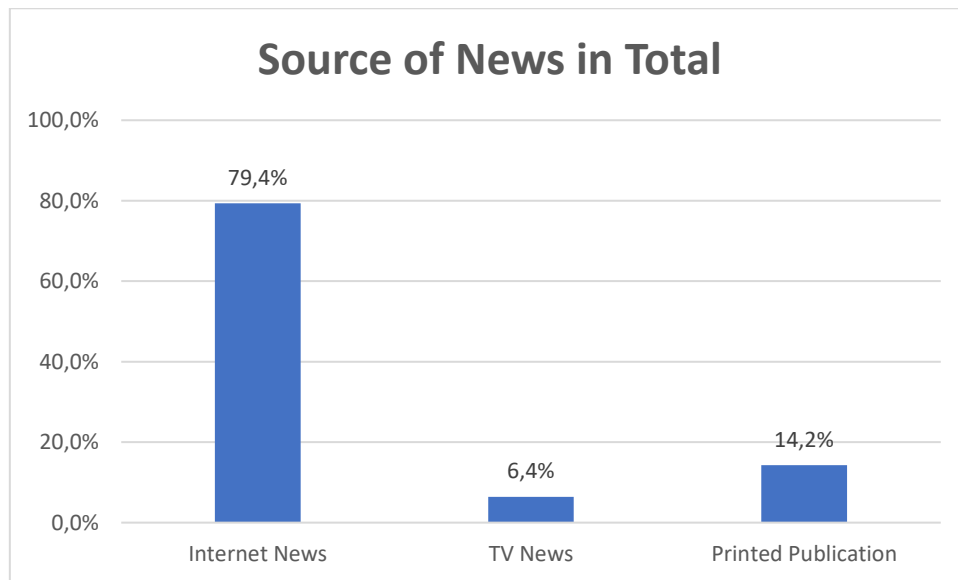
As shown in Graphic 24, there is a significant difference in yearly news status distribution. The level of positive news, particularly neutral news increased. During the period of the study, while the number of positive news about China was 943.433, the number of negative news was 144.887. In all the news, the number of positive news is 5.51 times more than the number of negative news.



Graphic 24

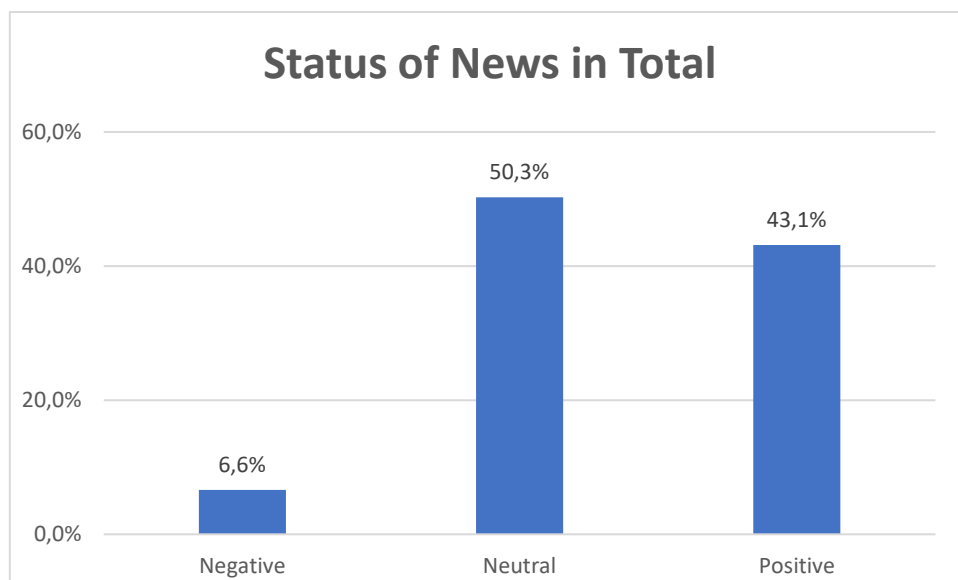
6.6 General Evaluations about the Perception of China in Turkish Media

Within the scope of the research the perception of China in Turkish media, 2.187.712 news about China between the years 2017-18-19 starting from the second half of 2016 were analysed. During this period, 1,736,406 news were collected from internet media, 139,732 news were collected from television, and 311,574 news were collected from printed media.



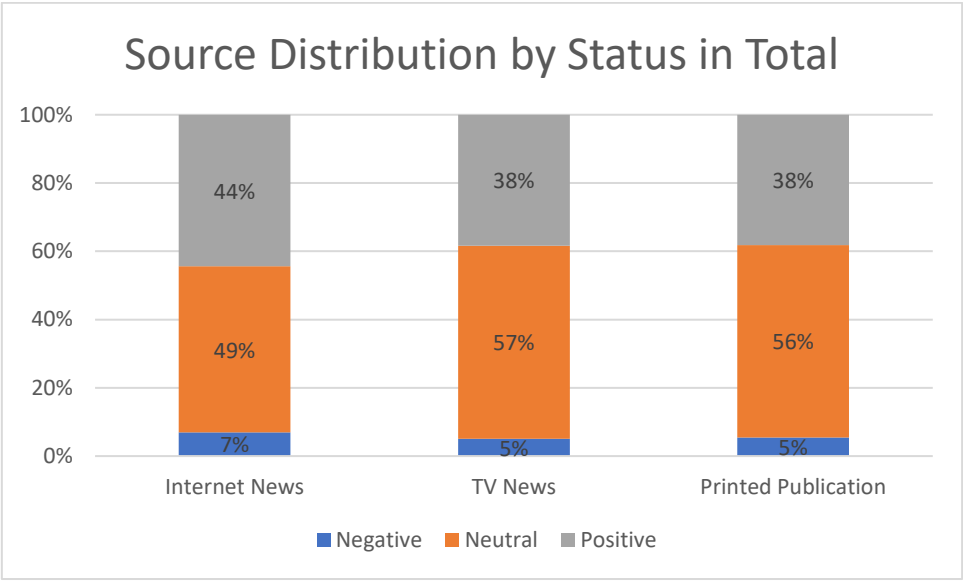
Graphic 25

In the news collected from all media 50.3 of them are neutral news, 43.1% of them are positive news and 6.6% of them were negative news. Considering the general picture, it is observed that positive news are covered significantly more than negative news.



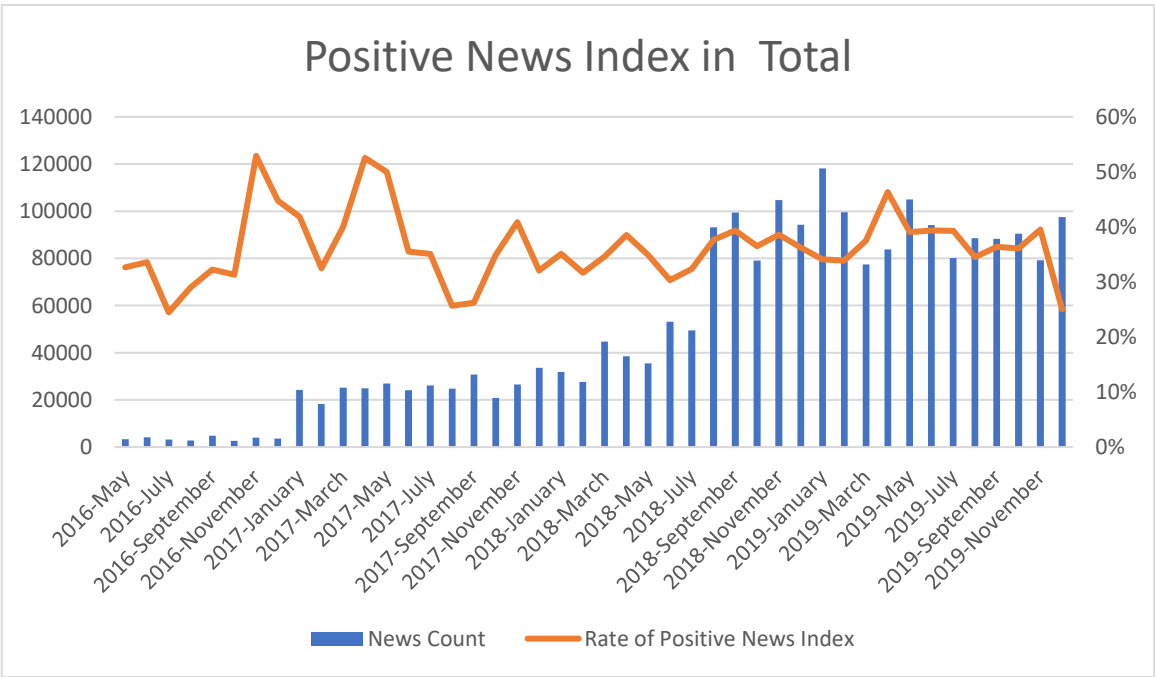
Graphic 26

When status analysis of these news was distributed according to the sources, the results presented in Graphic 27 were found.



Graphic 27

Results of monthly evaluated positive news index above, which covers all the periods, is given in Graphic 28. As far as cumulative results are concerned, it is observed that in the years 2016 and 2017, when the number of news was less, positive news index showed dramatic movements. In the years 2018 and 2019, when the number of the news is higher, positive news index trends in a more stable manner.



Graphic 28

In the research, the effect of total number of news and critical developments on the number of positive, negative and neutral news was modelled with ordinary least squares (OLS) regression model. Critical developments were determined based on the increase in the total number of news, sharp increase in the rate of positive news, and sharp increases in the rate of negative news. In each month, if there was a critical development, it was coded as "1", and if there was no critical development, it was coded as "0". If the critical development is due to negative news contents, it was coded as "-1". Our observation unit is 'months' and consists of 44 months between the dates May 2016 - December 2019. General significance of the model was achieved according to model selection criteria.

	Positive		Negative		Neutral	
	Coef.	P> t	Coef.	P> t	Coef.	P> t
t	-108.302	0.038	-76.18143	0.135	184.5634	0.004
Critical Developments	624.6079	0.091	-671.2934	0.066	46.68553	0.914
Total News Count	0.4664694	0.000	0.0906971	0.000	0.4428335	0.000
Constant	672.8584	0.224	512.6997	0.347	-1185.558	0.077
Number of Obs.	44		44		44	
F(3, 40)	1304.20		33.12		1221.80	
Prob > F	0.000		0.000		0.000	
Adj R-squared	0.9891		0.6914		0.9884	

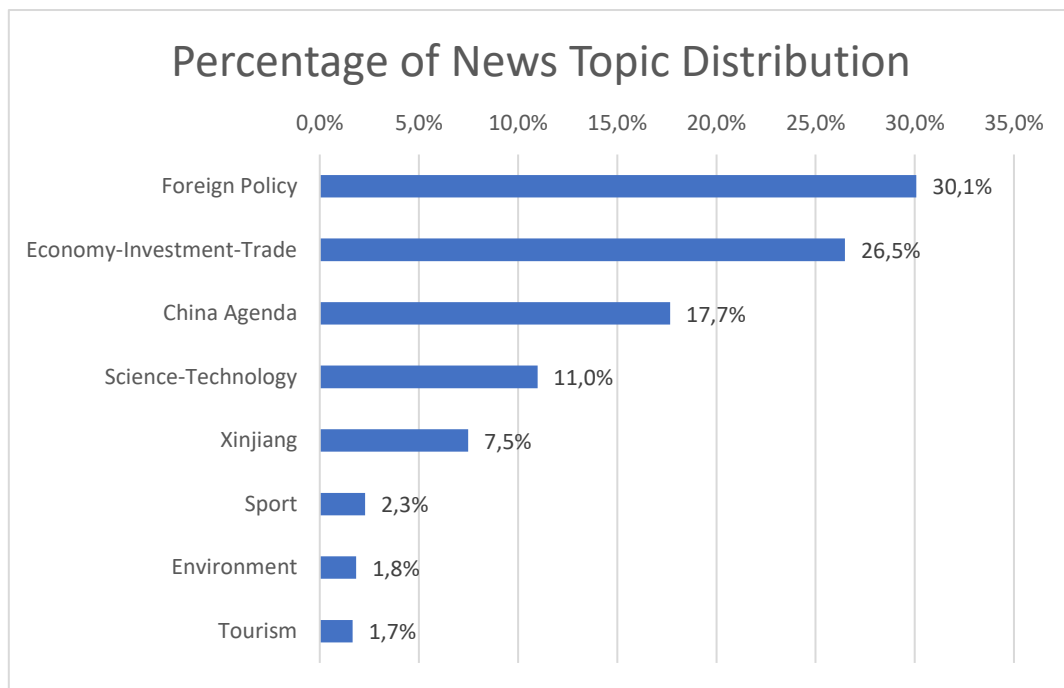
Table 3

According to the results presented in Table 3, when there is a positive critical development (critical development =1), number of positive news increases by 624.6079. The number of negative news decreases by 671.2934. Critical developments do not have a significant effect on neutral news.

When total number of news increases by 1 unit, number of positive news increased by 0.466. Number of negative news increases by 0.091. Number of neutral news increases by 0.443.

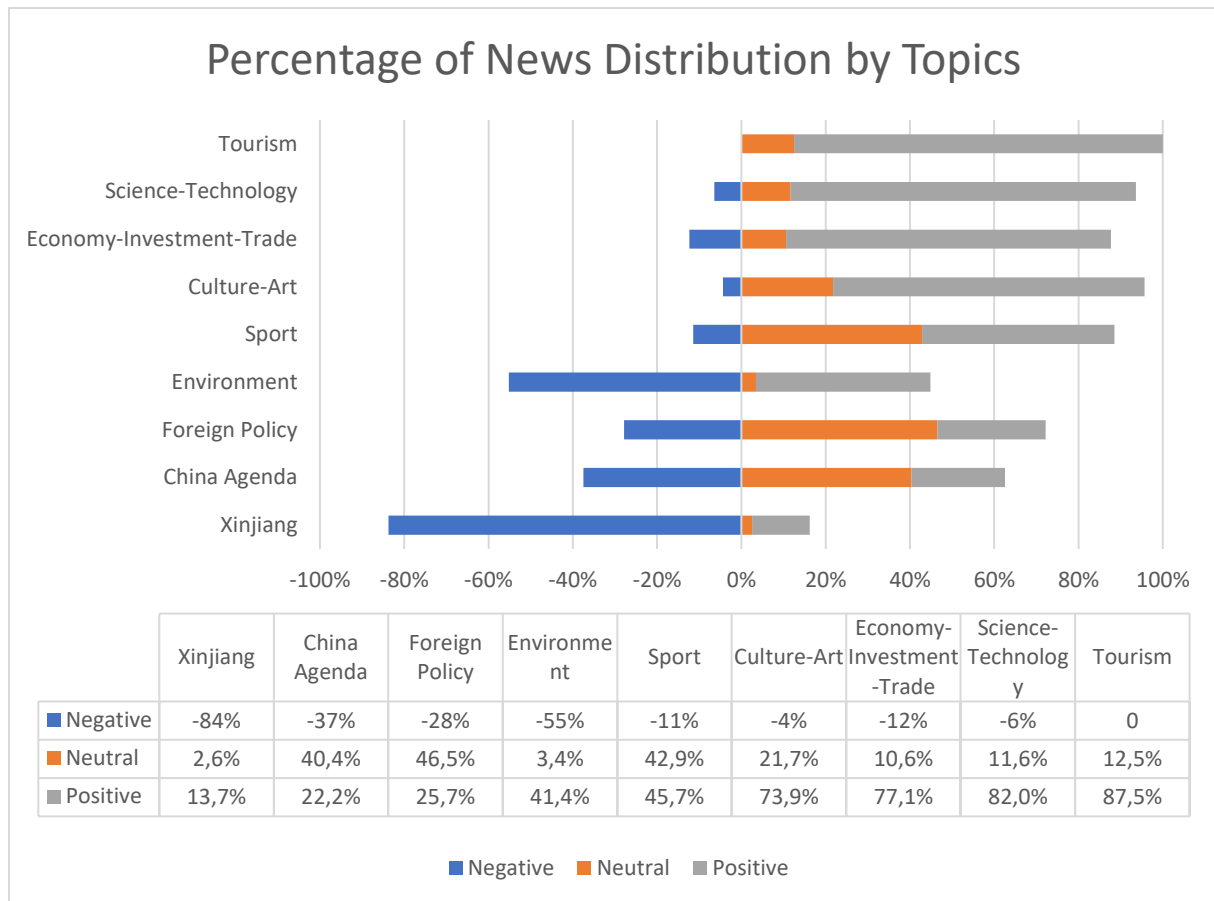
Corrected coefficient was calculated as 0.9891 in positive news model, 0.6914 in negative news model, and 0.9884 in neutral news model.

In the period of the study, 5000 samples were extracted from the big data for the subject distribution of the news. As a result of the study, as shown in Graphic 29, 30.1% of news about China consist of foreign policy contents, 26.5% of them consist of economy-investment-trade contents, 17.7% consisted of current issues of China, 11% consisted of science and technology contents, 7.5% consisted of Xinjiang contents, 2.3% consisted of sports contents, 1.8% consisted of environment contents, and 1.7% consisted of tourism contents.



Graphic 29

Results in Graphic 29 indicate that China's development centred public diplomacy activities can find a response in Turkish media. News on economy-investment and trade are the second most popular topics after news on foreign policy topics.



Graphic 30

According to the results given in Graphic 30, 77.1% of the news on economy-investment and trade consist of positive news. On the other hand, negative news have a 12.3% share. Based on these results, it can be suggested that China's development centred public diplomacy activities find a positive response in Turkish media.

In addition to this, other topics that mostly contribute to the image of China in Turkish media are science-technology (81.9%), culture-art (73.9%) and tourism (87.5%). Negative news mostly focus on the topics Xinjiang (83.5%) and environment (55.2%).

In this section of the study, the transformation of the perception of People's Republic of China in the periods before and after Turkey officially joined The Belt and Road Initiative will be investigated. Transformation of the perception of China will be addressed based on two public opinion polls conducted in the years 2016 and 2019.

A word cloud visualization of terms associated with China. The most prominent words are 'Crowded', 'Chinese', 'Goods', 'Cheap', 'Products', 'Production', 'Foreign', 'Replica', 'Hardworking', 'Developed Country', 'The Great Wall of China', 'Food Culture', 'Slant Eyes', 'Technology', 'Economy', 'Communism', 'Poverty', 'Japanese', 'Torture', 'Import/Export', 'Far East', 'East (Tibetan)', 'Labor', 'Hostility', and 'The Great Wall of China'.

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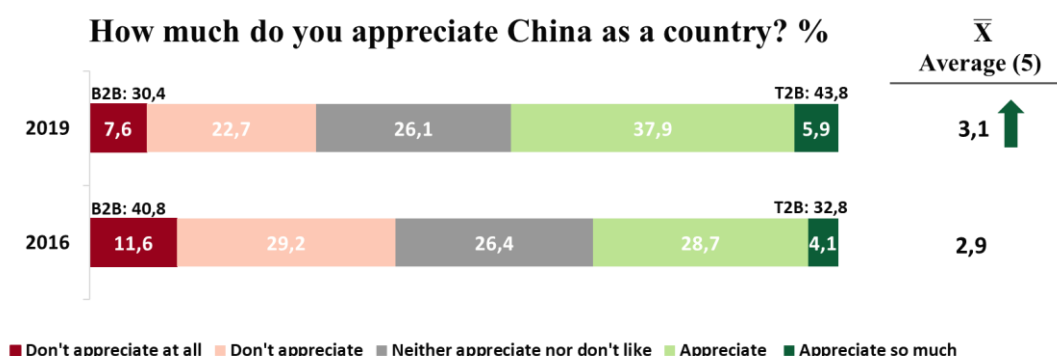
Based on the word clouds, as a common characteristic in the years 2016 and 2019, the most common words that comes to mind when one thinks of China are "crowd" and "Chinese made products". However, while the third most common emphasis in 2016 was "cheap goods" in 2016, this emphasis transformed as "technology" in 2019. Based on this, it can be argued that China, which was coded as the producer of cheap products in 2016, had a transformation that allowed it to be associated with the production and use of technology.

The level of appreciation towards China and the transformation of the level of appreciation over the course of the period between 2016-2019 are shown in Graphic 31.

In 2016, the rate of the participants who answered "don't trust at all", and "don't trust" was 40.8%, this rate decreases to 30.4% in 2019. On the other hand, while the rate of participants who answered "Thrust so much" and "Do trust" was 32.8% in 2016, this rate increases to 43.8% in 2019.

When the average of the answers given to the question "How much do you appreciate China as a country?" was taken, the rate of appreciation was found as 2.9. When the same question was asked in 2019, the average of the answers given increased to 3.1.

A positive increase is observed in the trust of the research participants towards China over the course of the period between two researches. Results of t-test, which was conducted to measure whether this increase is significant, is given in Table-6 below. According to these results, the increase between the years 2016-2019 is significant.



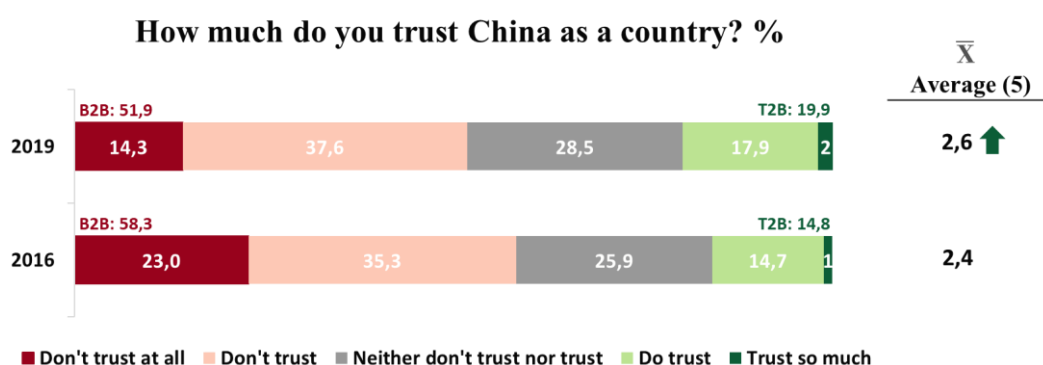
Graphic 31: How much do you appreciate China as a country?

The level of appreciation towards China and the transformation of the level of appreciation in the years 2016-2019 is shown in Graphic 32. According to these results, while the rate of participants who said they "don't trust at all" and "do not trust" to China was 58.3% in 2016, this rate decreased to 51.9% in 2019. According to the results, although there is a positive

increase in the level of trust, which can be considered as significant, more than half of research participants stated that they "do not trust at all" or "do not trust" China. On the other hand, while the rate of participants who stated they "trust" or "trust so much" was 14.8%, this rate increased to 19.9% in 2019.

When the average of the answers given to the question "How much do you trust China as a country?" was taken in 2016, the level of trust was found as 2.4. When the same question was asked in 2019, the average of the answers given increased to 2.6.

The level of participants' trust to China increased positively over the course of the period between two researches. Results of t-test, which was conducted to measure whether this increase is significant, are given in Table-6 below. According to these results, the increase between the years 2016-2019 is significant.



Graphic 32: How much do you trust China as a country?

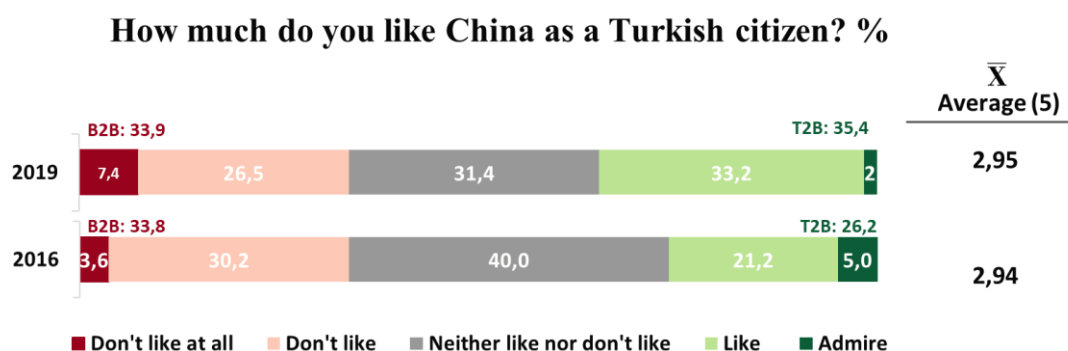
The level of liking towards China and the transformation of the level of liking in the years 2016-2019 is shown in Graphic 33. According to these results, while the rate of participants who said they "don't like at all" and "do not like" China was 33.8% in 2016, this rate roughly remained the same in 2019. While the rate of participants who stated they "like so much" and "like" China was 26.2% in 2016, this rate increased to 35.4% in 2019.

Another remarkable aspect of the research is that, while the rate of participants who stated they "neither like nor don't like" China was 2016, this rate decreased to 31.4% in 2019. It is observed that this difference focused on the participants who stated they "like so much" and "like" China in 2019.

When the average of the answers given to the question "How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen" was taken in 2016, the rate of liking China was found to be 2.94. When the

same question was asked in 2019, the average of the answers given was 2.95. There was a slight increase between two researches over the course of the period from 2016 to 2019.

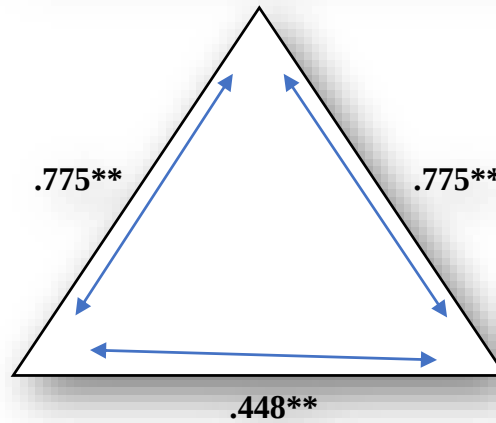
Results of t-test, which was conducted to measure whether this increase is significant, are given in Table-6 below. According to these results, the slight increase between the years 2016-2019 is not significant.



Graphic 33: How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?

In 2016, the difference between the averages of answers given to questions "How much do you appreciate Chinas as a country?" "How much do you trust China as a country?" and "How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?" ($p < 0.01$) is significant. According to the results given in Table 4, in the research conducted in 2016, coefficient of correlation between the answers given to the questions "How much do you appreciate China as a country?" and "How much do you trust China as a country?" is .725. Coefficient of correlation between the answers given to the questions "How much do you appreciate China as a country?", and "How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?" was calculated as .725. Coefficient of correlation between the answers given to the questions "How much do you trust China as a country?", and "How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?" is .448.

1.How much do you appreciate China as a country?



2.How much do you trust China as a country?

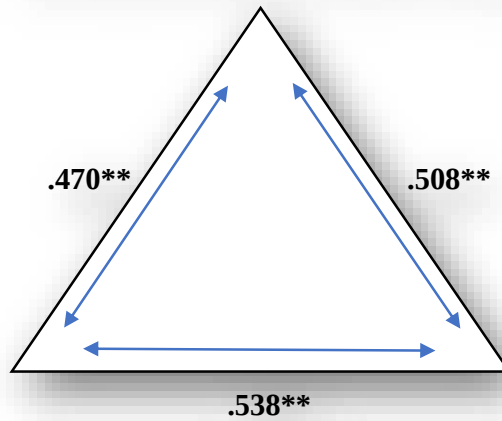
3.How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Correlation Test for 2016

Also in 2019, the difference between the averages of the answers given to the questions "How much do you appreciate China as a country?", "How much do you trust China as a country?" and "How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?" ($p < 0.01$) is significant. According to the results given in Table 5, while the coefficient of correlation between the answers given to the questions "How much do you appreciate China as a country?" and "How much do you trust China as a country?" was .470, coefficient of correlation between the answers given to the questions "How much do you trust China as a country?" and "How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?" was .538, and coefficient of correlation between the answers given to the questions "How much do you appreciate China as a country?" and "How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?" was calculated as .508.

1.How much do you appreciate China as a country?



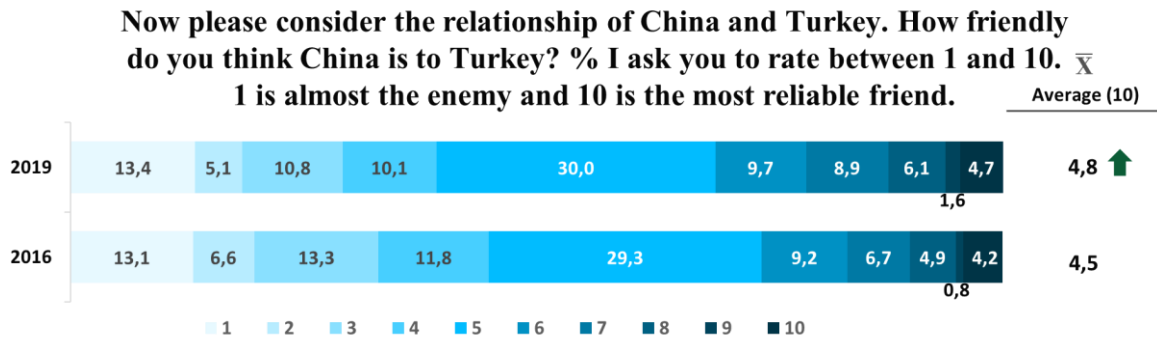
2.How much do you trust China as a country?

3.How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5: Correlation Test for 2019

The answers given to the question about how friendly China is to the participants of the study are shown in Graphic 34. According to 10-point Likert type answers, while the average of the answers was 4.5 in 2016, this rate increases to 4.8 in 2019. According to the results of t-test given in Table-6, the increase in the year 2019 is significant.



Graphic 34: How friendly do you think China is to Turkey? % I ask you to rate between 1 and 10. 1 is almost the enemy and 10 is the most reliable friend.

	Year	Mean	S.D.	t	p	Difference
How much do you appreciate China as a country?	2019 2016	2000 2400	1.063 1.079	9.729	0.000	.316
How much do you trust China as a country?	2019 2016	2000 2400	1.001 1.024	6.444	0.000	.198
How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?	2019 2016	2000 2400	.978 .924	.461	0.645	.013
Now please consider the relationship of China and Turkey. How friendly do you think China is to Turkey?	2019 2016	2000 2400	2.339 1.666	30.898	0.000	1.871

Table 6: T-test

Sense index is shown in Table-7. Sense index was calculated by weighing the answers to the questions "How much do you appreciate China as a country?", "How much do you trust China as a country?", "How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?", which were addressed in order to measure the perception of China in Turkish public opinion, with the factor loads of each question.

According to the results of the model, index value of women is 0.144 less than men ($p < 0.05$). Effect of age on index value was calculated as 0.130. Accordingly, sense index value decreases as age increases.

On the other hand, education variant does not have an important effect on sense index value. Socio-economic status was regressed as dummy variable. Accordingly, index value of questionnaire participants in C1 status is 0.283 less ($p < 0.10$). The effect of being in C2 status on index value is -0.307 ($p < 0.05$). Index value of questionnaire participants in D status is 0.320 lower ($p < 0.05$). Index value of questionnaire participants in E status is 0.70 lower ($p < 0.01$).

Dummy variable was created for observations related to the year 2019. Accordingly, index values of 2019 are 1.339 higher compared to 2016 ($p < 0.01$).

	Sense Index	
	Coef.	P> t
Female	-0.144	0.015
Age	0.130	0.000
Education	0.025	0.108
Socio Economic Status		
B	-0.200	0.199
C1	-0.283	0.057
C2	-0.307	0.043
D	-0.320	0.036
E	-0.70	0.000
2019	1.339	0.000
Constant	5.568	0.000
Number of Obs.	4400	
F(9, 4390)	59.83	
Prob > F	0.000	
Adj R-squared	0.107	

Table 7

Another question of the research is intended to understand the strengths of China as perceived by the participants. Open ended answers were received for the question "What do you think are the strengths of China?". The answers obtained from these answers were formed into word clouds for the years 2016 and 2019 as shown in Figure 4 and Figure 5. According to these results, it is observed that in labour force and economy are mostly stated as the strengths of China in 2016, while technology was also stated among the strengths in addition to labour force and "economy" in 2019.



Figure 4: What are the strengths of China? (2016)



Figure 5: What are the strengths of China? (2019)

In the research, in order to understand how weaknesses of China are evaluated, open-ended answers were received from the question "What do you think are the weaknesses of China? ". Word clouds were created from the answers given in the years 2016 and 2019 as shown in Figure-6 and Figure-7. For weaknesses of China, common results are observed in both years. Atheism, crowd, human, rights and bad quality products are significantly observed in both years. Another remarkable aspect is the fact that, in 2019, low quality products comment is observed significantly less compared to 2016.



Figure 6: What are the weaknesses of China? (2016) **Figure 7:** What are the weaknesses of China? (2019)

The answers given to the question "How did your opinion about China changed over the last three years" addressed for understanding the change of the perception of China between the years 2016-2019 are shown in Figure 8 and Figure 9.

According to the results given in Figure, in 2016, 51.3% of participants stated that their opinion is positive, 48.7% of participants stated that their opinion is negative. Over the last three years, 8% of those who stated that their opinion is positive, also stated that their opinion changed to negative. 38.4% of participates stated that their opinion remained positive for the last three years. 4.9% of participates stated that their opinion has become more positive in the last three years.

Among participants, who stated that that their opinion is negative, 11.9% of them stated that their opinion has become further negative in the last three years, 32.3% of them stated that their negative opinion remained the same in the last three years, and 4.5% of participants stated that their opinion changed positively in the last three years.

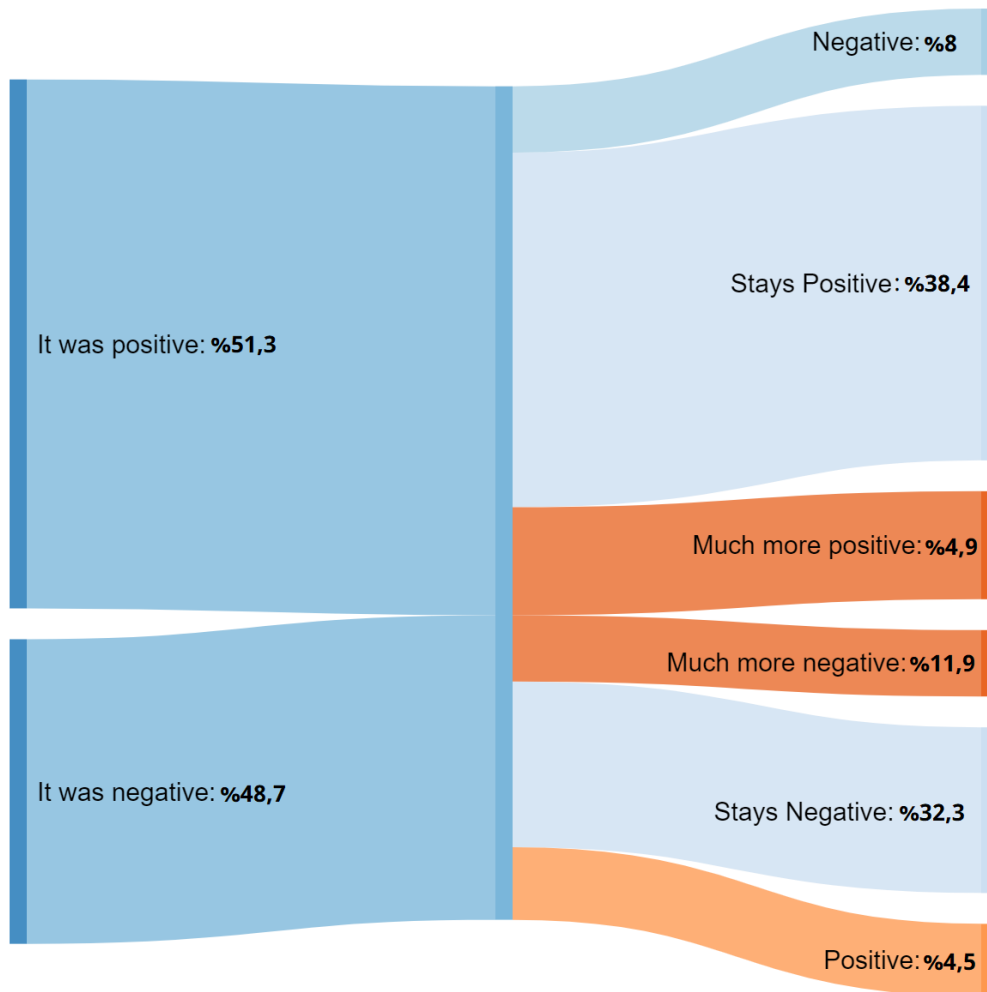


Figure 8: How has your opinion about China changed when you think about it over the last three years?
(2016)

According to the results given in Figure 9, in 2019, 63.9% of participants stated that their opinion is positive, 36.3% of participants stated that their opinion is negative. Over the last three years, 8.5% of those who stated that their opinion is positive, also stated that their opinion changed to negative. 41.3% of participants stated that their opinion remained positive for the last three years. 14.1% of participants stated that their opinion has become more positive in the last three years.

Among participants, who stated that that their opinion is negative, 8% of them stated that their opinion has become further negative in the last three years, 19.9% of them stated that their negative opinion remained the same in the last three years, and 8.4% of participants stated that their opinion changed positively in the last three years.

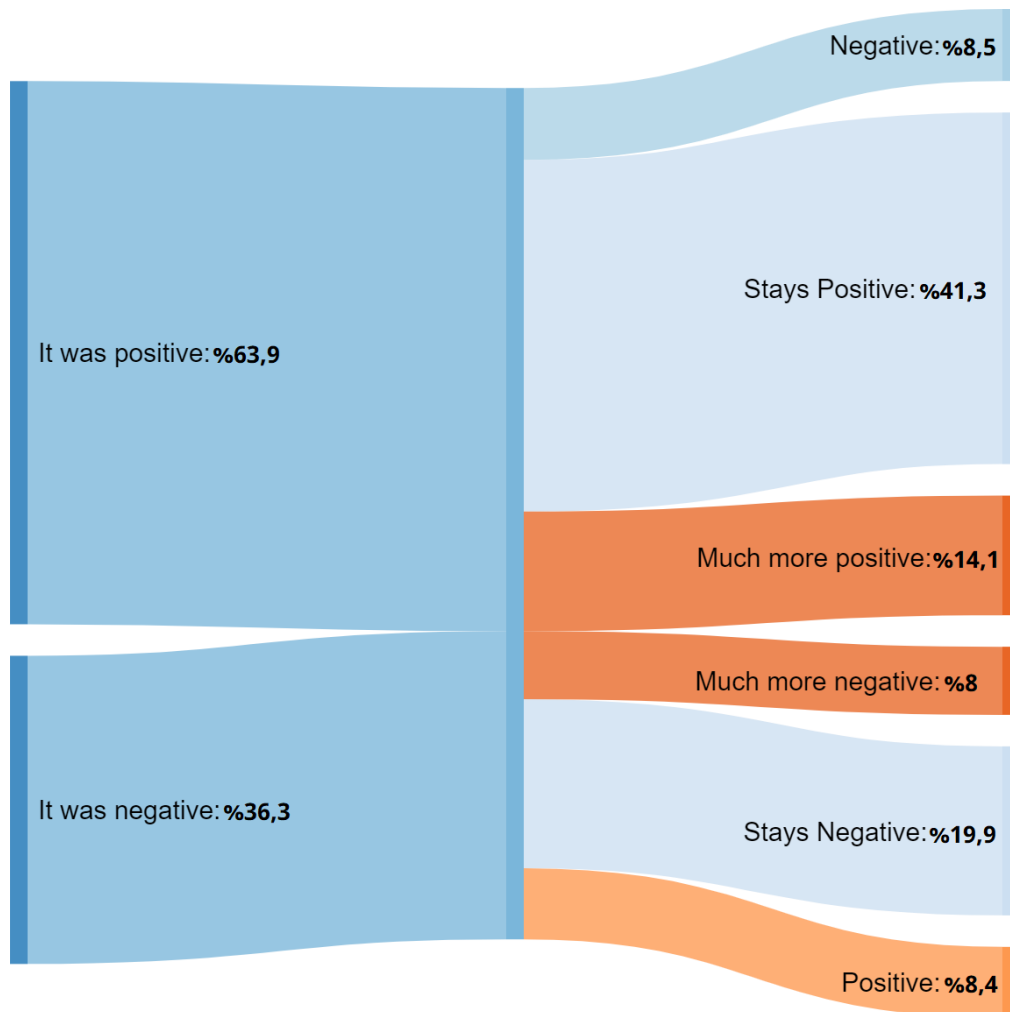
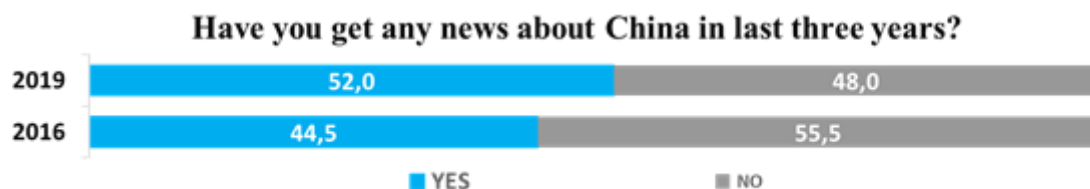


Figure 9: How has your opinion about China changed when you think about it over the last three years?
(2019)

The answers given to the question "Have you got any news about China in the last three years" in the researches is shown in Graphic 35. According to these results, while the rate of participants who stated that they got any news about China in the last three years was 44.5% in 2016, this rate increased to 52% in 2019.



Graphic 35

Open ended answers given to the following question "What were the subjects of the news you got about China?" are shown in Figure 10 and Figure 11 in the form of word clouds.

While answers 'Uighurs, economy and natural disasters' come to the forefront in 2016 as shown in Figure 10, the words Uighurs, Economy and Trade War are more predominant in the answers given in 2019. Technology news also increased in 2019. Uighurs are the most covered subjects in the news for both periods. According to the information provided in Graphic 29 in the section called the perception of China in Turkish media, the percentage of news about Uighurs in total number of news is 7.5%. However, news about Uighurs is stated as the subject, which the participants are most aware of. Based on this, it can be suggested that the level of awareness about the news on Uighurs is higher. According to the results given in Graphic 29, news on economy are the second most covered subject in the news with a percentage of 26.5% in the total number of news. Answers given to this research question also suggest that news on economy are among the subjects, which the participants are more aware of.

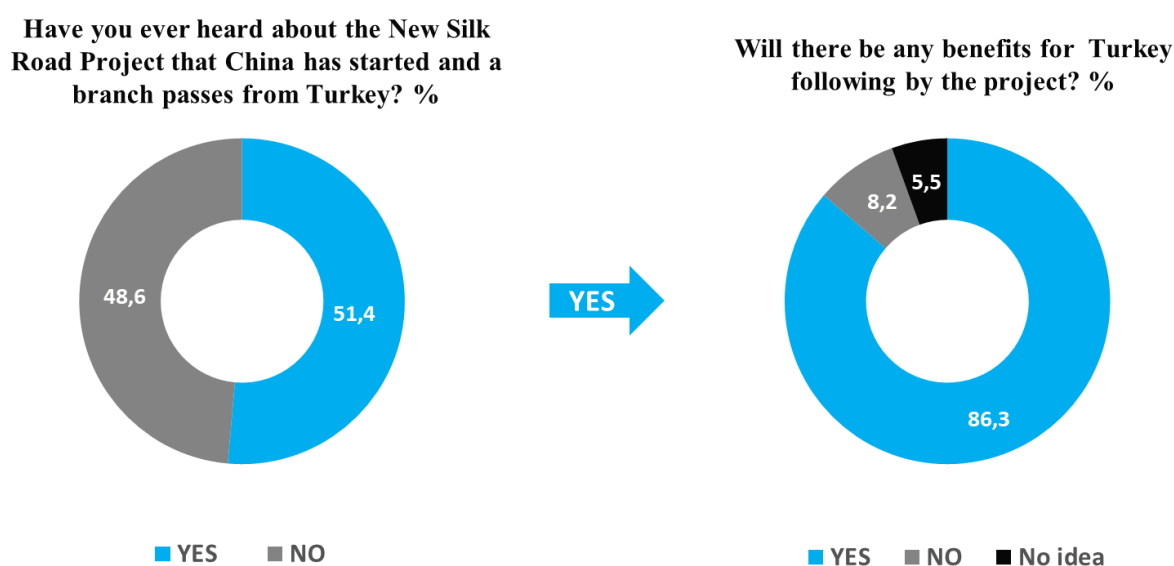


Figure 10: “What were the subjects of the news?” (2016)



Figure 11: “What were the subjects of news?” (2019)

The answers given to the questions "Have you ever heard about the New Silk Road Project that China started and a branch passes from Turkey?" and "Do you think this project will bring any benefits to Turkey?" in the research conducted in 2019, are given in Graphic 36. According to these results, 51.4% of participants stated that they had already heard about The New Silk Road Project. While 86.3% of those who had already heard about the project, stated that this project would bring benefits to Turkey, the rate of participants who stated that it would bring no benefits to Turkey was 8.2%.

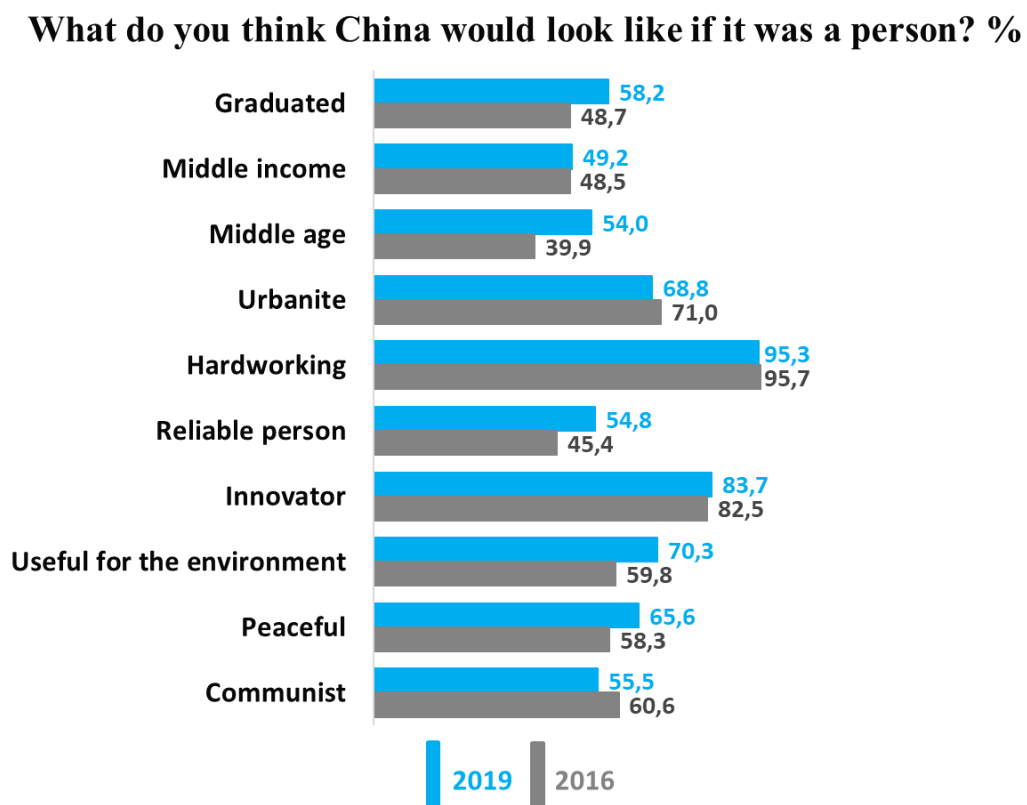


Graphic 36: Have you ever heard about the New Silk Road Project that China has started and a branch passes from Turkey? / Will this project bring any benefits to Turkey?

Humanisation model about China was applied in the research. In this model, the questions "If China were a human, what would its education status be?" "If China were a human, what would its level of income be?" "If China were a human, how old would it be?" "If China were a human, would it be an urbanite or villager?" "If China were a human, would it be hardworking or lazy?" "If China were a human, would it be a reliable person or an unreliable person?", "If China were a human, would it be innovator or conservative?", "If China was a human, would it be a person who is useful for the environment or a person who is harmful to the environment?", "If China were a human, would it be a peaceful person or an aggressive person?", "If China were a human, would it be a communist person or a capitalist person?" were asked in the years 2016 and 2019.

The most common options selected in the answers given to these questions were subject to humanisation model for both years. These results are shown in Graphic-37. According to these results, China was humanised as a university graduate, middle income, middle age, urbanite, hardworking, reliable, innovator, useful for the environment, peaceful and communist individual.

One remarkable aspect of these results is the fact that majority of the participants stated that they considered China unreliable in 2016, 54.8% of participants of the study conducted in 2019 stated that they considered China reliable.



Graphic 37: What do you think China would look like if it was a person?

CHAPTER 8: Conclusion

Public diplomacy, which emerged as a new style and method in the field of diplomacy, also has the potential to bring a new framework to classical foreign policy analysis. As discussed in previous chapters, public diplomacy is addressed through the concepts of soft power and diplomacy. From this point of view, public diplomacy is the implementation of soft power instruments that are relevant to the public and where non-state actors are at the forefront. Public diplomacy is about the way state policies are communicated to the public and gaining the consent of the public. From this point of view, the basis of public diplomacy is that states use public diplomacy to persuade and influence public opinion.

Public diplomacy has introduced a number of new methods for diplomacy. Among these, areas such as image, perception, news management and agenda setting stand out. Public diplomacy has enabled instrumental transformation in diplomacy through fields such as the media, new media and social networks. As it can be understood from here, values in public diplomacy, the stories of countries, foreign policy itself and how foreign policy is expressed have become the analysis tools of public diplomacy. In this context, the framework of public diplomacy analysis is built on the individual. This framework, built in the analysis of public diplomacy, reveals some units of analysis such as perception and thought. Thus, the relationship between the state-society and the individual in public diplomacy is considered as a new level of analysis. It can be claimed that the realism-liberalism and constructivist approaches among international relations theories of the relationship between the state-society and the individual are gathered under one roof.

Theoretical framework of the thesis is built on the basis of constructivism, one of the mainstream theories of international relations. One of the reasons of adopting constructivist approach is the fact that global system has been restructured since 1980's. Constructivism provides a theoretical ground for public diplomacy since civil actors participate in the foreign policy process within the framework of generating software as a civil society based and public oriented diplomacy method. Inclusion of historical-cultural and social elements in the field of public diplomacy and foreign policy is the social aspect of foreign policy. In other words, constructivism, which is one of the mainstream theories of International Relations, was considered as the most suitable theoretical framework for the sociology of foreign policy. Also, the fact that ideas, values, norms and culture came to the forefront starting from the 1990's coincides with constructivist approach's assumption that global politics is an intellectual production in addition to its material aspects. The increasing influence of the public opinion in

global politics with the effect of globalization led states to prioritize the social aspects in their foreign policies. As a result of this, states transformed their diplomacies in the fields of public diplomacy and soft power. The transformation in the field of diplomacy is manifested in states' tendency to establish new public diplomacy institutions, which generate soft power, in addition to the ministries of foreign affairs.

Based on this, conceptual framework of public diplomacy is first associated with the concept of soft power. Accordingly, it is suggested that public diplomacy is a method and policy that mobilizes soft power. The relationship between public diplomacy and soft power was analysed, and it was found that Nye, who developed the 'soft power' concept, resolved his analysis on the problematic of how soft power works by introducing public diplomacy. Diplomacy, the second concept of conceptual framework, and public diplomacy were associated in terms of their effects and on a transformative basis. It was argued that, as diplomacy evolved as a result of this transformation process, traditional diplomacy continued its existence, but public diplomacy emerged as a complementary to classical diplomacy for meeting its needs. It was also argued that diplomacy transformed into a public oriented and civil society based form as new subjects are introduced into the field of diplomacy, agenda topics expanded and new actors of diplomacy emerged.

Based on this conceptual framework, the research adopted the method of analysing the social aspect of foreign policy, which involves soft power, instruments and actors rather than classical hard power mechanisms, within a constructivist framework in terms of implementing development based foreign policy at the centre of public opinion and media in the context of China's The Belt and Road Initiative.

The research first evaluated the historical background of Chinese public diplomacy in terms of changes of mentality, style and method-instruments. Today, China gained an important place in international arena with its culture and civilisation. The effect soft power policy, which has been implemented by China especially since 1990's is quite significant. Today, China is among the world's largest economies. One of the reasons of this is the soft power policy implemented by China.

China achieves its foreign policy goals in international relations by using its attractiveness element, which is created within the framework of soft power policy, without exerting military or coercive power to other countries. In this way, China pursues a foreign policy strategy, which aims to convince other countries that China's interests and their interests are the same. The

economic support provided by China was a predominant factor especially in the improvement of relations between China and African countries.

'The Belt and Road Initiative', which is the modern version of Silk Road, an important trade line between Asia and Europe, has been one of the most assertive initiatives of the century in commercial and economic terms and on global scale by creating a double corridor between three continents including access by land and sea. This breakthrough has become the focus of not only commercial and economic expectations, but also public diplomacy activities of China.

Xi Jinping, the President of China, stated that the initiative consists of 5 principles. Improving monetary circulation, enhancing road links, promoting barrier-free trade, accelerating policy communication, and encouraging the understanding between people and societies. According to the data shared by Xi Jinping, the Chinese President who announced the project in 2013, the periphery of the railway line, which is called 'economic belt', is home to 3 billion people. Therefore, the line is regarded as the world's biggest 'economic market'. "The Belt and Road" initiative, which essentially aims to connect Asia, Africa and Europe, encompasses infrastructure investment projects of billions of dollars including power transmission line projects. When the project was first announced, China declared that it would provide credits amounting to 8 trillion dollars to several countries, and granted billions of dollars to some organizations in the initial years of the project. Silk Road Infrastructure Fund: 40 billion dollar, Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank: 100 billion dollar, and New Development Bank: 100 billion dollar. Beijing spent more than 200 billion dollars for the infrastructure of Silk Road excluding the grants, and it is estimated that total cost of its new giant project will reach 1.4 trillion dollar until 2027.

Being the world's second biggest economy with its dominance in global economy, China transforms this model, which provided significant contributions in the progression of economic developments, despite the increasing conservative measures and decreasing demand in the world after global crisis. This economic growth model, which prioritizes export, high savings and investments, is in the process of transforming into domestic consumption and high added value based production model. This transformation process affects China's position in global economy in the medium and long term, and presents opportunities for its relations with Turkey, like all the countries, which China is in an economic relations. Especially the tensions with USA and some of EU countries, makes it necessary for Turkey to consider alternative alliances.

The Belt and Road Initiative offers important opportunities for Turkey-China relations. Anatolia is one of the most significant crossroads of the Silk Road, which starts from the territory of the People's Republic of China. Therefore, The BRI is important for both countries. From the perspective of China, Turkey is an important country due to its geostrategic location, its political, historical and cultural connections with Caucasasia, African countries, Central Asian Turkish Republics; its membership to international organizations such as NATO, OSCE and CICA. On the other hand, from the perspective of Turkey, collaborating with China with the mobilization of Silk Road provides opportunities for improving and balancing economic and commercial relations with China, attracting more investment and tourists, transfers of technology, strengthening relations with Central Asia and taking a more active place in Asian market.

Turkey plays a key role for the actualization of The BRI. In addition to acting as a link between Asia and Europe due to its location, its proximity to energy and water resources, and its location with regard to energy corridors, has made Turkey one of the most significant countries of the initiative.

Considering the high level of foreign currency and investment capacity accumulating in China for years, and the importance attached by China to foreign investments, it can be suggested that China may provide the investment and financing Turkey needs. At this point, The Belt and Road Initiative's importance for Turkey increases further. Investment in several areas including transportation, logistics, energy, infrastructure in a sense coincides with the needs of Turkey. The willingness of ICBC, one of the world's largest banks which recently started operating in Turkish finance sector, and Bank of China to finance giant projects, which are of significant important for Turkey, will make it easier to attract investment to Turkey, and more Chinese companies to transfer their experiences in relevant fields to Turkish markets. The fact that number of Chinese companies increased after these banks started operating in Turkey supports this argument. In this regard, it is certain that, like developing countries, Turkey also needs foreign investments in its development process. Policies to be implemented for increasing foreign direct investments needed in this process will lead the creation of the necessary strategy.

Development-Based Public diplomacy plays a momentous role in China's positioning its country image in the public opinions of other countries, and persuading the public opinion of other countries. It is observed that China concentrated its activities on this field, particularly with The BRI countries. The question of China's development based public diplomacy activities affected the public opinion in Turkey is the main subject of this research.

In this context, perception of China in Turkish media was addressed in the first section of the empirical study, which addresses the subject at two levels. Printed media, internet media and television broadcasts were followed starting from the second half of 2016 through the years 2017-2018 and 2019.

Within the scope of the research, it was observed that the number of news published/broadcast about China increased exponentially every year in this time period. Since 2016, Turkish media has started to focus more on China. It was concluded that the image of China in Turkish media improved according to 2,187,712 news, which were subject to content analysis throughout the research period. Vast majority of news in this time period consist of "neutral" and "positive" news. Exponential increase of neutral news every year, contributed to the increase of contents, which provide information about China, update the public about new developments and daily news, and raise awareness. Positive news, which show a significant increase over the course of the years, also helped improving the awareness about China positively.

On the other hand, "trade-economy and investment" news, which can be directly related to China's development-based public diplomacy activities implemented in connection with The Belt and Road Initiative, is the topic, which was covered most after "foreign policy" news. Also, majority of these news have a "positive" expression. Based on this, it can be suggested that China's development-based public diplomacy activities found a positive response in Turkish media.

In the second section of the empirical study, the subject of how perception of China transformed in Turkish media with The Belt and Road process. It was concluded that the perception of China in Turkish public opinion improved based on the comparison between the first public opinion poll, which was conducted in 2016, that is, before Turkey officially joined The Belt and Road Initiative, and a public opinion poll conducted in 2019.

It was observed that there was a significant increase in "trust" "appreciation" and "liking" towards China during the research period. Also, a significant increase was observed in the rate of persons, who consider China as Turkey's friend.

In addition to this, remarkable transformations were also observed in the values and meanings attached by Turkish public opinion to China as a country. China, which was coded as the producer of cheap and low quality goods in 2016, is now remembered as the country, which develops and markets technology in 2019. While economy and labour force were considered as

the strengths of China in 2016, technology was also considered as a strength of China in addition to economy and labour force.

According to public opinion polls conducted before and after The Belt and Road Initiative, China succeeded in improving its country image within a relatively short period of time.

Based on these results, it is observed that China's public diplomacy activities increased in parallel with its economy growth and its increasing influence on global politics. It can be argued that the soft power policy pursued by China has become largely successful based on Turkey example.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Factor Analysis Results of the Public Survey for 2016

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,689
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1624,587
	df	3
	Sig.	0,000

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
How much do you appreciate China as a country?	1,000	,639
How much do you trust China as a country?	1,000	,669
How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?	1,000	,680

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1,988	66,256	66,256	1,988	66,256	66,256
2	,533	17,776	84,032			
3	,479	15,968	100,000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix^a

	Component
	1
How much do you appreciate China as a country?	,825
How much do you trust China as a country?	,818
How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?	,799

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Appendix 2: Factor Analysis Results of the Public Survey for 2016

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,690
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1431,520
	df	3
	Sig.	0,000

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
How much do you appreciate China as a country?	1,000	,641
How much do you trust China as a country?	1,000	,669
How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?	1,000	,701

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2,011	67,047	67,047	2,011	67,047	67,047
2	,534	17,787	84,834			
3	,455	15,166	100,000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix^a

	Component
	1
How much do you appreciate China as a country?	,837
How much do you trust China as a country?	,818
How much do you like China as a Turkish citizen?	,801

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

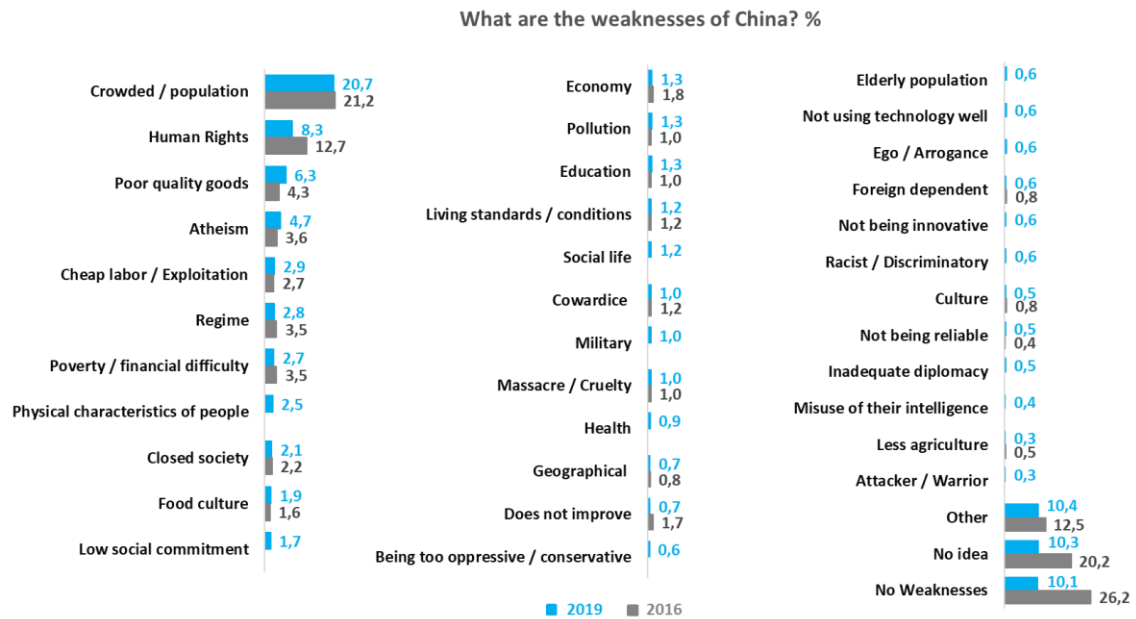
Appendix 3: “What comes to your mind when you think of China?”



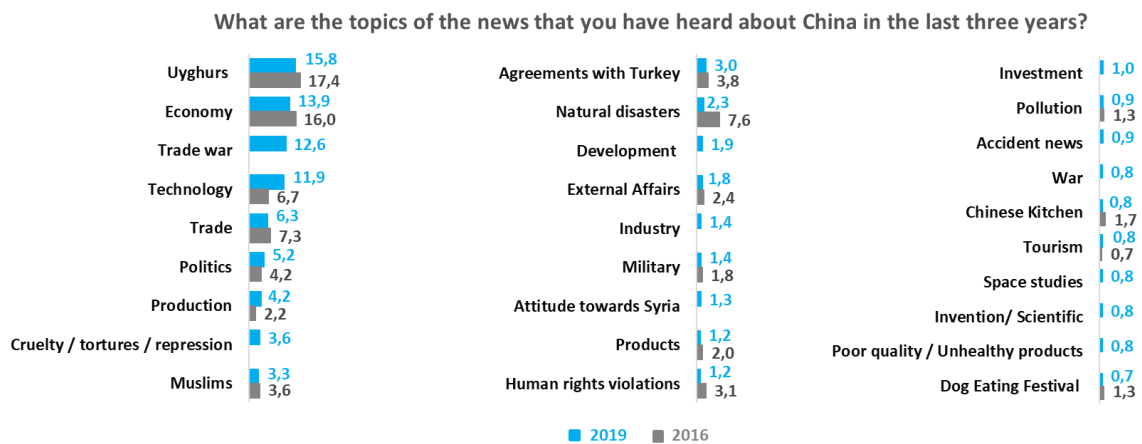
Appendix 4: “What are the strengths of China?”



Appendix 5: “What are the weaknesses of China?”



Appendix 6: “What are the topics of the news that you have heard about China in the last three years?”



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