Twisted Tongue: Limits of China's Propaganda during Crises and Policy Changes
Online Appendices

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Appendices

Appendix A Survey Procedure and Ethics

A.1 Survey Procedure & Pre-Registration

The survey experiment was conducted in December 2022 and was administered in mainland China by a Shanghai-based Chinese online survey company. The participants were recruited by the survey company and then directed to a US-based website, Qualtrics, where they completed the survey anonymously. Once they completed the survey on Qualtrics, they were redirected back to the survey vendor's platform.

All Chinese citizens above 18 years old are eligible for this study. To further ensure sample quality, attention checks were used to screen the respondents before treatment. About 60% of the respondents passed the attention checks yielding 3,314 valid responses. The survey experiment was pre-registered prior to the implementation of the surveys.

A.2 Compliance with Ethical Principles of Human Subject Research

The survey experiment followed all established principles of human subject research and was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the lead researcher's home institution. Although the IRB exempted the study from a formal consent form, an information sheet was still presented at the beginning of the survey. All participants were informed about the purpose, length, and format of the study. All participants need to click "I consent" on the information sheet page before they could proceed. They were allowed to opt out of the study at any point in the survey. Incomplete survey responses were not recorded.

No deception was used. All vignettes were actual news from the state-controlled Xinhua News Agency. All respondents were paid by the survey firm at its usual rate for their participation. The survey firm was paid by the researchers. All participants were adults and none of them would be put in a disadvantageous position had they chosen not to participate.

Because the survey was conducted in China, an authoritarian regime, we paid extra caution to protect respondents' information and responses, so that they will not be negatively affected by the authority due to their participation in this study. We did not ask for personal information that could directly identify participants' identities, such as names, phone numbers, and email addresses. Participants in the experiment were recruited from a Chinese survey platform and directed to an American-based website, Qualtrics, where they completed the survey anonymously. All data was stored directly and securely in the Qualtrics account of an American institution, with the Shanghai-based survey company having no access to the data. In addition to obtaining IRB approval, our Qualtrics links and accounts also received approval from the Information Security Review to ensure the data's security and minimize the risk to participants from state repression.

Appendix B Descriptive Statistics

B.1 Survey Sample

Table B1: Sociodemographics of the Study Participants and Chinese Internet Users

Sociodemographics		Survey Participants	Chinese Internet Users
Region	East	54.8%	46.2%
	Northeast	6.0%	8.4%
	Central	21.7%	22.1%
	West	17.6%	23.3%
Gender	Female	50.1%	48.1%
	Male	49.9%	51.9%
Education	$\leq$ Junior high	3.7%	56.1%
	Senior high	16.5%	23.8%
	3-year college	36.4%	10.5%
	$\geq$ 4-year college	43.3%	9.7%
Age	$\leq$ 19	2.2%	23.2%
	20-29	27.4%	21.5%
	30-39	46.2%	20.8%
	40-49	15.9%	17.6%
	$\geq$ 50	8.3%	16.9%
Income	$\leq$ 3000	6.4%	51.0%
	3000-5000	13.8%	21.5%
	5000-8000	32.6%	14.3%
	$\geq$ 8000	47.2%	13.3%

Note: Data about Chinese Internet users are from *The 45th Statistical Report of Internet Development in China*, issued by China Internet Network Information Center in April 2020.

B.2 Balance Table

Table B2: Balance Table

	Control	T1	T2	T3	T4	p
Controls:						
Female	0.51	0.52	0.52	0.51	0.52	0.28
Age Group	4.40	4.47	4.45	4.28	4.41	0.33
Education	3.23	3.14	3.16	3.23	3.20	0.19
Income	3.39	3.35	3.36	3.37	3.39	0.95
Party Member	0.12	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.13	0.94
Ideology	2.30	2.26	2.31	2.33	2.35	0.61
Political Interest	3.76	3.76	3.76	3.76	3.69	0.78
Social Media	3.53	3.50	3.50	3.57	3.46	0.38
Outcomes (1-7 scale):						
COVID Policy Support	5.13	5.07	5.08	5.04	4.96	
Relaxation Preference: Lockdown	4.46	4.61	4.56	4.73	4.51	
Relaxation Preference: International Travel	4.22	4.49	4.35	4.34	4.34	
Relaxation Preference: Health Code	4.30	4.35	4.44	4.62	4.38	
Willingness to Protest	3.06	2.97	2.83	2.99	3.06	
Protest Rightfulness	4.14	4.38	4.10	4.06	4.30	

Note: The p values are for F-tests of multiple treatment groups.
T1: Soft propaganda supporting reopening
T2: Hard propaganda supporting reopening
T3: Soft propaganda supporting Zero-COVID *and* reopening
T4: Hard propaganda supporting Zero-COVID *and* reopening

COVID Policy Support: 1-Wrong and failed 7-Correct and succeeded
Relaxation Preference: Lockdown: 1-More restrictive 7-More relaxed
Relaxation Preference: International Travel: 1-More restrictive 7-More relaxed
Relaxation Preference: Health Code: 1-More restrictive 7-More relaxed
Willingness to Protest: 1-Never participate 7-Definitely participate
Protest Rightfulness: 1-Completely not rightful 7-Completely rightful

As shown in Table B2, the randomization is successful, producing balanced groups.

Appendix C OLS Regressions

Table C1: Treatment Effects on COVID Policy Support

	Policy Support				Prefer Reopen			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Hard	-0.053				0.165*			
	(0.074)				(0.077)			
Two-sided Hard		-0.048				0.138		
		(0.074)				(0.078)		
Soft			-0.092				0.245*	
			(0.076)				(0.076)	
Two-sided Soft				-0.163*				0.093
				(0.074)				(0.080)
Constant	5.128*	5.128*	5.128*	5.128*	-0.129*	-0.129*	-0.129*	-0.129*
	(0.052)	(0.053)	(0.054)	(0.052)	(0.054)	(0.055)	(0.054)	(0.057)
Observations	1208	1208	1214	1196	1192	1193	1204	1188
R^2	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.004	0.004	0.003	0.009	0.001

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$

Table C2: Treatment Effects on COVID Policy Support with Controls

	Policy Support				Prefer Reopen			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Hard	-0.030				0.203*			
	(0.075)				(0.076)			
Two-sided Hard		-0.011				0.145		
		(0.076)				(0.078)		
Soft			-0.061				0.257*	
			(0.077)				(0.075)	
Two-sided Soft				-0.144				0.107
				(0.074)				(0.080)
Gender	-0.003	0.057	0.210*	0.092	0.048	0.114	0.098	0.149
	(0.078)	(0.079)	(0.081)	(0.077)	(0.079)	(0.080)	(0.078)	(0.083)
Education	-0.053	-0.072	-0.018	-0.025	-0.023	-0.040	-0.049	-0.042
	(0.059)	(0.062)	(0.061)	(0.062)	(0.060)	(0.064)	(0.059)	(0.067)
Income	0.095*	0.114*	0.060	0.090*	0.091*	0.144*	0.062	0.098*
	(0.044)	(0.044)	(0.046)	(0.044)	(0.045)	(0.045)	(0.044)	(0.047)
Party Member	-0.166	-0.206	-0.086	-0.280*	-0.130	-0.211	-0.142	-0.015
	(0.116)	(0.117)	(0.123)	(0.117)	(0.119)	(0.120)	(0.118)	(0.126)
Political Interest	0.071*	0.068	0.096*	0.072*	0.218*	0.206*	0.274*	0.235*
	(0.036)	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.036)	(0.037)	(0.035)	(0.037)
Social Media	-0.058	-0.008	-0.007	-0.015	-0.088*	-0.106*	-0.033	-0.050
	(0.041)	(0.043)	(0.042)	(0.041)	(0.042)	(0.044)	(0.041)	(0.044)
Ideology	-0.111*	-0.112*	-0.123*	-0.144*	-0.079	-0.046	-0.014	-0.015
	(0.041)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.039)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.041)	(0.042)
Constant	5.177*	4.924*	4.594*	4.900*	-0.759*	-0.935*	-1.201*	-1.231*
	(0.304)	(0.319)	(0.305)	(0.312)	(0.311)	(0.325)	(0.293)	(0.336)
Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Age Group FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	1164	1162	1168	1159	1150	1150	1159	1152
R-squared	0.031	0.027	0.034	0.039	0.069	0.087	0.097	0.077

Notes: Only control group and specified treatment group are included in each model. * $p < 0.05$

Table C3: Treatment Effects on Willingness to Protest

	Willingness to Protest				Protest Rightfulness			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Hard	-0.088				0.241*			
	(0.095)				(0.105)			
Two-sided Hard		-0.230*				-0.038		
		(0.091)				(0.108)		
Soft			-0.062				-0.084	
			(0.098)				(0.109)	
Two-sided Soft				0.009				0.156
				(0.097)				(0.109)
Constant	3.055*	3.055*	3.055*	3.055*	4.143*	4.143*	4.143*	4.143*
	(0.067)	(0.064)	(0.070)	(0.069)	(0.074)	(0.077)	(0.077)	(0.077)
Observations	1207	1206	1213	1195	1207	1205	1215	1195
R^2	0.001	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.002

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$

Table C4: Treatment Effects on Willingness to Protest with Controls

	Willingness to Protest				Protest Rightfulness			
Hard	-0.104				0.283*			
	(0.095)				(0.104)			
Two-sided Hard		-0.240*				-0.050		
		(0.092)				(0.108)		
Soft			-0.060				-0.055	
			(0.099)				(0.108)	
Two-sided Soft				0.008				0.186
				(0.098)				(0.109)
Gender	-0.073	-0.053	-0.269*	-0.263*	-0.508*	-0.387*	-0.409*	-0.372*
	(0.099)	(0.095)	(0.104)	(0.102)	(0.108)	(0.112)	(0.113)	(0.113)
Education	-0.016	-0.042	-0.016	0.032	0.100	0.165	0.148	0.094
	(0.075)	(0.075)	(0.078)	(0.081)	(0.082)	(0.088)	(0.085)	(0.090)
Income	0.031	0.034	0.058	0.010	0.245*	0.265*	0.269*	0.256*
	(0.056)	(0.053)	(0.058)	(0.057)	(0.061)	(0.062)	(0.063)	(0.064)
Party Member	0.315*	0.318*	0.338*	0.385*	-0.385*	-0.461*	-0.371*	-0.192
	(0.148)	(0.141)	(0.156)	(0.154)	(0.161)	(0.167)	(0.171)	(0.171)
Political Interest	-0.158*	-0.085	-0.132*	-0.059	-0.022	-0.030	-0.096	-0.087
	(0.045)	(0.044)	(0.046)	(0.045)	(0.049)	(0.052)	(0.050)	(0.051)
Social Media	-0.054	-0.059	-0.119*	-0.113*	-0.096	-0.102	-0.157*	-0.143*
	(0.052)	(0.051)	(0.054)	(0.053)	(0.057)	(0.061)	(0.059)	(0.059)
Ideology	0.111*	0.076	0.051	0.037	-0.030	-0.032	-0.053	-0.166*
	(0.052)	(0.050)	(0.054)	(0.052)	(0.056)	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.058)
Constant	3.583*	3.447*	4.068*	3.790*	4.259*	3.886*	4.436*	4.732*
	(0.388)	(0.383)	(0.387)	(0.410)	(0.423)	(0.453)	(0.424)	(0.457)
Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Age Group FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	1165	1162	1169	1160	1165	1161	1172	1161
R-squared	0.038	0.043	0.048	0.030	0.082	0.068	0.074	0.062

Notes: Only control group and specified treatment group are included in each model. * $p < 0.05$

Appendix D Treatment Vignettes

The purpose of the treatments is to present respondents with different types of propaganda messages and test the effect of being exposed to government COVID policy propaganda on Chinese individuals' support toward the policy. To make the treatments as externally valid as possible, we select all the materials from the state news media: Xinhua News Agency. Respondents will be asked to read a selected piece of news from Xinhua. We then randomly assign them to one of the five experimental groups: (1) the single-sided soft propaganda treatment group, (2) the single-sided hard propaganda treatment group, (3) the two-sided soft propaganda treatment group, (4) the two-sided hard propaganda treatment group, and (5) the control group. Table D1 summarizes the experimental design.

Table D1: Tabulation of Treatment

Propaganda Vignette	Treatment Group 1	Treatment Group 2	Treatment Group 3	Treatment Group 4	Control Group
Soft A (Reopening)	✓		✓		
Hard A (Reopening)		✓		✓	
Soft B (Zero-COVID)			✓		
Hard B (Zero-COVID)				✓	
Placebo					✓

(1) Soft propaganda A: The single-sided soft propaganda treatment group reads an op-ed by Xinhua that justifies reopening by citing public health officials and medical experts' judgments that the Omicron variant of SARS-COV-2 is much less virulent and now causes similar symptoms with seasonal flu's.

(2) Hard propaganda A: The single-sided hard propaganda treatment group reads a piece of an op-ed by Xinhua that commands the reopening and adjustment of epidemic control measures under Xi Jinping's leadership.

(3) Soft propaganda A+B: The two-sided soft propaganda treatment group reads both the single-sided soft propaganda treatment A and an op-ed by Xinhua that cites the same public health officials and medical experts' statistical evidence on the mortality and sequela of the Omicron variant of SARS-COV-2 (treatment B). The op-ed emphasizes the insufficient

elderly vaccination rate in China and the need for the "Zero-COVID" policy for public health reasons.

(4) Hard propaganda A+B: The two-sided hard propaganda treatment group reads both the single-sided hard propaganda treatment A and a piece of an op-ed by Xinhua that echoes a speech of Xi Jinping at a Politburo meeting and calls for resolute adherence to the "Zero-COVID" policy according to commands of the party center (treatment B).

(5) The control group reads a short paragraph about a piece of news on the appearance of the moon, Mars, and Jupiter in the sky. Such information is irrelevant to the zero-COVID policy or any government intention. However, it happens around the time when China is pursuing the "Zero-COVID" policy and therefore serves as an ideal placebo.

D.1 Soft Propaganda A: Pro-Reopening

【专家介绍进一步优化落实疫情防控措施】

新制定的十条优化措施出台后，各地更加有序有效地推进疫情防控工作。科学精准划分风险区域、进一步优化核酸检测、优化调整隔离方式、落实高风险区"快封快解"、加快推进老年人新冠病毒疫苗接种。

中国疾控中心首席专家吴尊友表示，"绝大多数流感病例，以及无症状和轻症的新冠病例，注意休息和多饮水，不需要特殊医疗服务，即可自我康复。"中国工程院院士钟南山院士判断，"经过不断变异，奥密克戎变异株感染并不可怕，绝大部分可在7到10天完全恢复。" 现在新冠病毒的毒力已经进化到季节性流感的水平，有些甚至比季节性流感毒力还低，轻症患者的治疗都是按照普通感冒的治疗手段处理就可以了，在方舱医院也无需太多的治疗干预，平均住院时间在7天左右。专家接受人民日报专访时指出，"目前学界并未确认新冠肺炎有后遗症。" 应最大限度减少疫情对群众生产生活秩序和经济社会发展的影响。

[Experts introduce the further optimization and implementation of measures for epidemic control] After the introduction of the newly developed ten optimization measures, localities are more orderly and effective in promoting the prevention and control of the epidemic. Scientifically and precisely delineate risk areas, further optimize of nucleic acid testing, optimize and adjust isolation methods, implement "fast lockdown and fast reopen" in high-risk areas, and accelerate the promotion of vaccination of elderly people with the new crown virus.

Wu Zunyou, the chief expert at the CDC, said, "The vast majority of influenza cases, as well as asymptomatic and mild cases of coronavirus, can recover themselves without special medical services by paying attention to rest and drinking more water." Academician Zhong Nanshan, a member of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, judged that "after continuous mutation, infection with the Omicron mutant strain is not horrifying and the vast majority can fully recover in 7

to 10 days." Now the virulence of the new coronavirus has evolved to the level of seasonal influenza, some even lower than the seasonal influenza virulence, the treatment of patients with minor illnesses is handled according to the treatment means of the common cold can be, in the square cabin hospital also do not need too much therapeutic intervention, the average hospitalization time in about 7 days. Experts in an exclusive interview with the People's Daily pointed out that "the current academic community has not confirmed that there is long COVID." The impact of the epidemic on the production and living order of the masses and economic and social development should be minimized.

D.2 Hard Propaganda A: Pro-Reopening

【凝聚共识、形成合力，落实好疫情防控优化措施】

新制定的十条优化措施出台后，各地更加有序有效地推进疫情防控工作。近三年来，在以习近平同志为核心的党中央坚强领导下，举国上下心往一处想、劲往一处使，激发出同舟共济、共克时艰的精神力量，形成了抗击疫情的强大合力。

防控措施和策略的调整是一项系统性的工作，需要党政各部门和社会各方面同心、同向、同行。各地区各部门要坚持第九版防控方案，落实二十条优化措施，不动摇、不走样，更规范、更快速、更有效地开展防控。要坚决避免层层加码，最大限度地减少疫情对经济社会发展的影响。不得随意扩大，封控管理要快封快解、应解尽解。严禁随意封校停课、停工停产、未经批准阻断交通、随意采取"静默"管理、随意封控、长时间不解封、随意停诊等各类层层加码行为，对造成严重后果的依法依规严肃追责。进一步增强大家对当前疫情防控政策的信心和耐心，就能更好凝聚起万众一心、共同抗疫的磅礴力量。

[Gather consensus, form a synergy, and implement the optimal measures for epidemic prevention and control] After the introduction of the newly developed ten optimization measures, the epidemic prevention, and control work became more orderly and effective across localities. In the past three years, under the strong leadership of the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core, the whole country has been thinking and working in the same direction, inspiring the spiritual strength to overcome the difficulties together and forming a strong synergy to fight against the epidemic.

The adjustment of prevention and control measures and strategies is a systematic work that requires all departments of the party and government and all sectors of society to be of one mind, one direction, and one walk. All regions and departments should adhere to the ninth edition of the prevention and control program and implement the twenty optimized measures without wavering or deviating, and carry out prevention and control in a more standardized, faster, and more effective manner. We must resolutely avoid adding layers and layers to minimize

the impact of the epidemic on economic and social development. Shall not be arbitrarily expanded, the closure and control management should be quickly sealed and solved as soon as possible. It is strictly forbidden to arbitrarily close schools and classes, stop work and production, block traffic without approval, arbitrarily take "silent" management, arbitrarily seal the control, a long time not unseal, or arbitrarily suspend the clinic and other types of cascading behavior. Actions causing serious consequences will be dealt with in accordance with the law and the serious pursuit of responsibility. To further enhance confidence and patience in the current epidemic prevention and control policy, we can better unite the majestic power of all people to fight the epidemic together.

D.3 Soft Propaganda B: Pro-Zero-COVID

【新华述评｜从权威专家解读看"动态清零"必要性】世卫组织最新数据显示，全球新冠确诊病例数累计超过5亿，死亡病例数逾619万。习近平总书记近日指出，"要坚持外防输入、内防反弹，坚持科学精准、动态清零，抓细抓实疫情防控各项举措"。

近期美国日增确诊病例约2.9万例，日增死亡病例约500例。目前美国有近2400万成年人患有新冠长期后遗症。中国疾控中心首席专家吴尊友介绍，新冠后遗症可以持续数周、数月甚至更长时间。德国联邦卫生部长表示，此前宣布允许新冠感染者自愿进行隔离的措施是"错误的"，德国将继续沿用新冠感染者强制隔离政策。

专家提醒，公众要避免出现低估奥密克戎危害等认知误区。目前来看，奥密克戎的危害性远高于所谓流感。香港数据显示，未接种疫苗的80岁以上老年人病死率高达15.68%，风险是30岁以下人群的252倍。中国工程院院士钟南山说，我们不会容忍自然感染导致大量的长者死亡，所以我们的政策仍然是动态清零。

[Xinhua Commentary — Experts explain the necessity of "Dynamic Zero COVID"] The latest data from WHO shows that the cumulative number of confirmed cases of the global COVID-19 pandemic exceeds 500 million and the number of deaths exceeds 6.19 million. General Secretary Xi Jinping recently pointed out that "we should adhere to the principle of prevention of external importation, prevention of internal rebound, scientific precision, dynamic Zero COVID, grasp the details and substance of the epidemic prevention and control initiatives."

Recently, there are about 29,000 additional confirmed cases and 500 additional deaths per day in the United States. There are currently nearly 24 million adults in the U.S. suffering from the "long COVID" of the coronavirus. Wu Zunyou, chief expert at the CDC, said that "long COVID" can last for weeks, months or even longer. Germany's federal health minister said that the previously announced measure to allow voluntary quarantine of newly infected people was

"wrong" and that Germany will continue to follow the policy of mandatory quarantine of newly infected people.

Experts warned that the public should avoid misconceptions such as underestimating the danger of the Omicron variant. At present, the danger of the Omicron variant is much higher than the so-called flu. Data from Hong Kong show that unvaccinated people over the age of 80 have a death rate of 15.68 percent, a risk 252 times higher than that of people under the age of 30. Zhong Nanshan, a member of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, said we will not tolerate natural infections leading to a large number of elderly deaths, so our policy remains to be "dynamic Zero COVID."

D.4 Hard Propaganda B: Pro-Zero-COVID

【新华述评｜坚决筑牢疫情防控屏障】近日，中共中央政治局召开会议指出，一定要认真落实习近平总书记重要讲话精神，毫不动摇坚持"动态清零"总方针，坚决筑牢疫情防控屏障。

会议强调，要深刻、完整、全面认识党中央确定的疫情防控方针政策，做到三个"坚决"：—— 坚决克服认识不足、准备不足、工作不足等问题；—— 坚决克服轻视、无所谓、自以为是等思想，始终保持清醒头脑，毫不动摇坚持"动态清零"总方针；—— 坚决同一切歪曲、怀疑、否定我国防疫方针政策的言行作斗争。

下一步，我国将坚持"动态清零"总方针不犹豫不动摇，持续完善常态化疫情防控机制，坚决守住不发生规模性反弹底线。疫情防控形势越是严峻复杂，越要统一思想、坚定信心。同心协力，坚持就是胜利，坚持才能胜利。各级党委、政府和社会各方面把思想和行动统一到党中央决策部署上来，克服麻痹思想、厌战情绪、侥幸心理、松劲心态，全面动员、全面部署，尽快打赢抗疫的大仗硬仗。

[Xinhua Review — Resolutely build a strong barrier for COVID containment] Recently, the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee held a meeting and pointed out that we must conscientiously implement the spirit of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important speech, unwaveringly adhere to the general policy of "dynamic Zero COVID", and resolutely build a firm barrier to prevent and control the epidemic.

The meeting stressed the need for a profound, complete, and comprehensive understanding of the epidemic prevention and control policies set by the Party Central Committee, to achieve three "resolute": resolutely overcome the lack of awareness, preparation, and work; resolutely overcome contempt, indifference, self-righteousness, and other ideas, always keep a clear head, and unswervingly adhere to the general policy of "dynamic Zero COVID"; resolutely fight against all distortions, doubts, and denials of our epidemic prevention policies.

In the next step, China will not hesitate to adhere to the general policy of "dynamic Zero COVID", continue to improve the regular epidemic prevention and control mechanism, and resolutely guard the bottom line of no large-scale rebound. The more severe and complicated the situation is, the more we must unify our minds and have firm confidence. Working together, persistence is victory, only persistence can win. Party committees, governments, and all sectors of society at all levels to unify their thoughts and actions to the decision and deployment of the Party Central Committee. Overcome paralysis, wariness, fluke mentality, and relaxed mentality. Full mobilization. Full deployment. Win the big battle against the epidemic as soon as possible.

D.5 Control Group

【小心被萌到！#25日天空将露笑脸#】天文科普专家介绍，25日凌晨，木星、火星、残月将联袂上演一出“双星伴月”。届时三者会在天空中组成一幅“可爱笑脸”。只要天气晴好，在天亮前大约一个半小时内，我国感兴趣的公众面向东南方低空，用肉眼就可观赏到这趣味一幕。#25日双星伴月#

[Very Cute! #The sky will show a smiley face on the 25th#] According to astronomy science experts, in the early morning of the 25th, Jupiter, Mars, and the waning moon will jointly stage a “double star with the moon”. At that time, the three will form a “cute smiling face” in the sky. As long as the weather is fine, within about an hour and a half before dawn, if people in our country face the southeast direction, they can see this interesting scene with their naked eyes. #25 days with double stars and moon#

Appendix E Measurement

E.1 Dependent Variables

DV: COVID Policy Assessment

- Overall, how do you assess the COVID Policy in the last three years until now?
  总的来说，您如何评价过去三年至今的防疫政策?

DV: COVID Policy Preference

- Some people argue that the government should spare no cost to stop the spread of the pandemic, including imposing city-wide lockdowns. Others argue that the government should relax restrictions and stop centralized quarantine and testing.
  Where would you place yourself on the scale below?
  有人认为政府应该不惜一切代价遏制疫情蔓延，包括使用"全城静默"等方式。也有人认为政府应该放开管控，不再集中隔离和检测。
  请问您更倾向于哪种防疫政策呢?

- Some people argue that the government should impose strict restrictions on the number of international travelers to limit imported COVID cases. Others argue that the number of international flights should be increased to meet the demand of overseas Chinese students and workers.
  Where would you place yourself on the scale below?
  有人认为政府应该严格限制从国外出入境的人数（包括留学生和海外务工人员）以防止疫情流入。也有人认为应当恢复国际航班数量以满足留学生和海外务工人员的需求。
  请问您更倾向于哪种防疫政策呢?

- Some people argue that the government should routinely use Health codes to regulate entering public spaces, such as restaurants, movie theaters, public transportation, tourist sites, planes, trains, etc. Others argue that Health codes are emergency measures and should not impact people's lives in the long run.
  Where would you place yourself on the scale below?
  有人认为政府应该常态化使用健康码来管理人员进入公共场所，包括餐馆、影院、公共交通、景区、飞机、火车等。也有人认为健康码是应急措施，不应当长期影响人民生活的便利。
  请问您更倾向于哪种防疫政策呢?

DV: Willingness to Protest

- Imagine the following scenario: your neighborhood is suddenly locked down for 7 days. Some residents feel frustrated and plan to protest. How likely would you participate? 请您设想下面这一场景：您所在的小区的突然宣布临时封控7 天。小区居民为此感到不满，准备聚集抗议。请问您有多大可能会参加?

DV: Perceived Protest Rightfulness

- Do you think the protest described above would be deemed rightful by the state? 您觉得上面描述的抗议在国家看来是正当的吗?

E.2 Control Variables

We include two different sets of pre-treatment covariates: demographic covariates and predisposition covariates. Demographic covariates include *education*, *age*, *gender*, and *region*. Predisposition covariates include *party membership*, *political interests*, *ideology*, and *Social Media*.