

**The Professionalization of  
Journalism in China:  
A Case Study of *Southern  
Weekend***

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## **Introduction: the Commercialization and Political Role of Chinese Newspapers**

Prior to Deng Xiaoping's Open Door policies, all media outlets in China served as a propaganda mouthpiece for the party-state, informing the public of party ideology and official decisions.<sup>1</sup> In the 1980s, the party-state loosened its control on the media because officials understood that in order to compete with "international media groups and face the global struggle for public opinion," they had to strengthen domestic media through commercialization.<sup>2</sup> In order to foster engaging and competitive media products, the government allowed media groups to privatize their models of operation, adopt new compensation systems, restructure their assets, and create joint ventures.<sup>3</sup>

The government halted commercialization of journalism in 1989 because the conservative faction won over and purged journalists and editors for the slightest connection with Tiananmen protests.<sup>4</sup> The media did not dare report on hard news until Deng Xiaoping brought economic reform back to life with his symbolic visit to Shenzhen in 1992.<sup>5</sup> Media reform accelerated in the 1990s and sales of metropolitan tabloids rose while sales of the serious party newspapers fell.<sup>6</sup> These relatively commercialized newspapers initially supplemented the readers with entertainment, cultural, and economic news.<sup>7</sup>

Not only did commercial newspapers expand content diversity, commercial newspapers enjoyed more credibility among readers than their party counterparts.<sup>8</sup> In the 1990s, some responsible journalists took an individual initiative to supervise public officials, influence public opinion, and create solutions to social problems

through hard-hitting reports. Commercialized newspapers later institutionalized the production of controversial hard news. Provincial propaganda bureaus and party papers allowed their respective commercial newspapers to report on political issues as long as they brought in revenue.<sup>9</sup> Since commercial newspapers provided various narratives and explanations, the increased commercialization affected the party's ability to guide and shape public opinion.<sup>10</sup> Soon, staffs of commercial newspapers were often caught in between conflicting orders from their "two masters"; not only did they have to produce permissible content for the party-state, but also popular content for the public.<sup>11</sup>

Ever since former premier Zhao Ziyang incorporated the term "supervision by public opinion" (*yulun jiandu*) in his report, the media's role as a supervisor has been officially endorsed in annual reports of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.<sup>12</sup> However, the party-state sought out to manipulate the media's power since rather than increase media freedom.<sup>13</sup> The CPPCC reports often coupled "media supervision" with the party-state's ultimate power to "guide public opinion," a euphemism for media control.<sup>14</sup> Some departments of the government still believe that "implementing the supervision of public opinion creates instability and factions."<sup>15</sup> As a result, civic journalists and editors rarely received support from the party-state when practicing supervising journalism.

Since the political environment do not reward newspapers that engage in controversial hard news narratives, journalists and editors' sense of moral responsibility served as their biggest motivation to produce in-depth news.<sup>16</sup> Some

journalists and editors aimed to influence politics by producing hard news through investigation techniques and political suggestions hidden in editorials.<sup>17</sup> Even traditional central media, such as *Workers Daily*, *Legal Daily*, and *China Youth Daily* saw an increase in activist editors and journalists.<sup>18</sup> They continued to serve as social guidance for the people, but this time for increased civic participation own rather than the party-state's ideology by questioning party lines and advocating for legal awareness.<sup>19</sup>

This paper seeks to explore the limits of civic journalism and hard news production in China's ever-changing media environment.<sup>20</sup> To this day, commenting or reporting certain events that differ from the party's narrative exceeds the Chinese definition of "mainstream" news and faces limitations. These boundaries have varied from time to time due to different reasons. This paper will specifically dwell upon the politics between the people in charge of newspapers that uphold civic values and the party-state. How have responsible journalists and editors gained more freedom of speech and promoted their values and politics by exercising their media power? More importantly, why do they pursue these goals in face of a stifling and ruthless party-state?

This paper will discuss these questions by examining the prime example, *Southern Weekend*. Created in 1984, *Southern Weekend* is the successful forerunner of civic journalism in China and garners international reputation for influencing judicial outcomes, speaking for unheard voices such as AIDs victims, and deterring sociopolitical crimes.<sup>21</sup> The newspaper started up in Guangzhou, a niche that

prioritized commercial interests and welcomed media openness more readily than other regions.<sup>22</sup> *Southern Weekend* thus enjoyed relatively more political freedom and established its brand mission for stretching the party-state's limits.

*Southern Weekend's* different levels of political involvement can be traced chronologically. Journalists eagerly influenced politics through sensational reports during the sensational period from 1996 to 2002; while from 2003 onwards, during the professionalization period, *Southern Weekend's* reports have become more evidence-based and consequently more moderate. The concept of professionalization the paper uses is different from educational qualifications journalists receive in universities; rather, it is rather a style of reportage that *Southern Weekend* claimed to have adopted in order to influence politics in a more sophisticated fashion. In general, people who work in the journalism industry have an equivocal explanation for the concept of professionalism and do not share the same values with *Southern Weekend*.<sup>23</sup> Practical implications of professionalism are still unclear because efforts to discuss media supervision and journalistic values have been restricted by the government, such as recently banned annual Public Opinion Supervision Conference.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, reasons for *Southern Weekend's* transition shed light on the relationship between Chinese media and the party-state in general: Chinese media report on fact-based, institutional-related news in order to increase the quality and significance of their reports and reduce political risks from different factions.

### **History of *Southern Weekend's* Transition**

Contrary to *Southern Weekend's* reputation as an active participant in Chinese politics, it started out as a weekly entertainment tabloid. Southern Daily Newspaper Group (now renamed as the Southern Media Group) created *Southern Weekend* in 1984 to provide “sweet, soft, and lively news” in addition its serious party paper *Southern Daily*.<sup>25</sup> Sometimes the reports bordered on vulgarity, with headlines such as “Tragedy of Incest (*luanlun canju*)” March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1992 and November 18<sup>th</sup> 1994 “Pervert in the Girl’s Bathroom (*nǚ’ce e’mo*).”<sup>26</sup> One of its editor-in-chiefs, Zuo Fang, redefined the brand by adding more sociopolitical reports and commentaries and established *Southern Weekend* as a quality newspaper.<sup>27</sup> “We aimed to break the traditional central media’s old rules and opposing the Central Propaganda Bureau in every way,” he wrote in retrospect.<sup>28</sup> *Southern Weekend's* muckraking reports (*jiechou baodao*) marked the newspaper’s initial encounter with politics. For example, *Southern Weekend* criticized corrupt county officials as well as the law enforcement system even though these topics were regarded as “untouchable.”<sup>29</sup> The newspaper also broke the sex and drugs taboo by reporting on drug addicts when the government still denied their existence.<sup>30</sup>

After Zuo retired and Jiang Yiping took over as editor-in-chief of *Southern Weekend* in 1996, Jiang further established the newspaper’s brand identity and credibility through her management as well as editorials.<sup>31</sup> Many people refer to that period as “The Jiang Yiping Era” since *Southern Weekend* enjoyed its heyday as the leading newspaper of hard news under her encouraging gatekeeping policies and liberal mindset.<sup>32</sup> *Southern Weekend* journalists would usually investigate for a long

period of time after most daily newspapers break controversial news and search for an alternative frame.<sup>33</sup> Jiang's successful management and the journalists' commitment resulted in *Southern Weekend's* national popularity. The newspaper reached 100 million in circulation and earned up to 1 billion RMB in advertisement revenue with only 50 employees.<sup>34</sup>

During the sensational period, *Southern Weekend* actively engaged in extra-regional media supervision (*yidi jiandu*), a major form of their political participation. The growing conflicts of interests between local officials allow muckraking reporters to cross provincial borderlines and supervise each other's provincial governments.<sup>35</sup> Media from other provinces find it easier to report on misconduct in a province than do local media.<sup>36</sup> While *Southern Weekend* has "[weathered] several political storms" on officials in other areas, including Beijing, it rarely reports on wrongdoing in Guangdong.<sup>37</sup> *Southern Weekend's* early example of extra-regional supervision concerned the 1997 investigative report on a hit-and-run traffic accident that occurred in Henan Province.<sup>38</sup> Since the driver responsible was a senior police official, local Henan media refrained from releasing the details. *Southern Weekend's* revealing report created a nationwide public outcry against abuse of power and police misdeeds.<sup>39</sup>

These outcries could not have been incited without reportage literature's legacy and the signature style of *Southern Weekend's* reports. Editors and journalists celebrated *Southern Weekend's* brand identity as an empathizing media as well as a whistleblower for social justice.<sup>40</sup> Jiang coined some of *Southern Weekend's* famous

slogans such as “There's always something that brings you to tears,” and “Empower the powerless and energize the pessimists to march on” in her New Year editorials.<sup>41</sup> Since it is often quoted and understood as *Southern Weekend*'s civic mission, it shows that both readers and journalists of the newspaper prefer sensational reports. *Southern Weekend* as well as other hard news journalists inherited legacy from an earlier generation of journalists who artfully blended fact and fiction. Reportage literature (*baogao wenxue*), this hybrid style of writing, usually alludes to true incidents and characters while omitting sources and facts.<sup>42</sup> Unable to write honestly due to government censorship, the first contemporary league of hard-hitting journalists such as Liu Binyan used “reportage literature” as a way of critiquing systematic flaws.<sup>43</sup> Journalists employed literary techniques inherited from such as “narration interspersed with comments” (*jiayu jiayi*).<sup>44</sup> Journalists also attempted to frame the event as an interesting story through providing detailed descriptions, writing in a readable and literary style.<sup>45</sup> For example, a journalist quoted Marco Polo's metaphors and Song Dynasty poetry in his 2003 report *Cars Stuck in the Forbidden City's Traffic*.<sup>46</sup>

Given the lack of government transparency, *Southern Weekend* encouraged “narration interspersed with comments” because of the lower production cost. Furthermore, reporters could imply the significance of sociopolitical issues by reporting and on the peripherals; fact-based and relevant information would have been censored and neglected by the public.<sup>47</sup> For example, when a policeman murdered 10 bystanders on June 18<sup>th</sup> of 1998, the government would not have allowed a report

with details of the policeman's background or the police station's reaction.<sup>48</sup> *Southern Weekend* rather described the heartbreaking yet realistic lives of the victims' families and included an excerpt of the court's ruling that victims were innocent bystanders.<sup>49</sup>

While the literary style of reportage has granted *Southern Weekend* much popular support and the ability to influence politics, the style has caused trouble as well. Journalists increased the use of sensational frames in pursuit for affect and jeopardized the ability for objectivity during investigations.<sup>50</sup> For the sake of smoothness in reading, reports even omitted key evidence and sources before 1998.<sup>51</sup> This style has made *Southern Weekend* vulnerable to libel lawsuits once they have misrepresented a party of interest mistakes on controversial events, with examples discussed further below.

In an effort to correct overtly sensational and partial reports, Qian Gang, a media scholar and former standing deputy editor-in-chief, acknowledged in 2001 that reports should focus on facts rather than judgments and sentiments. Qian envisioned that *Southern Weekend* could push the process of China's political system reform faster and further by empowering institutions.<sup>52</sup> Rather than focusing on particular and extreme injustices, *Southern Weekend's* reports could address more institutional injustices and induce constructive debates. Previously, *Southern Weekend's* prescriptive messages used standards of "conscience" instead of legal standards, since the judicial branch was not independent from party-state power.<sup>53</sup> Qian's clear agenda shifted *Southern Weekend* away from expressive reporting styles that

advocated for a vague idea of conscientious justice and critiqued the progress of political reform and media independence. He proposed that *Southern Weekend* will become more responsible and credible instead of perpetuating its previous image of an impatient, judgmental, and “angry youth.”<sup>54</sup>

*Southern Weekend*'s news selection standards have shifted their previous emphasis on special or extreme cases towards news that have institutional significance and national prevalence. Editor management style is one of the internal reasons for this transition. After Qian Gang was demoted by the government, Xiang Xi's succeeded as editor-in-chief and he further down-toned reports' level of controversy. Many hard-hitting journalists left *Southern Weekend* during the following year since their editors kept them on a shorter leash and imposed tighter internal censorship.<sup>55</sup> Since the demotion of Xiang, *Southern Weekend*'s present low-key editor-in-chief Huang Can continues to sustain the newspaper with tight self-censorship standards.<sup>56</sup> On one hand, this transition increases relevance of the news; on the other hand, it decreases political risks. The latter reason for editors and journalists' professionalization will become more evident in the following section.

### **External Factors for *Southern Weekend*'s Transition**

In the process of muckraking and influencing politics, *Southern Weekend* became a target of the government and many special interest groups as early as 1993.<sup>57</sup> Much external pressure in turn caused *Southern Weekend*'s transition in reporting and news selection. Politically, *Southern Weekend* has conflicted with both the local and central

governments' interest. Once the newspaper delivers a controversial event in a provocative way to the people, they feel increasingly dissatisfied with their government. Few officials would engage in dialogue or create constructive solutions. Rather, they chose to control the press' power of media supervision.

Popularized by *Southern Weekend*, the “extra-regional media supervision” (*yidi jiandu*) method has been obstructed by local governments through sporadic, extrajudicial means.<sup>58</sup> Local governments use police or even employ thugs from illegal gangs to beat up journalists.<sup>59</sup> Vice city governors have directly participated in violence against journalists, showing the central government's extent of indulgence towards these informal procedures.<sup>60</sup> According to a journalist's report, different local policemen convicted, indicted, or harassed at least 10 reporters for their reports in 2010, which is an unprecedented number.<sup>61</sup> Some reporters lost their jobs for reporting too aggressively on local government activities.<sup>62</sup> In response to these illegal incriminations and harassment incidents, reporters have advocated for “journalism rights,” which has gained little progress.<sup>63</sup> Local officials also plead for a censorship notice from the Central Propaganda Bureau to silence a particular report.<sup>64</sup> Even when a controversial report is finally published, local governments would destroy or buy out the newspaper that carry the report before it reaches their readers.<sup>65</sup>

After different provincial officials realized that *Southern Weekend's* muckraking targeted issues that exclude Guangdong, they notified the Central Propaganda Bureau and portrayed the newspaper's efforts as a Guangdong province's factional attack.<sup>66</sup>

The Central Propaganda Bureau then started to limit *Southern Weekend* reports through institutional means.

When the party-state disapproves of persistent sensitive information appearing in newspapers, staff members are fired or demoted not only as a form of punishment, but also as a management technique.<sup>67</sup> The editors, especially the editor-in-chief, have more liabilities than the reporters as the “gatekeeper” of the last pass and undergo high risks after each criticism from the top.<sup>68</sup> The Guangdong Propaganda Bureau demoted at least three editor-in-chiefs of *Southern Weekend* in the past decades and replaced them with more conservative gatekeepers.<sup>69</sup> For example, in 2001, *Southern Weekend*'s published a report that attempted to analyze Zhang Jun, a head of a notorious gang, from a criminological and sociological perspective. The author included interviews with Zhang Jun's gang members and their families, as well as a broad analysis of problems such as poverty that may have led to a life of crime.<sup>70</sup> After the article came out, people from Zhang Jun's hometown, Changde city of Hunan province, read the report's analysis as damage to the whole province's reputation. Provincial officials informed to central authorities that *Southern Weekend* had published “a negative portrait of China's socialist struggle.”<sup>71</sup> Soon, the Guangdong Propaganda Bureau was directed to demote the deputy editor-in-chief, front page editor, and another senior editor and ban the news section chief and reporter from ever working in journalism again.<sup>72</sup>

A more recent case happened in December 2009, when the editor-in-chief Xiang Xi was demoted. The Central Propaganda Department demoted Xiang not only

because he exclusively interviewed President Barack Obama without its approval, but also because Xiang left the respective issue's front page blank.<sup>73</sup> That issue attracted much public attention and was interpreted by many as a gesture of protest.<sup>74</sup> "Everyone working in the Chinese media knows about the tradition of 'opening a blank window' (*kai tian chuang*). Leaving a big blank space on a page indicates that something has been censored," an editor from another publication commented.<sup>75</sup> Since the "blank window" incident, at least two Guangdong propaganda officials now regularly participate in each of Southern Media Group's publications' editing process, further strengthening internal censorship and reducing risks of sensitive reports.<sup>76</sup>

The News Commentary Group is another form of institutional limitation the party-state imposes upon *Southern Weekend*. The News Commentary group is an informal censorship system that inspects newspaper content and applies punishments accordingly.<sup>77</sup> The NCG was previously in charge of the "seven newspapers and one journal" released by the central government.<sup>78</sup> After the Central Propaganda Bureau regarded *Southern Weekend* as nationally influential, the NCG added it on to the inspection list and often singled it out for criticisms.<sup>79</sup> Since the Bureau has banned certain newspapers for their investigative reports and editorials for serious transgressions, *Southern Weekend* cooperated and selected news more carefully in order to keep its business running.

More generally, Hu Jintao instituted stricter media policies that limited hard-hitting newspapers since 2003. The start of "Hu-Wen New Deal" granted more media freedom in the cases of the SARS outbreak and the Sun Zhigang event.<sup>80</sup> Soon

after, in an attempt to control the media industry without threatening its economic gains, the Hu-Wen administration implemented more “sophisticated defense mechanisms,” such as the establishment of a system of laws and regulations.<sup>81</sup> One of them includes the enforcement of new licensing system for journalists.<sup>82</sup> The party-state also banned extra-regional reporting and ordered media outlets to refrain from criticizing party officials in 2004.<sup>83</sup> While the party-state ordered the arrest of *Southern Metropolitan Daily*’s three top employees and sentenced them to jail in 2004, it did not absolve employees of central party newspapers either; editors of *Beijing News* and *China Youth Daily* were removed from their previous positions.<sup>84</sup> During the 17<sup>th</sup> National Party Congress, Hu stressed that journalists should not view media supervision as a right independent of the party; rather, they should be “connected to the party-state system of policing and controlling society.”<sup>85</sup>

Not only do journalists and editors have no rights, they also face more legal restrictions. Many restrictions existed purely for the sake of censoring newspapers like *Southern Weekend*. For example, political powers have been used libel laws to punish hard news reporting. Even if the prosecutor loses, the case can still burden the news corporation with a large financial cost or diminish the respective report’s effect by the end of the law suit.<sup>86</sup>

In face of the upcoming 18<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the Communist Party of China and increased numbers of social tensions, propaganda guidelines and policies of 2011 are exceptionally strict. For example, the party-state further banned extra-regional reports on disasters and extreme events, discussions on political reform, or using the

phrase “civil society.”<sup>87</sup> Interestingly, the guidelines also warned that newspapers should not adopt the perspective of a media organization to “take the place of and interfere with” mass opinion.<sup>88</sup>

*Southern Weekend* has faced lawsuits because of journalist’s eagerness to replace their own opinions for the facts. For example, *Southern Weekend*’s several reports and commentaries on the “Wronged Good Samaritan” Liu Qiu Hai backfired in the form of four libel lawsuits over 5 years.<sup>89</sup> On March 12<sup>th</sup> of 1995, Liu Qiu Hai and his friends bypassed a girl injured in a car accident. They escorted the girl, Chen Xiaoli, to the hospital and left her some money. The local police later accused Liu as the runaway driver. Since Liu was one of Leizhou city’s National Committee representatives, he published a letter in a party paper arguing against the policemen’s accusation. In October, *Southern Weekend* showed bias towards Liu’s cause by using his opinion letter as a prompt and including imaginative details in its own report, such as the girl tugging Liu’s pant leg and pleading “save me, please.” In November, Chen sued Liu for running away from the accident. *Southern Weekend* published an indignant report titled in a Chinese axiom “The Bad Guy Slung the First Accusation” (*e’ren xian gaozhuang*). The report accused Chen Xiaoli and her brother-in-law Chen Chongming for engaging in indecent and criminal activity prior to the accident, such as drug dealing and prostitution. *Southern Weekend* published these accusations in several different reports throughout 1996 and 1998, even while facing libel lawsuits.<sup>90</sup> The newspaper lost all four lawsuits since the reporter obtained much information from individual human sources.<sup>91</sup>

While these judicial rulings against *Southern Weekend* were not exactly impartial and apolitical, they taught the newspaper lessons on media power and the importance of using strong evidence. Muckraking journalists who faced libel lawsuits from both public administration officials and private businesses learned the importance of professional reporting techniques. They would interview different sides of the conflict before publishing certain reports and documented crucial evidence in case of lawsuits.<sup>92</sup> In addition to the informal and formal political restrictions from central and local governments, journalists at commercialized newspapers rarely take the risk of influencing politics. Much of *Southern Weekend's* present journalism can be categorized as “watchdogs on party leashes,” because journalists and editors avoid the most sensitive political and social issues and investigate safer issues that have less severe restrictions than political ones, such as business and environmental problems.<sup>93</sup> In an attempt to justify their change in reporting, journalists at more commercialized papers now explicitly disavow journalistic activism and have embraced the classical liberal theory of press autonomy and professionalization.<sup>94</sup>

### **Internal Factors for *Southern Weekend's* Transition**

Aside from political pressure that restricts *Southern Weekend's* civic journalism, critics also accuse it for prioritizing sensation rather than facts.<sup>95</sup> Frontline journalists used to be radical in terms of their political views, stopped using sensation to influence the public, and denounced black-and-white frames. Journalists' previous judgmental mentality encouraged them to slacken investigation processes, produce opinionated frames, and write in a sensational style.<sup>96</sup> To make a good story,

journalists often projected their preconceived plotline upon events. Since not all events had a dramatic storyline, many nuances were neglected or omitted. Li Haipeng, a former celebrity *Southern Weekend* journalist known for his literary techniques, admitted that “the media environment allowed me to inflate my own views with reality back then. Now, the journalism field has stricter standards.”<sup>97</sup>

Since many *Southern Weekend* journalists came from rural or non-metropolitan backgrounds, they proactively identified with “disadvantaged people” who suffered under harsh circumstances.<sup>98</sup> Similar to American journalists’ “follow the money” mindset, journalists assumed power relationships between the sufferer and the oppressor. Since the government lacked transparency, muckraking journalists shared a conspiracy belief that the actual “truth” could hardly be investigated by following facts, but rather deduced through interest relations.<sup>99</sup>

*Southern Weekend* journalists previously questioned the party-state first and foremost. These political views, often too radical for producing objective journalism, accounts for both the cause and effect of having a government is antagonistic towards free press. For example, the exposure of a controversial event could draw attention and policy solutions from the central government, yet different interests groups within the government still could end a responsible journalist’s career and even incriminate him or her as an act of revenge.<sup>100</sup>

In retrospect, former *Southern Weekend* reporter Chi Yuzhou saw that *Southern Weekend*’s sensational muckraking journalism sometimes carried “populist notions,” the journalists’ vengeful intentions, and partial opinions.<sup>101</sup> He found it distasteful

that journalists would savor their success once they learn about that an official was punished with a heavier sentence because of their reports' influence.<sup>102</sup> According to Chi, *Southern Weekend's* muckraking reports prior to 2003 targeted at individuals rather than institutions. As a result, reports have led to the prosecution of a possibly decent official by relative standards, while the system continues to harm at a larger scale.<sup>103</sup> Chi analyzed that a "powerful" individual report, which was once considered as the best type of report, definitely could be manipulated by the party-state.

The party can easily manipulate the media's opinions and politics. Legal scholar Benjamin Liebman argued that the party tolerates bubbles of discontent from the media in part because they target local problems. This not only insulates the center from similar criticism, but also "furthers party-state goals of economic development, social stability, and control."<sup>104</sup> While "supervising" reports did root out many corrupt officials in immediate effect, they have also been used by the party-state. Fighting local corruption has long been part of the government's agenda and reporters have extensive discretion to cover such issues.<sup>105</sup> Muckraking reports against corruption emerged in 1995 when lawsuits against official corruption increased significantly.<sup>106</sup> From this perspective, the interaction between the media and state is interdependent as opposed to adversarial and they cooperate towards shared goals.<sup>107</sup> The media prevents the society from implosion by informing the public and serving as "valves" that decompress social pressure.<sup>108</sup>

Furthermore, reports that influence judicial outcomes by garnering populist support and public outrage reports may deliver justice from the public's general judgment. They can lead to "swift, severe, but not necessarily legally sound court decisions" because they do not reaffirm the rule of law, but rather the effectiveness of top-down political intervention in the legal process.<sup>109</sup> Muckraking reports against high level corruption also rarely take effect and the government has rarely changed its policy because of media reports.<sup>110</sup> The high political cost and low political impact of muckraking reports continue to trouble *Southern Weekend* journalists.

With the emergence and popularization of the Internet, journalists and pundits suggest that media has trendsetting potentials. Li Datong, a famous editor of a central party newspaper *China Youth Daily*, believes that Chinese media has entered a "strategizing phase" where skilled and resourceful newsmen could negotiate with leaders and maneuver around censorship restrictions.<sup>111</sup> However, this unreliable right to negotiate remains solely in the hands of party-state newspapers.

While many reporters and editors at *Southern Weekend* still undergo risks by reporting hard news under China's oppressive circumstances, their understanding of "journalism" has changed significantly.<sup>112</sup> Learning from its experience in political involvement, *Southern Weekend* has accepted political limitations and improved their management techniques. While they have become increasingly uncertain of the type of reports that could provide constructive criticisms within China's process of political reform, they believe that they can gain leverage when negotiating media freedom if they promote "professional" reporting standards.<sup>113</sup> Editors have altered

their selection standards and prefer fact-based news while journalists have been adopting Euro-American reporting habits.<sup>114</sup> On one hand, this transition increases the relevance and significance of *Southern Weekend*'s news; on the other hand, it decreases political risks. However, their wishes to professionalize in order to create relevant journalism will remain rhetoric under current restrictive political conditions.

### **Obstacles against Professional Journalistic Ethos and Conclusion**

While *Southern Weekend* is well-known for its idealistic values, it is more difficult to practice them than to promote them. While journalists from different industries informally collaborate and propose to serve the public's interest through upholding "fundamental values" of news reporting, they do not share broad consensus on these values.<sup>115</sup> Also, the political and economic basis for professionalization is very fragile. Journalists and editors should not naively suppose that state control will allow them to report hard news by improving the level of their professional standards. The relationship between the party-state and the media "looks increasingly like a game of cat and mouse."<sup>116</sup> The classical liberal model alone cannot provide the impetus for working around the government limitations or for promoting concepts of rights.<sup>117</sup> Objective, apolitical journalism seems impossible under an authoritarian state. Newspapers are also unaware of their ideological biases; Neo-Marxist media theorists criticized that while newspapers profess to vanguard for the "public interest," they actually look after the urban population's interest.<sup>118</sup> They believe that while commercialized media promote civil rights discourse, they intentionally neglect class

conflicts between the urban and the rural population.<sup>119</sup>

While the conditions for a freer media are not necessarily guaranteed with aims of professionalization, it is worth reemphasizing that civic values and mission are people's main motivation to report hard news. Civic journalists in China share ethos akin to that of civic journalists in the United States; both believe that "journalism has an obligation to public life... that goes beyond just telling the news or unloading lots of facts."<sup>120</sup> Responsibility for civic ideals and its democratic function are more important for journalists and editors than reporting formalities and techniques. The concept of professionalism has been increasing the quality and significance of Chinese reports and also reducing the political risks newspapers experience from different factions. Chinese journalists will continue to use this rhetoric of professionalism and also fight for media freedom in a more sophisticated way.

## End Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Bandurski, David and Qian Gang. "China's Emerging Public Sphere: The Impact of Media Commercialization, Professionalism, and the Internet in an Era of Transition." In *Changing media, changing China*. ed. Susan Shirk. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 40.
- <sup>2</sup> "Finding the Right Foothold and Point of View for Planning for the future." *Chinese Journalist*, December 2002, <http://www.chinesejournalist.cn>
- <sup>3</sup> Bandurski, David and Qian Gang. "China's Emerging Public Sphere: The Impact of Media Commercialization, Professionalism, and the Internet in an Era of Transition." In *Changing media, changing China*. ed. Susan Shirk. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 40.
- <sup>4</sup> Chan, Ying. "The Journalism Tradition." In *Investigative journalism in China: eight cases in Chinese watchdog journalism*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2010. 8.
- <sup>5</sup> Qian, Gang, and Ying Chan. *Zhongguo Chuanmei Fengyun Lu*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008. Print. 142
- <sup>6</sup> Bandurski, David and Qian Gang. "China's Emerging Public Sphere: The Impact of Media Commercialization, Professionalism, and the Internet in an Era of Transition." In *Changing media, changing China*. ed. Susan Shirk. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- <sup>7</sup> Qian, Gang. *Zhongguo Chuanmei Yu Zhengzhi Gaige*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008. Wikipedia Chinese, "Nanfang Zhoumo" <http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/南方周末> (accessed April 10, 2011)
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 40.
- <sup>9</sup> Liebman, Benjamin. "Watchdog or Demagogue: The Media in the Chinese Legal System." *Columbia Law Review* 105, no. 1 (2005). 57. For example, *Southern Weekend* contributes some its revenue to the Southern Daily Media Group, and indirectly, to the Guangdong Province Party Committee.
- 246 As one journalist for a paper linked to a municipal Party committee commented, "As long as we are successful, we have more room."<sup>247</sup>
- <sup>10</sup> Qian, Gang. *Zhongguo Chuanmei Yu Zhengzhi Gaige*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008. 44
- <sup>11</sup> Bandurski, David and Qian Gang. "China's Emerging Public Sphere: The Impact of Media Commercialization, Professionalism, and the Internet in an Era of Transition." In *Changing media, changing China*. ed. Susan Shirk. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 43
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>13</sup> He, Qinglian. *Wusuo Zhongguo. Zhongguo dalu kongzhi meiti celüe da jiami (China locked in mist: Revelations on the Mainland's policy to control the media)*. Taipei: Liming wenhua chubanshe, 2006. 25
- <sup>14</sup> Bandurski, David. "He Qinglian, Wusuo Zhongguo. Zhongguo dalu kongzhi meiti celüe da jiami." China perspectives. <http://chinaperspectives.revues.org/3513> (accessed April 12, 2011).
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* 104
- <sup>16</sup> Chan, Ying. "The Journalism Tradition." In *Investigative journalism in China: eight cases in Chinese watchdog journalism*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2010.
- <sup>17</sup> Liebman, Benjamin. "Watchdog or Demagogue: The Media in the Chinese Legal System." *Columbia Law Review* 105, no. 1 (2005): 34.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* 112. The phenomenon of activist journalists who use their roles to pursue their own vision of social justice is an outgrowth of a system in which journalists have long played investigatory roles.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* 112
- <sup>20</sup> In order to distinguish their work from party papers, journalists that produce these reports have different terminologies for referring to these reports. "Investigative reporting" (*diao cha baogao*) or "in-depth reporting" (*shendu baodao*) are examples of genre-defining names. Media scholar Hugo de Burgh, however, shows in his book *The Chinese Journalist* that the notion of a unified genre is problematic. Different journalists have different standards and definitions for their news reports. Some believe that "investigative reports" root out corrupt officials and influence politics, while others define their "in-depth reports" not as different from the Western notion of "hard news" as the term would suggest. "Sensitive," influential, or maybe simply unusual, as all news should be, have been subjected to censorship and thus been referred to as "investigative reporting" during different times. For clarity's sake, this paper will use "civic journalism" and "hard news" as synonyms (in the Euro-American sense), with a subcategory of "muckraking" to substitute for what Chinese journalists may refer to both as "investigative journalism."
- While some English publications have used "watchdog" instead of muckraking, it risks the danger of conflating the report targeted at sociopolitical offenses (*jiechou baodao*) with the political role—"media supervision" (*yulun jian du*). "Muckraking" will refer to the specific genre while "hard news" encompasses all different types of reports.
- <sup>21</sup> Liebman, Benjamin. "Watchdog or Demagogue: The Media in the Chinese Legal System." *Columbia Law Review* 105, no. 1 (2005). "Media Freedom in China." Congressional-Executive Commission on China. <http://www.cecc.gov/pages/roundtables/062402/index.php> (accessed April 15, 2011).
- Qian, Gang. *Zhongguo Chuanmei Yu Zhengzhi Gaige*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>23</sup> Zhang, Zhi'an. "Qimeng yu jian du de bian zhou." In *How Journalists Become Professionals: Deep Reporting*

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- Elites and their Professional Awareness (Jizhe ruhe zhuan)*. 2007. Reprint, Guangzhou: Nanfang Daily, 2009.
- <sup>24</sup> "Central propaganda department." China Digital Times (CDT). <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/china/central-propaganda-department/> (accessed April 18, 2011).
- <sup>25</sup> Qian, Gang, and Ying Chan. "Founding Southern Weekend." *Zhongguo Chuanmei Fengyun Lu*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008. Print.
- Zhu, Qiang. "Lun Nanfang Zhoumo de Wenben Chuangxin (On Southern Weekend's Creative Writing)." Dongfang Xinwen (East Day News). [http://qnjz.dzwww.com/xwgc/200609/t20060927\\_1778468.htm](http://qnjz.dzwww.com/xwgc/200609/t20060927_1778468.htm) (accessed April 10, 2011).
- <sup>26</sup> Zhu, Qiang. "Lun Nanfang Zhoumo de Wenben Chuangxin (On Southern Weekend's Creative Writing)." Dongfang Xinwen (East Day News). [http://qnjz.dzwww.com/xwgc/200609/t20060927\\_1778468.htm](http://qnjz.dzwww.com/xwgc/200609/t20060927_1778468.htm) (accessed April 10, 2011).
- <sup>27</sup> Qian, Gang, and Ying Chan. "Founding Southern Weekend." In *Zhongguo Chuanmei Fengyun Lu*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008. Print.
- "Media Women." Women of China. <http://www.womenofchina.cn/html/report/124884-1.htm> (accessed April 9, 2011).
- "Jiang Yiping." Baidu Baike. <http://baike.baidu.com/view/1917075.htm> (accessed April 11, 2011).
- <sup>28</sup> Qian, Gang, and Ying Chan. "Founding Southern Weekend." In *Zhongguo Chuanmei Fengyun Lu*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008. Print.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>31</sup> "Media Women." Women of China. <http://www.womenofchina.cn/html/report/124884-1.htm> (accessed April 9, 2011).
- Zhu, Qiang. "Lun Nanfang Zhoumo de Wenben Chuangxin (On Southern Weekend's Creative Writing)." Dongfang Xinwen (East Day News). [http://qnjz.dzwww.com/xwgc/200609/t20060927\\_1778468.htm](http://qnjz.dzwww.com/xwgc/200609/t20060927_1778468.htm) (accessed April 10, 2011).
- <sup>32</sup> Zhang, Jie. "Jiang Yiping: Nanfang Zhoumo Renxing Guanhuai (Southern Weekend's Care for the People)." *Jin Chuanmei (Media Today)*, July 2005.
- <sup>33</sup> Zhang, Zhi'an. "Zuo xianshi zhuyizhe, qiu bukeneng de shi." *How Journalists Become Professionals: Deep Reporting Elites and their Professional Awareness (Jizhe ruhe zhuan)*. 2007. Reprint, Guangzhou: Nanfang Daily, 2009.
- <sup>34</sup> Zhang, Jie. "Jiang Yiping: Nanfang Zhoumo Renxing Guanhuai (Southern Weekend's Care for the People)." *Jin Chuanmei (Media Today)*, July 2005.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>36</sup> Liebman, Benjamin. "Watchdog or Demagogue: The Media in the Chinese Legal System." *Columbia Law Review* 105, no. 1 (2005). 48. Journalists forbidden from writing on a particular topic by local propaganda authorities, for example, may send articles to friends at newspapers in other provinces. 65
- <sup>37</sup> Bandurski, David and Qian Gang. "China's Emerging Public Sphere: The Impact of Media Commercialization, Professionalism, and the Internet in an Era of Transition." In *Changing media, changing China*. ed. Susan Shirk. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 41
- Liebman, Benjamin. "Watchdog or Demagogue: The Media in the Chinese Legal System." *Columbia Law Review* 105, no. 1 (2005). 48. But its sister newspaper Southern Metropolitan Daily has taken up this responsibility to some extent.
- <sup>38</sup> Fung-cho Li. "The Emergence of China's Watchdog Reporting." In *Investigative journalism in China: eight cases in Chinese watchdog journalism*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2010.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>40</sup> Pan, Dafen, and Xiwei Pan. "Cong Nanfang zhoumo sixiang dingwei kan xinwen meiti de shehui zeren." *Kaoshi Zhoukan* 4 (2010). [http://d.wanfangdata.com.cn/periodical\\_kszk201004031.aspx](http://d.wanfangdata.com.cn/periodical_kszk201004031.aspx)
- <sup>41</sup> Jiang, Yiping. "Rang wulizhe youli, rang beiguanzhe qianxing." Southern Weekend <http://www.infzm.com/content/20902> (accessed April 14, 2011).
- Zhang, Zhi'an. *How Journalists Become Professionals: Deep Reporting Elites and their Professional Awareness (Jizhe ruhe zhuan)*. 2007. Reprint, Guangzhou: Nanfang Daily, 2009.
- <sup>42</sup> Chan, Ying. "The Journalism Tradition." In *Investigative journalism in China: eight cases in Chinese watchdog journalism*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2010. 7
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>45</sup> Zhu, Qiang. "Lun Nanfang Zhoumo de Wenben Chuangxin (On Southern Weekend's Creative Writing)." Dongfang Xinwen (East Day News). [http://qnjz.dzwww.com/xwgc/200609/t20060927\\_1778468.htm](http://qnjz.dzwww.com/xwgc/200609/t20060927_1778468.htm) (accessed April 10, 2011).
- <sup>46</sup> Li, Haipeng. "Chexian Zijincheng." Guangdong News. [www.southcn.com/weekend/city/200310170057.htm](http://www.southcn.com/weekend/city/200310170057.htm) (accessed April 14, 2011).
- <sup>47</sup> Zhang, Zhi'an. *How Journalists Become Professionals: Deep Reporting Elites and their Professional Awareness (Jizhe ruhe zhuan)*. 2007. Reprint, Guangzhou: Nanfang Daily, 2009.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid. Policeman Zhao Lin shot 21 people, killing 10 in Luding county of Sichuan province on June 18<sup>th</sup> 1998.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>50</sup> Zhang, Zhi'an. "Qimeng yu jiandu de bianzou." In *How Journalists Become Professionals: Deep Reporting Elites and their Professional Awareness (Jizhe ruhe zhuan)*. 2007. Reprint, Guangzhou: Nanfang Daily, 2009.

- <sup>51</sup> Qian, Gang. "Interview on Sensationalism." In *Zhongguo Chuanmei Yu Zhengzhi Gaige*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008.
- <sup>52</sup> Qian, Gang. "Speech at Nanjing University in 2001." In *Zhongguo Chuanmei Yu Zhengzhi Gaige*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008.
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>55</sup> Chan, Ying. "The Journalism Tradition." In *Investigative journalism in China: eight cases in Chinese watchdog journalism*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2010.
- Li Haipeng and Zhai Minglei quitted Southern Weekend in 2003 after experiencing tighter censorship.
- <sup>56</sup> "Zhongguo de liangxin daole." Jiayuan Xinwen. <http://www.iask.ca/news/china/2009/1209/2178.html> (accessed April 19, 2011)
- <sup>57</sup> Zuo, Fang. "Launching Southern Weekend." In *Zhongguo Chuanmei Fengyun Lu*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008. Print.
- <sup>58</sup> Liebman, Benjamin. "Watchdog or Demagogue: The Media in the Chinese Legal System." *Columbia Law Review* 105, no. 1 (2005). 52
- <sup>59</sup> He, Qinglian. *Wusuo Zhongguo. Zhongguo dalu kongzhi meiti celüe da jiemi (China locked in mist: Revelations on the Mainland's policy to control the media)*. Taipei: Liming wenhua chubanshe, 2006. 69, 71.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>61</sup> Chao, Getu. "Jizhe weiquan, xingwei yishu." Nanfang Daily. [http://media.nfdaily.cn/cmyj/26/03/content/2010-11/09/content\\_17426104.htm](http://media.nfdaily.cn/cmyj/26/03/content/2010-11/09/content_17426104.htm) (accessed April 13 2011)
- <sup>62</sup> He, Qinglian. *Wusuo Zhongguo. Zhongguo dalu kongzhi meiti celüe da jiemi (China locked in mist: Revelations on the Mainland's policy to control the media)*. Taipei: Liming wenhua chubanshe, 2006
- <sup>63</sup> Chao, Getu. "Jizhe weiquan, xingwei yishu." Nanfang Daily. [http://media.nfdaily.cn/cmyj/26/03/content/2010-11/09/content\\_17426104.htm](http://media.nfdaily.cn/cmyj/26/03/content/2010-11/09/content_17426104.htm) (accessed April 13 2011)
- Sun, Xupei. "Pitfalls and Obstacles to a Press Law in China." In *Zhongguo Chuanmei Fengyun Lu*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008. Print.
- A News Law (Xinwen Fa) was proposed during the 1989 NPC before the crackdown but was rarely brought up again.
- <sup>64</sup> Qian, Gang. *Zhongguo Chuanmei Yu Zhengzhi Gaige*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008.
- <sup>65</sup> Liebman, Benjamin. "Watchdog or Demagogue: The Media in the Chinese Legal System." *Columbia Law Review* 105, no. 1 (2005). 52
- "1999-2003: Commemorating 25 Years of Southern Weekend." Southern Weekend. <http://www.infzm.com/content/31617> (accessed April 11, 2011).
- "Shenzhen baotan zhiji jinzhi xiaoshou nanfang dushi bao fengbo." Sina News. <http://news.sina.com.cn/s/248358.html> (accessed April 11, 2011).
- Southern Weekend* has been bought out in at least two occasions while *Southern Metropolitan Daily* has been banned from Shenzhen in 2001.
- <sup>66</sup> He, Qinglian. *Wusuo Zhongguo: Zhongguo dalu kongzhi meiti celüe da jiemi (China locked in mist: Revelations on the Mainland's policy to control the media)*. Taipei: Liming wenhua chubanshe, 2006.
- <sup>67</sup> Bandurski, David and Qian Gang. "China's Emerging Public Sphere: The Impact of Media Commercialization, Professionalism, and the Internet in an Era of Transition." In *Changing media, changing China*. ed. Susan Shirk. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- <sup>68</sup> Qian, Gang. "Yue Ping Zu." In *Zhongguo Chuanmei Yu Zhengzhi Gaige*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008. 48
- Some journalists have joked that Jiang's job consisted mostly of writing repentance every time *Southern Weekend* received criticisms. One reason for using this style of management is so that reporters do not feel restricted by their editors for content.
- <sup>69</sup> "Nanfang Zhoumo zongbian Xiangxi bei jiangzhi." Epoch Times. <http://www.epochtimes.com/b5/9/12/9/n2748623.htm> (accessed April 15, 2011).
- Demoted editor-in-chiefs include Qian Gang, Jiang Yiping, and Xiang Xi.
- <sup>70</sup> Liebman, Benjamin. "Watchdog or Demagogue: The Media in the Chinese Legal System." *Columbia Law Review* 105, no. 1 (2005). 73
- <sup>71</sup> Ibid. 73
- <sup>72</sup> Ibid. 73
- <sup>73</sup> Buckley, Chris. "China demotes editor after Obama interview: sources." Reuters. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/12/13/us-obama-china-censorship-idUSTRE5BC0BM20091213?pageNumber=2> (accessed April 17, 2011).
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>76</sup> He, Qinglian. "Yige zhide zhuyi de zhengzhi fuhao." Voice of Asia Chinese Blog. <http://voachineseblog.com/heqinglian/2011/01/signs-politics/> (accessed April 17, 2011).
- <sup>77</sup> Qian, Gang. "Yue Ping Zu." In *Zhongguo Chuanmei Yu Zhengzhi Gaige*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008. 48
- The informal system allows the party-state to hide its act of censorship. Comments have led to the reorganization and closure of newspapers and some have drawn the attention and authorization for action (*pishi*) from the provincial and department leader.
- <sup>78</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>79</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>80</sup> Chan, Ying. "The Journalism Tradition." In *Investigative journalism in China: eight cases in Chinese watchdog journalism*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2010. 11
- <sup>81</sup> Ibid.
- Bandurski, David and Qian Gang. "China's Emerging Public Sphere: The Impact of Media Commercialization, Professionalism, and the Internet in an Era of Transition." In *Changing media, changing China*. ed. Susan Shirk. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 43
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid. 43
- <sup>83</sup> Chan, Ying. "The Journalism Tradition." In *Investigative journalism in China: eight cases in Chinese watchdog journalism*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2010. 11
- <sup>84</sup> Ibid. 11
- <sup>85</sup> Fung-cho Li. "The Emergence of China's Watchdog Reporting." In *Investigative journalism in China: eight cases in Chinese watchdog journalism*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2010.
- <sup>86</sup> Bandurski, David and Qian Gang. "China's Emerging Public Sphere: The Impact of Media Commercialization, Professionalism, and the Internet in an Era of Transition." In *Changing media, changing China*. ed. Susan Shirk. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- <sup>87</sup> CDTranslator. "A General Notice from the Central Propaganda Bureau Regarding News and Propaganda in 2011." China Digital Times.  
<http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2011/01/2011-general-notice-from-the-central-propaganda-bureau/> (accessed April 18, 2011).
- <sup>88</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>89</sup> Gao, Gaifang. "Nanfang zhoumo dui 'Liu Qiu Hai Shijian' baodao de deshi." The Journalist Monthly.  
<http://shsxz.eastday.com/epublish/gb/paper159/3/class015900002/hwz322988.htm> (accessed April 17, 2011).
- <sup>90</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>91</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>92</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>93</sup> Zhao, Yuezhi. "Civil Rights, Legal Justice." In *Communication in China: political economy, power, and conflict*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008. 253
- Chan, Ying. "The Journalism Tradition." In *Investigative journalism in China: eight cases in Chinese watchdog journalism*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2010. 9
- <sup>94</sup> Liebman, Benjamin. "Watchdog or Demagogue: The Media in the Chinese Legal System." *Columbia Law Review* 105, no. 1 (2005). 182
- <sup>95</sup> Chu, Chaoxin. Zhengju diyi, qita doushi fuyun. Nanfang Media.  
[http://media.nfdaily.cn/cmjy/27/02/content/2011-01/12/content\\_19235234.htm](http://media.nfdaily.cn/cmjy/27/02/content/2011-01/12/content_19235234.htm) (accessed April 17)
- Zheng, Zhi. Wosuo jingti de yizhong xinwen xushu fangshi. Sina Blog  
[http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4abc8511010006rt.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4abc8511010006rt.html) (accessed April 17)
- <sup>96</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>97</sup> Zhang, Zhi'an. *How Journalists Become Professionals: Deep Reporting Elites and their Professional Awareness (Jizhe ruhe zhuan ye)*. 2007. Reprint, Guangzhou: Nanfang Daily, 2009.
- <sup>98</sup> "Nanfang zhoumo 'huangjin yidai' jizhe xianzhuang." 360doc.  
[http://www.360doc.com/content/08/0502/22/24223\\_1230883.shtml](http://www.360doc.com/content/08/0502/22/24223_1230883.shtml) (accessed April 12, 2011). Slogans such as "speak up for the disadvantaged masses" have appeared many times in their editorials.
- <sup>99</sup> Zhang, Zhi'an. "Kanqing zhishan fangxiang, chaozhe chuncui qu nuli." In *How Journalists Become Professionals: Deep Reporting Elites and their Professional Awareness (Jizhe ruhe zhuan ye)*. 2007. Reprint, Guangzhou: Nanfang Daily, 2009.
- <sup>100</sup> He, Qinglian. *Wusuo Zhongguo: Zhongguo dalu kongzhi meiti celie da jiemi (China locked in mist: Revelations on the Mainland's policy to control the media)*. Taipei: Liming wenhua chubanshe, 2006.
- Pan, Philip P. "The Newspaperman." In *Out of Mao's shadow: the struggle for the soul of a new China*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008.
- Examples include Nanjing Criminal Poisoning Incident, Guangxi Nandan Coal Disaster, and the Liaoyang Workers' Petition.
- <sup>101</sup> Zhang, Zhi'an. "Kanqing zhishan fangxiang, chaozhe chuncui qu nuli." In *How Journalists Become Professionals: Deep Reporting Elites and their Professional Awareness (Jizhe ruhe zhuan ye)*. 2007. Reprint, Guangzhou: Nanfang Daily, 2009.
- <sup>102</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>103</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>104</sup> Liebman, Benjamin. "Watchdog or Demagogue: The Media in the Chinese Legal System." *Columbia Law Review* 105, no. 1 (2005). 64
- <sup>105</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>106</sup> Zhu, Qiang. "Lun Nanfang Zhoumo de Wenben Chuangxin (On Southern Weekend's Creative Writing)." Dongfang Xinwen (East Day News). [http://qnjz.dzwww.com/xwgc/200609/t20060927\\_1778468.htm](http://qnjz.dzwww.com/xwgc/200609/t20060927_1778468.htm) (accessed April 10, 2011).
- <sup>107</sup> Fung-cho Li. "The Emergence of China's Watchdog Reporting." In *Investigative journalism in China: eight cases in Chinese watchdog journalism*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 2010.
- <sup>108</sup> Qian, Gang. "Speech at Nanjing University in 2001." In *Zhongguo Chuanmei Yu Zhengzhi Gaige*. Hong Kong:

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Cosmos Books, 2008.

<sup>109</sup> Zhao, Yuezhi. "Civil Rights, Legal Justice." In *Communication in China: political economy, power, and conflict*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008. 263

<sup>110</sup> Shirk, Susan. "Changing Media, Changing China." In *Changing media, changing China*. ed. Susan Shirk. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. The case of Sun Zhigang is a rare exception. In comparison, reports on deaths due to government demolitions have not impacted as much.

<sup>111</sup> Li, Datong. *Yong xinwen yingxiang jintian (Using News to Influence Today)*. Tide Times, 2006.

<sup>112</sup> Qian, Gang. *Zhongguo Chuanmei Yu Zhengzhi Gaige*. Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2008.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Zhang, Zhi'an. "Qimeng yu jiandu de bianzou." In *How Journalists Become Professionals: Deep Reporting Elites and their Professional Awareness (Jizhe ruhe zhuan ye)*. 2007. Reprint, Guangzhou: Nanfang Daily, 2009.

<sup>115</sup> Zhan, Jiang. "Xinwen gongtong ti huzhiyuchu?." Nanfang Daily. [www.baoye.net/News.aspx?id=309078](http://www.baoye.net/News.aspx?id=309078) (accessed April 17, 2011).

Zhao, Yuezhi. "Civil Rights, Legal Justice." In *Communication in China: political economy, power, and conflict*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008. 253

The *Beijing News* adopts the slogan of "Responsible for Reporting Everything" as its motto and endeavors to "guard the interests of the country and the people, appeal to rationality, check against administrative power, pursue truth and virtue, defend public justice, and expose the ugly and the evil."

<sup>116</sup> Bandurski, David and Qian Gang. "China's Emerging Public Sphere: The Impact of Media Commercialization, Professionalism, and the Internet in an Era of Transition." In *Changing media, changing China*. ed. Susan Shirk. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid. David Bandurski once said that "The strange and tense love triangle between party control, commercialization, and professional journalism in China is one of the key puzzles any scholar of China's media must work out."

<sup>118</sup> Zhao, Yuezhi. "Civil Rights, Legal Justice." In *Communication in China: political economy, power, and conflict*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008. 253

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Pew Center for Civic Journalism, "Doing Civic Journalism." <http://www.pewcenter.org/doingcj/> (accessed April 9, 2011).