

## DOCTORAL THESIS

### Ideologies and practices of public diplomacy media outlets: a critical discourse analysis of China Radio International and Voice of America

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## **Abstract**

Countries around the world are increasingly making use of public diplomacy methods in order to advance their interests and garner favour with foreign publics, with the aim of creating ‘soft power’. One of the most direct methods of doing such is through state-sponsored media outlets, which serve as government mouthpieces with the ability to speak directly to foreign populations. Such practices have recently gained more attention from Western practitioners and academics due to their increased use by countries like Russia and China, and especially in regards to their increasing media presence around the globe. However, this ignores the fact that countries like the United States have been using such outlets since the mid-1900s in openly propagandistic attempts to ‘win hearts and minds’.

In order to understand the practices and ideologies used by such media outlets in their quest to influence foreign publics and create soft power, this research combines a content analysis with a Discourse-Historical Approach to critical discourse studies of two state-sponsored radio programmes, China Radio International and Voice of America, broadcast in March 2016. Of particular interest is the ideology and tactics used to portray countries such as China, the United States, and other countries into which these programmes are broadcast.

The results demonstrate that cultural and media values feature subtly but significantly in these programmes, offering justification for their respective governments’ actions, while also being used to condemn actions of other countries. Furthermore, the results reveal a hierarchical approach to coverage of countries, with many countries being reduced to inactive bystanders in global affairs.

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