

Two Approaches to Seeking Public Support in Addressing Challenges in the Field of International Security

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Abstract— In the contemporary field of international affairs, China's economic, geopolitical, and military rise is a significant challenge. The focus of this study falls on the response which these circumstances find in the context of national security in two states of established economic and geopolitical standing. In this scientific framework, international security is situated as the object of the study. The subject of the research is the complex of activities undertaken by governments to build transparency in the public space about their international affairs. The aim of the study is to explore a discovered approach for overcoming the latency of the public opinion, relative to China's rise. Presented are two principally different policies, which were implemented in the USA and in Russia, in response to the challenge of 'China's rise'. The research uses the progress of digital technology, and on this ground realizes a phenomenological approach which implements methods in the field of Science for communications, Public diplomacy, and Comparison of open-source data. This whole complex is united in the context of security in an international environment. The important part of the result of this study is the quantitative description of certain social dependencies that are essential for national security. These dependencies are perceptible to people yet inherently challenging to measure.

Keywords— China's rise, external security, media content, public opinion

I. INTRODUCTION

It is a widely known fact that society is a key factor for a country's vitality. Therefore, the process of shaping a unified public opinion is of interest to scientists and experts in the field of Security. It is obvious that if the public sentiments are negative, the success of one executive power's initiative is impossible. Because of this, in the country activities are arranged to attract the public support for the government's initiatives and for the positioning specific questions far from the focus of the public opinion. Due to their complexity and multi-directionality, the

vectors in which the public activity is shaping are difficult to describe. The reason is that the empirical testing of this kind activity is relevant for science. Even more interesting is the algorithm through which these mechanisms are realised. The work shows a quantitative description of such process and a bond between public interest and the presence of information in the media. The discourse does not primarily address media freedom; instead, it examines the interplay between governmental security policy objectives, media content and the construction of public opinion. The objective is to demonstrate, through an analysis of two diametrically opposed approaches to the same challenge, that the shaping of society constitutes one indispensable factor in security policy. In this context, the work does not examine the media themselves, but rather the consequences that the manner of presenting information about a given challenge has in relation to governmental security policies. An example has been shown of a difference in the picture offered for public perception in the USA and in the RF; however, the identified mechanism is universal and can manifest in various states, under varying circumstances, in accordance with which state authorities seek a particular kind of support for their policies in the field of security.

For the sake of specificity, working definitions have been introduced in the paper. According to them:

- public opinion is understood as a complex, synergistically acting aggregate of expectations, attitudes, preferences, and perceptions of reality that are shared within society and determine its readiness to act in a particular direction;
- public support is the understanding, approval, and above all willingness to cooperate that have been agreed upon within society and around which any potential social activity is united;

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– public attention is explained by the "list" of topics on which people focus. It is understood as a key factor in the formation of the public agenda. It also contains a negative element, in that due to a lack of attention, society may lower its critical barriers toward other topics that are important for security.

It is a widely acknowledged fact in academia that the media do not reflect everything that occurs, and in this way media coverage is capable of influencing public opinion and public support.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The exploration of the challenge is based on a phenomenological approach; i.e. the facts are explored through the way they are processed by the human consciousness and the way they are thought of and talked about.[1] By its very nature, the approach lends itself more to the examination of qualitative factors than to the empirical presentation of observed dependencies. For this reason, it is used in the social sciences, including in the study of security, insofar as security is a social construct.

On the one hand, such approach corresponds to the understanding of security, defined by the Copenhagen School. According to it, security is a social construct, and relevant events become challenges or threats only when they are perceived as such.[2] This framework justifies the application of the phenomenological approach in scientific research, especially when explored are matters relating to public stance, public opinion, and the manners for obtaining public support. The established connection with the concept of the Copenhagen School justifies the expectation that the phenomenological approach will become increasingly prominent in the field of Security. This element also corresponds to the relevance of matters, such as the one about working with the people in a country. On the other hand, among security experts it is widely spread that the engagement with the public opinions, expectations, and stance is key for the success of policies through which a country overcomes the challenges in its domestic and foreign security.[2] According to the renowned American researcher Harold Lasswell, the functions of communication are: 1. To organise the community - correlation; 2. To observe, reflect, and trace the changes in the environment – surveillance; 3. To pass knowledge through the years – transmission. [3] Lasswell's concept that a major function of communication (incl. the media content; author's note) is to organise the community towards one activity or another serves as a foundation of the statement that the media content (also referred to as media narrative in the present work) is a tool for modelling the type of the support that governments seek and receive for their policies. Whether and to what extent governments utilise this tool is complex matter which is unlikely to be possible to explore fully. We cannot claim definitively when governments use this tool – a state, typical for the fields of Social science and, respectively, for the one of

Security (according to the Copenhagen School of security studies).

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The phenomenological approach in the present study has been applied in the following methodological sequence: 1) to the extent possible, the challenge has been separated from conformist notions and from prior public emotions surrounding the issue; 2) attention has been directed toward the challenge of China's rise, and more specifically toward the way in which it is perceived - or rather, could be perceived - in the societies of Russia and the United States; 3) an intentional analysis has been carried out regarding how the challenge may be linked to public expectations and attitudes, as well as to state security policies; 4) the essence of the public experience has been sought - that is, an exposition of the expected public support upon the final outcome of policy in the field of international security. In this form, the methodology corresponds to theoretical frameworks developed by Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. [4]

The methodology presented highlights the obvious characteristic of the phenomenological approach – that it combines the objective and the subjective, the quantitative and the qualitative, into a complex unity. For this reason, the reproducibility of results is sought not so much through repetition of the experiment, but through replication of the findings reached. In this case, this is tied to the assertion that the public support for state policies in the field of security can be modelled through a specific combination of feeding information to the media and initiatives aimed at steering public activity in a particular direction. This does not mean that in the same or highly similar events occurring at a different time and place, the media will publish the same headlines. The way in which the phenomenological approach is understood in this paper is that there is a high probability of applying the same manner of modelling public support through directing information to the media and combining this process with accompanying initiatives by the state authorities.

This research uses the internet-based platform Google Trends (<https://trends.google.com>) as a tool for quantitative observation of the chronology of search queries across the web. The phrase “China's rise” was used as a search term for entire world. It describes one of the challenges to international security, which various scholars regard as a precondition for the emergence of a risk of conflict between a rising and an established power within the international security system (the Thucydides Trap). [5] Drawing on various theoretical frameworks (some of which have already been cited), as well as on the tangible political reality of the first half of the 2020s, China (as a rising power) and the United States and Russia (as established powers) are examined as such forces. The reason for selecting the United States and Russia is the events of the war in Ukraine and the visibly divergent directions in which the two states are organising their policies toward China.

The concept that the relationships between government and the public constitute a primary factor in state policy [6], and the recognition that this interaction is highly significant for security [7] directs scientific attention to the correlation between policy activity and media content during the period of August 2024 year.

The phrase China's rise is understood as an established term among researchers in the field of security, and when searching Google Trends, the side effects of translation — which could potentially exist across different countries — were not examined. This was done during searches on online platforms in the Russian Federation and in the United States. It was noted that in public media the language is more varied.

The search was conducted in the following sequence:

1) Using the Google search engine, materials in American media were searched. The search was carried out for a specific period (07.08.2024 – 17.09.2024). The restriction was applied via Google Tools – Custom range;

2) Since the search for the phrase “China” AND US media did not yield results (on the first three suggested pages, the results were dominated by media outlets such as YouTube, The Guardian, China Media Project, and similar), the search was further specified through a direct examination of individual media sources, under the same restrictions (for the same period) and using the following Google operators:

- “China's rise” site:cnn.com;
- “China's rise” site:wsj.com;
- “China's rise” site:tass.com

A check was also conducted using the word “China” through the following operators:

- “China” site:cnn.com;
- “China” site:wsj.com;
- “China” site:tass.com

- 3) For specificity, the results suggested by Google were verified as content within the websites of CNN, The Wall Street Journal, and TASS.

III. RESULTS

The research is focused on a challenge that overcomes the frame of interactions among the directly involved countries. The geopolitical situations of this kind - regardless of whether they involve active warfare or request for economic rearrangement - are of significant relevance to international security. Such conditions often constitute a prerequisite for crises and can trigger consequences for multiple countries that aren't directly engaged in the conflict. An emblematic example is the Iraq crisis of 2003 year, which influenced the security strategies all the way to the European Union [8]. Therein lies the Thucydides Trap for our contemporary age.

1) separation from conformist notions and prior public emotions surrounding the issue

It is evident that demands for economic realignment represent a challenge for states and the societies within them. A useful convenience for this study is that in politics there operates the rule formulated by the British statesman H. J. T. Palmerston: "We have no eternal allies, and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual, and those interests it is our duty to follow". [9] For this reason, the conformism and emotions that accumulate in society in response to a given challenge are not expected to be particularly lasting. This is why, in examining China's rise as a challenge in the United States and in the Russian Federation, any pre-existing layers of conformism and emotion are eliminated as unwanted confounding factors in the study. It is a widely known fact that until the early 1990s, China – despite being a country of enormous population – was not treated intensively as a competitor to the highly developed states.

Some of today's researchers in the field of security warn that Chinese policy is directed more inward than outward. For this reason, they argue that "the conventional view of China plays down the economic and diplomatic arenas that a war-fighting approach is unsuited to address." [10]

2) Focusing on the way in which China's rise is perceived – or rather, could be perceived – in the societies of the RF and the USA

The focus in this research is concentrated on the changes in the international economic and political environment to security, which are situated after the obvious China's rise over the past years. The rapid economic and technological growth during this period has led to an expansion of China's interests towards international trade routes; to the alternative's possibilities for the export of China's products and technologies; to the shaping the international relation, generating both attraction to and repulsion against China's foreign policy on world-wide important issues. Some countries perceive China's rise as an opportunity for friendship and cooperation. Other countries interpret this geopolitical development as a potential threat to both internal and external security. It is widely known that the USA government has expressed concerns regarding 5G technology, particularly due to its development and leadership by Chinese digital companies. The USA's policy is concerned also over the growth of Chinese industrial production, which is perceived as a potential threat to American industry and domestic markets. On the other hand, the Russian policy is widely characterized as oriented toward cooperation with China. There is no doubt that such policy orientations require public support to be sustainable. In accordance with contemporary theoretical frameworks, the media play a significant role in these supporting processes.[11]

3) intentional analysis of how the challenge can be connected with public expectations and stance, as well as with state security policies

A considerable number of authors also cover the view that 'security is no longer only a value but a state which is to be guaranteed by society through providing the necessary conditions'.[12] The scholarly position that government policies require public support can be understood as a socially oriented concept, linked to the framework, developed within the Copenhagen School of security studies.[13] It is generally assumed that such public support needs to be shaped through various forms of transparency, including in some cases through full media blackouts also. [14] This viewpoint on the contemporary international security environment directs the focus of this topic to the managing of public interests and public opinion in the USA and Russia (RF), as two countries, both of which are obviously recognized as some of the most

influential in foreign policy. The evolution of the war between Russia and Ukraine, and the active stance of the United States toward the conflict, dispel any doubts about the choice.

4) exposition of the expected public support towards the end result of the policy in the field of international security

The result suggests that the observed methods for shaping the synchronization between foreign policy activity and public support are positioned at opposite ends of the spectrum of possibilities.

The queries on the topic 'China's rise' across the web are presented on the Figure 1. It can be seen that, with the exception of brief periods of lull, queries reflecting interest in the topic are generated on the internet continuously, with a visibly increasing trend over the past year.

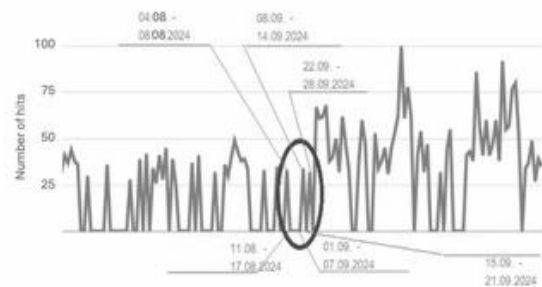


Fig. 1. Highlights (in a five-year period) a temporal interval during which no discernible activity is observed. (<https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=today%205-y&q=China's%20rise&hl=bg>)

In keeping with the phenomenological analysis, a compelling question arises as to what happens during such a period of lull and how information about these events (if any exist) is brought to the attention of society. For this reason, one such period of lull has been selected from the data shown in the graph covering the five-year period (2020–2025). It runs from 07 August to 17 September. This is indicated by the corresponding dates in Fig. 1.

During the period from 07th August 2024 to 17th September 2024, in which no significant web search is observed, several developments in Chinese foreign policy are of particular interest: 1) on the 19 of August a collision between Filipino and Chinese naval vessels was reported [15]; 2) the Prime minister of Vietnam conducted an official visit to China, contributing to further strategic cooperation between the two countries [16]; 3) China and Belarus conclude an agreement on economy and technological partnership [17]; 4) Chinese government actively develops a series of diplomatic visits, during which the questions about Russia-Ukraine conflict are discussed [18]; 5) For 4th to 6th September in Beijing was realized a major diplomatic forum with African states [19]; 6) Ahead of the UN General Assembly China calls for a reassessment

of the challenges facing contemporary multipolar world [20]. In summary, the situation facing that Chinese government: 1) is pursuing a diplomatic initiative to support its position on the Russia-Ukraine conflict and to reinforcing its orientation to cooperating with Russia; 2) is developing the activity aimed at strengthening involving with Africa countries; 3) is developing instrumental activity at other Asian countries; 4) ahead UN maintains its claim to an influential position in the contemporary multipolar world.

Further research in Google Trends revealed inconsistency in the data regarding queries generated from Russia. Due to a problem of a nature unknown to us, at the time of writing the paper, instead of the graph generated by the query for *China's rise* in March 2026, a check of the Google Trends platform in May displays the message "Oops! Something went wrong. Please try again in a bit." (<https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=today%205-y&geo=RU&q=China%27s%20rise&hl=en-GB>). Consequently, this result does not allow for reproducibility of the study. For this reason, the search has been continued in the direction of media content during the period marked in Fig. 1.

The observation over the media content regarding incidents from 07th August 2024 to 17th September 2024 (via search in Google and in the open media platforms) illustrates the differences in public interest regarding the topic 'China's rise'. Explanations for these variations have been examined through the analysis of media narratives in the RF and in the USA. One reason is that the publications from influential agencies are disseminated across multiple media platforms and achieve widespread diffusion on social networks. Accordingly, the moderation of instrumental action in the public sphere is conducted by influential media platforms.

As noted in the description of the methodology, the initial search for media publications using the query: "China" AND "US media" ([https://www.google.com/search?q=\"China\"+AND+US+media&sca_esv=fcd476843e4cb329&tbs=cdr:1,cd_min:8/7/2024,cd_max:9/19/2024,sbd:1&tbm=nws&ei=ykz_adgGN6Exc8Pq8ugwQs&start=20&sa=N&ved=2ahUKEwjfre2LvayUAXVeQvEDHasIKLg4ChDy0wN6BAGGEAc&biw=1870&bih=969&dpr=1](https://www.google.com/search?q=\)) did not produce the expected result. The outcome returned multiple pages, but they were not assessed as relevant for media influence or were not from American media outlets (despite the Google indication). Below are the first several indicated headlines:

How the EU risks falling further behind the US and China (DW News); *US-West* (China Media Project); *US thinktank leader arrested on charges of acting as unregistered agent of China* (The Guardian); *China warns students against 'beautiful women' and 'handsome guys' who might turn them into spies* (NBS News); *China says it is ending foreign adoptions, prompting concern from US* (The Guardian); *\$50 billion, a million jobs and a red carpet welcome: China woos Africa as U.S. struggles to keep up*

(NBS News); *South China Sea: Can the Philippines and US stop China?* News Desk (YouTube).

Obviously, these headlines are not relevant to the constraints of the scientific study, but they suggest that more active searching is directed toward sources other than American media (The Guardian, China Media Project, DW).

For this reason, a more specific search was conducted for the same period, restricted to media websites. The search results were as follows:

- "China's rise" site:cnn.com:

For CNN, Google provides numerous headlines; however, careful examination shows that it is difficult to identify the topic "China's rise" within them. Some of the first suggested headlines include:

China's one-child policy hangover: Scarred women dismiss ... (18.08.2024); *For decades, Chinese workers have retired relatively early. ...* (13.09.2024); *A dangerous new flashpoint is fast emerging in the South China Sea* (27.08.2024); *China-Africa ties 'best in history' claims Xi as Beijing* (05.09.2024); *China and Russia are ramping up joint military drills. ...* (17.09.2024); *China's secretive space plane has returned to Earth* (12.09.2024) et. c. It is evident that these headlines are more generally related to the broader topic of China.

- "China's rise" site:wsj.com;
(www.wsj.com/search?query=china's+rise&dateRange=all&products=wsj%2Cvideo%2Caudio%2Clivecoverage%2Cbuyside&sort=relevance)

Google indicates only one headline: 'Toll of Dead and Injured Hovers Near One Million in Ukraine War' (17.09.2024). A search on the newspaper's website does not show any publications matching the query "China's rise".

- "China's rise" site:tass.com
(https://www.google.com/search?q=China's+rise+site:tass.com&client=ubuntu-s&sca_esv=827c5b7b45126b9a&channel=fs&tbs=cdr:1,cd_min:8/7/2024,cd_max:9/17/2024&ei=JEf_aajTN6GAXc8PzpuCmQ0&start=10&sa=N&sstk=Af77f_fenWmK6VYeOK36vBQiqBAwbebRBZ3aFbXAPYzkJikkE_iTjTOV3MmlpR_BKt0Whfabe6MCX44Tz5_7cFtwI4WKVb9q603a8g&ved=2ahUKEwio9cvat6yUAXUhQPEDHc6NINMQ8tMDegQIMhAE&biw=1870&bih=969&dpr=1)

Google indicates 18 headlines that can be considered relevant to the search. The topic is further developed in the study.

Due to the inconsistency of the search for the phrase "China's rise", a further check was conducted using the word "China" with the following operators:

- "China" site:cnn.com;

- "China" site:wsj.com;

- "China" site:tass.com; "Китай" site:tass.com;.

The results obtained for CNN show little change, while those for The Wall Street Journal display greater diversity. In *The Wall Street Journal*, the topic of China is linked to a variety of issues, but the theme of "China's rise" is not a primary focus. Some of the headlines include:

Vatican's Meager Gains in China Spotlighted During ... (11.09.2024); *PwC China Hit With Six-Month Ban Over Evergrande Crisis* (13.09.2024); *The U.S. and Taiwan Must Change Course* (02.09.2024); *China's Forex Reserves Rose in August as U.S. Dollar ...* (07.09.2024); *What Scared Ford's CEO in China* (14.09.2024); *U.S. Officials Meet Dalai Lama in New York, Triggering ...* (22.08.2024); *China detains two activists, adding to tension with U.S* (06.09.2024) et.c.

The Google results for TASS also show considerable diversity. However, the headlines reveal an interesting tendency toward engaging public attention not only through attention-grabbing topics but also through news highlighting cooperation. This necessitated a further verification within the news agency's own platform. The examination of TASS identified over 2020 news articles, containing the term 'China' (https://tass.ru/search?search=Китай&from_date=2024-08-06T21:00:00.000Z&to_date=2024-09-17T20:59:59.000Z). From this set over 330 publications containing commentary and information on the topic of 'China's rise' are extracted. For example:

- *The Hang Seng Index of the Hong Kong Stock Exchange rose by 1.37% at the end of trading. It reached 17,660.02 points.* (17th September 2024);

- *Trump believes that China can get ahead of the US in the crypto industry The current administration of the United States is "very hostile to" this area, the former American leader said.* (17th September 2024);

- *A journalist from China said that media cooperation is gaining opportunities for joint work Wang Bin. Head of the Eurasian Bureau of the China Media Corporation, regrets that in the modern world, many media are too dependent on the politics and interests of individual countries.* (14th September 2024);

- *Zelensky called the Brazilian-Chinese peace plan destructive.* (12 September 2024);

- *China says BRICS countries should strengthen coordination in the fight against terrorism.* (12 September 2024);

- *The House of Representatives of the US Congress supported bills against China* (10 September 2024);

- *The Russian-Chinese Friendship Society considers SAMBO a part of cultural diplomacy.* (06 September 2024);

- *Expert: Biden's attack on two fronts on Russia and China doomed the United States to failure.* (18 August 2024);

- *Expert: common interests will ensure strategic stability for China and Russia. Chen Wenling, Leading Economist at CCIEE, recalled that Beijing and Moscow at the highest level announced their positions, according to which China and Russia are building transparent relations with each other* (18 August 2024);

- *India did not invite China to the summit of the Global South.* (17 August 2024);

etc.

The narratives were aimed at China's foreign activity, but also to Russia - China relationships, which reflects directly in public sphere. This category of news reports on the expansion of student collaboration and exchange, about technological cooperation, about cultural partnership initiatives (for example SAMBO a part of cultural diplomacy) etc. Due to the fact that TASS does not provide an open accessible data-structured archive, the precise temporal analysis is constrained. Nevertheless, the overall orientation of emitted narratives was evident: Russia's foreign policy increasingly directs the focus toward deepening and expanding widening Russia - Chinese partnerships.

The situation in the USA's media during the studied time-period differed substantially. Unlike most European countries, the United States does not have a single state-representative news agency — for example, an equivalent of BTA in Bulgaria, TASS in Russia, or Agence France-Presse in France, etc. For this reason, media headlines on the relevant topics were searched for on Google and in outlets such as CNN, The Wall Street Journal, and others, as well as in British media known for their active coverage of topics relating to the United States (such as Reuters or The Financial Times). There were no narratives found comparable to those identified in the RF. Even an extensive search in CNN did not yield a news headlines about China. However, within the period from 7th August to 17th September, the Wall Street Journal published a news article entitled 'China Detains Two Activists, Adding to Tension with U.S.' [21]. It is evident that the relations between USA and China are strained and this condition is inevitably imparted on the public.

It is evident that in the USA and the RF the methods for attracting public support to foreign policy are different. The observation on this topic yield that China's pursuit of a dominant role in the interstate system, has influenced the foreign policy activities of multiple countries and has engaged the publicity in these states across different periods of time.

IV. DISKUSSION

The results show that both in Russia and in the United States, China's rise is regarded as a challenge. In the spirit

of the Copenhagen School of Security, it can be said that the difference lies in the fact that in the United States this challenge is communicated as a threat, whereas in the Russian Federation it is framed as an opportunity for cooperation. This also explains the different approaches applied in the two states in order to shape public opinion regarding the challenge.

- The results of analyses argue that two diametrically positioned examples for intervention in public opinion are described. There is no doubt that the Russian activity includes both a parallel influence in multiple vectors of public interests and is looking for specific effect of accumulation. This policy leads to effective internal public support for Russian foreign relationships. As the result, the individuals in Russian publicity accept China's rise as a successful development and as an opportunity for progress.

As the result of the media policy in the USA, the interest of individuals in American publicity are organized in a pragmatic direction. That is a possible explanation of the fact that due to lack of media content people search for information across the web. It seems that in the USA China's rise is accepted as a threat for positioning in the interstate system. The coverage related to China's development either lacks in American media or are rationally directed to rational policy responses, including the development of domestic technologies, as well as a constraining of China's import among other initiatives. One example are the publications in the Wall Street Journal.

- After comparing the incidents observed during the specified period of time with representations in American media coverage, it becomes evident that publicity in the USA, independent of the Americans foreign policy interests, stays uninformed, respectively without opinion about China-Filipinos naval accident, about China's call on reassessment of the challenges before the contemporary multipolar world provided in advance of the UN General Assembly, among other events. The temporal assessment shows that they aligned with President Donald Trump's policy aimed at "bypassing" the United Nations and advancing interests in Asia [22]. From the perspective of international security, such gaps should be regarded as indicators of future actions.

- According to the contemporary concepts in the field of Security theory society constitutes a key factor for vitality of the state system. From this perspective, governments actively seek to generate and sustain public support for their activities. It is evident also that it is possible the publicity to be kept in a state of shortage of concrete information - however this manner is effective only over short temporal intervals. The results in analysis indicate that on the vector 'China's rise' information the American policy expands beyond the boundaries of this theoretical framework. An argument in this direction is the result of a Google search using the operator "China" AND "US media", which shows numerous publications outside the United States.

- One notable feature of figure 1 is the pronounced fluctuation in web-based queries on topic 'China's rise', that are emitted from the USA. This pattern suggests that individuals in the US publicity recognise China's rise as a path of foreign policy's discourse. It also indicates that with the information flows the US government may be attempting to manipulate the public support.

- The differences in media activity suggest that, in the domain of publicity, the governments of the USA and the RF employ distinctly different manners to protect their foreign policy objectives. The U.S. approach appears to involve modulated fluctuation in informational flows. In contrast, the Russian manner is founded on parallel dissemination and collaboration between media and government's initiatives. Within the Russian foreign policy discourse, China's claims about contemporary multipolar world stay in the background and are replaced with perspectives to constructive bilateral relations. This manner builds a strong public support to Russian government's initiatives.

V. CONCLUSION

1. Today, the rise of China is seen as a challenge. Some countries aim to overcome this challenge via contention (e.g. the USA), others see in this situation an opportunity for building collaboration. The situation can be defined as an example of the Thucydides Trap.

2. The management of public attitudes is an obligatory element of contention or of collaboration in foreign policy relationships through which a state overcomes the challenges in international security's environment. Irrespective of the type of attraction/repulsion of the public attention and the public support, the shaping of public opinion is necessary.

3. The approaches for management of the public opinion, which is necessary for the support of government's initiatives, vary in a wide range – from an active informational pressure to a shortage of mass information on certain topics. With this activity governments look for synergy through an accumulated effect. The connection with the Thucydides Trap indicates that the presented example is not limited to policy in Russia or the United States but is universal from the standpoint of the instruments used to shape public support.

4. Although the changes in cyberspace have been substantial, the mass media remained a significant component of activities, through which the government aimed at attracting support via public opinion. When information is insufficient and public interest is high, people seek news from foreign media outlets. This is demonstrated by the search results for "China" AND "US media".

5. The activities through which governments seek public support for their responses to a given challenge range from the cumulative shaping of public opinion – achieved through complex synergies between

governmental and media actions – to the withholding of information.

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