

# Platform, Mediation, and Current Issues

## On the case of White Paper Movement: Youtube comments vs. Twitter replies from BBC's community

### RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The study is based on the case of the white paper protests that erupted in China in 2022. A series of protests against the Zero-COVID policy took place in big cities such as Shanghai and Beijing in mainland China and even overseas starting with one at Communication University of China, Nanjing on 26 November 2022. However, related videos and information are blocked by Chinese internet censorship

As of early December 2022, many Chinese, despite the scale of the protests, are still unaware of what has occurred. However, still a lot of Chinese use multi-methods bypassing the GFW. Thus, people who discuss the topic of white paper protests on YouTube and Twitter form a suspicious group, whose nationality cannot be determined. Our study will analyze the discursive environment of the two platforms in this case in detail.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How is the White Paper protest represented on the platforms YouTube and Twitter in the same timeline?

What are the differences between the debates and discourses in the BBC community around the White Paper movement on these two platforms?

## Data collection

Overview of both Youtube and Twitter:

For Youtube, we used Youtube Data Tools to collect the total number of videos under the keyword "china protest" that were published from November 24 to December 3, 2022. We ranked them by date in chronological order. For Twitter, we used 4CAT and queried "china protest". We retrieved as many tweets as possible with the same date range we used for Youtube.

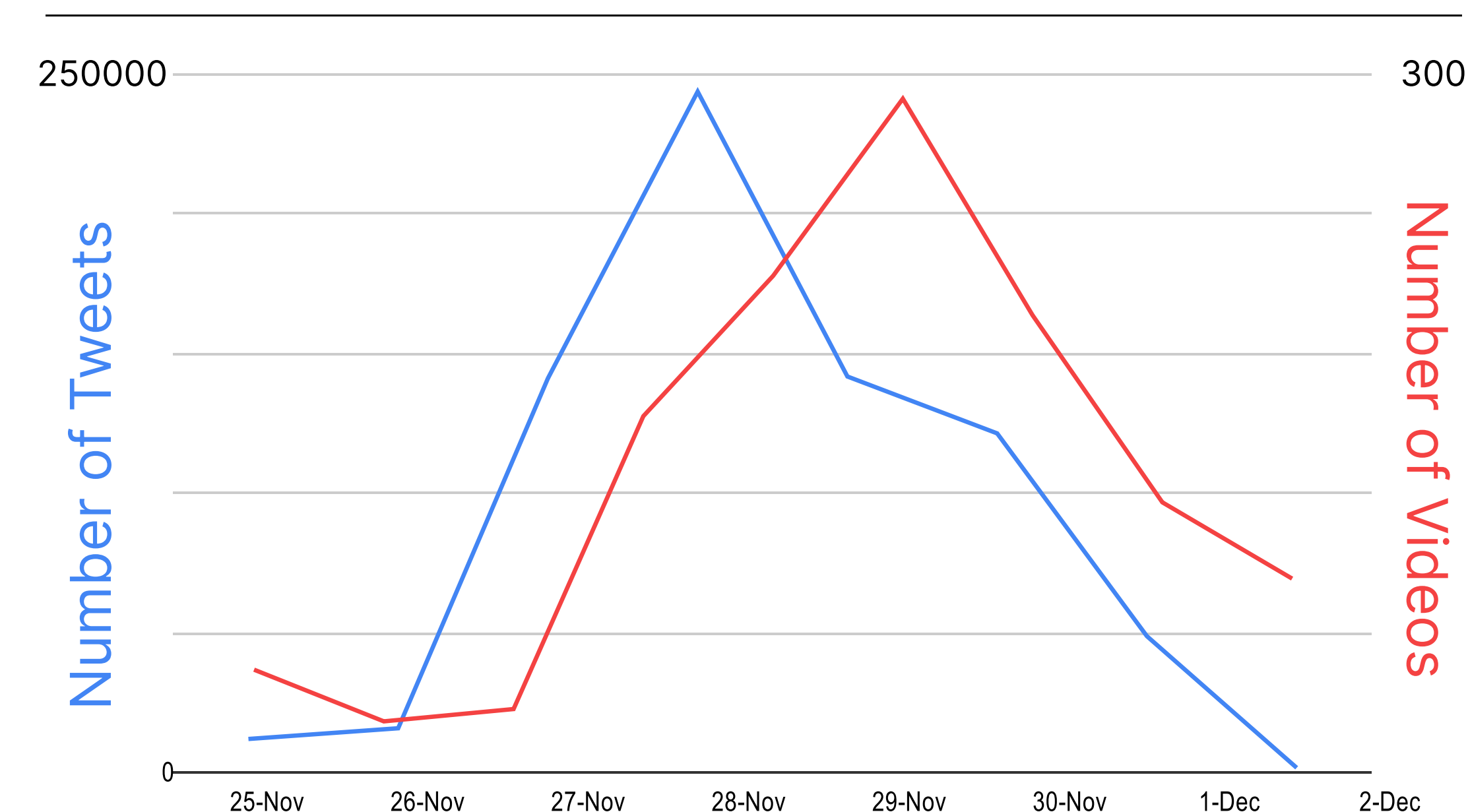
Analyzing two tweets and two Youtube videos from BBC News (which were reported with the same titles on two platforms):

We used Youtube Data Tools to retrieve the comments from the two videos. Meanwhile, we used 4CAT to retrieve the replies from the two tweets. We used the query "in\_reply\_to\_tweet\_id:". For both BBC's Youtube video comments and tweets, we collected and analyzed the top 30 comments, and ranked them by the highest like or favorite count.

## Data Processing

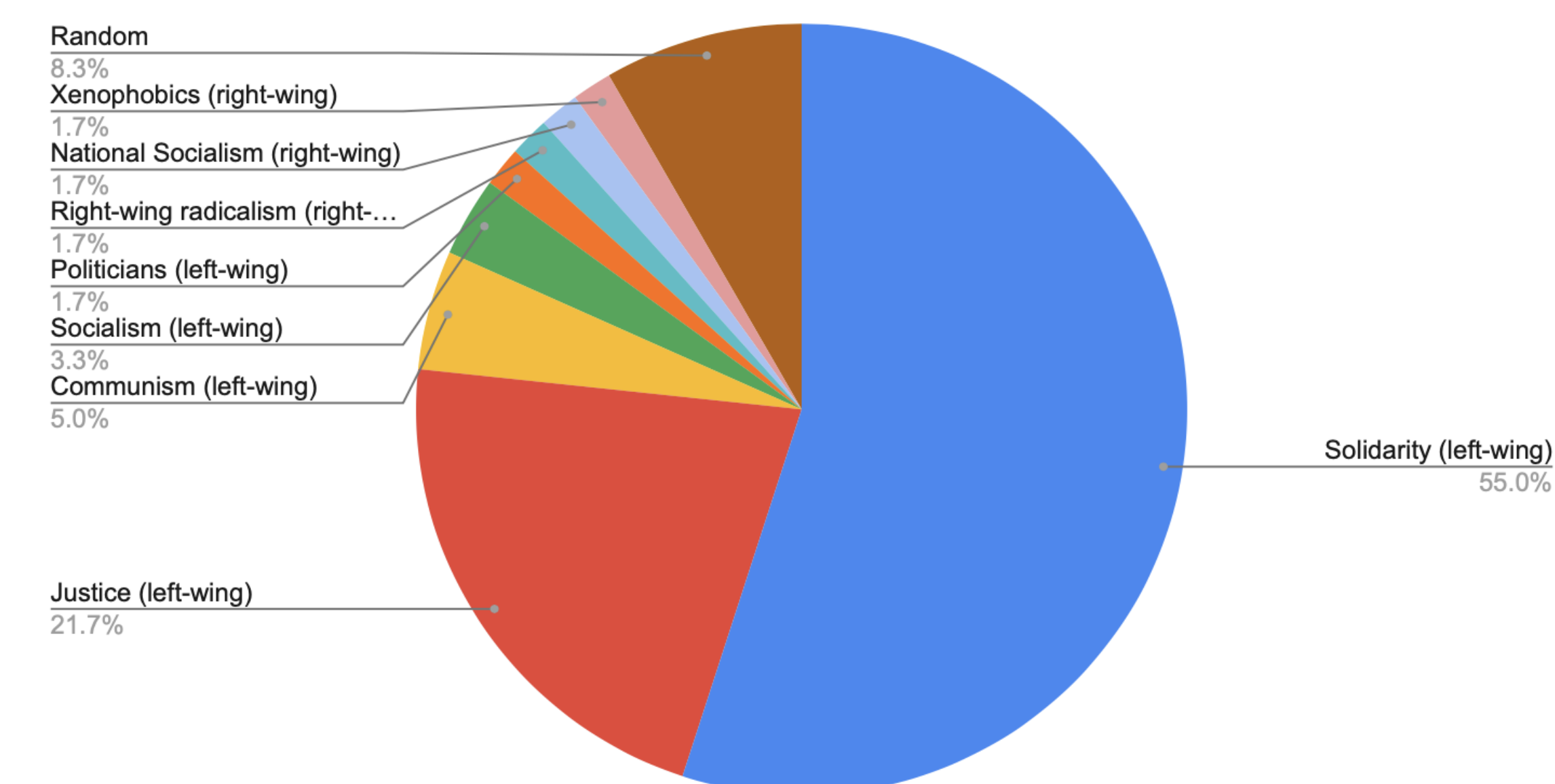
We first conducted an overview analysis of a total of 1121 Youtube videos and 728166 Twitters Tweets to achieve a comprehensive understanding of how the social issue is represented on different platform patterns. This analysis focused on comparing the amount of production, the representation of content, and co-words network analysis. In addition, we also conducted a more detailed qualitative analysis of the comments and replies on BBC News' YouTube and Twitter, which are a total of 120 texts to see how audiences perceived and discussed the protest on each platform. Building on previous findings by Bauer et al.(2017), we designed a specialized coding scheme sheet for our research topic to measure the political stand of users. Based on the coding scheme, we classified users into four categories: left-wing, right-wing, neutral, and random.

GRAPHS: Production Volume on Twitter and YouTube and Pie Charts



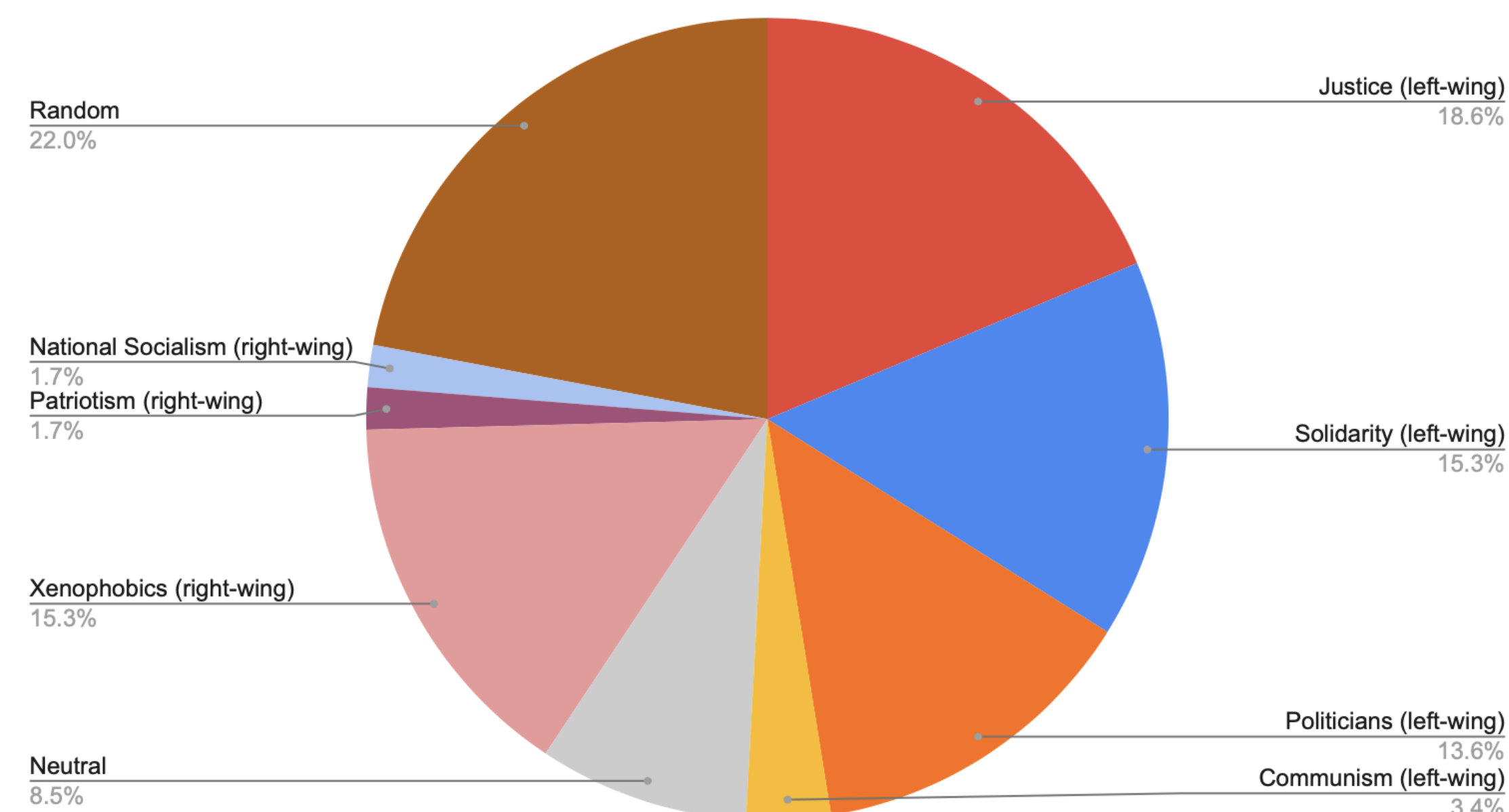
The discussion on Twitter is much larger, reaching an amount of 250,000 tweets per day, comparing to almost 300 YouTube videos a day. This is because tweets are much easier to distribute and take less effort to produce than a YouTube video does. We also see that the peak day of production on Twitter was one day earlier. This would indicate that Twitter is a faster reacting platform than YouTube is.

Comment Coding Scheme from 2 BBC Youtube Videos (Top 30 comments for each video)



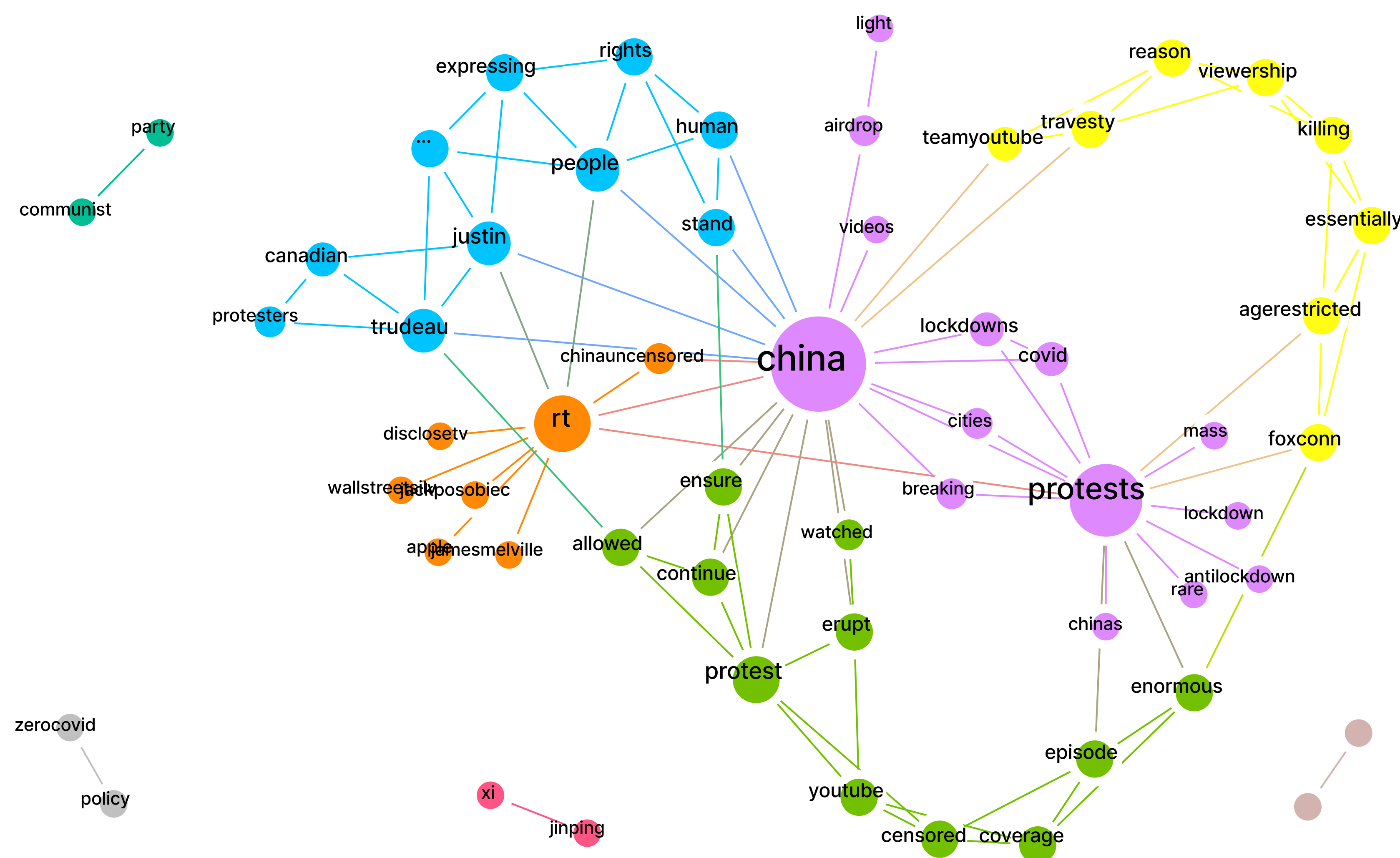
For Youtube comments, 4 topics fell under the left-wing category, with 'justice' receiving the highest percentage of 16.6% among the 4. On the other hand, 3 topics fell under the right-wing category with 'xenophobics' receiving the highest percentage of 15.3% among the 3. Meanwhile, there were tweets that fell under the 'neutral' and 'random' categories.

Reply Coding Scheme from 2 BBC Tweets (Top 30 replies for each tweet)



For Twitter replies, 5 topics fell under the left-wing category, with 'solidarity' getting the highest overall with 55% followed by 'justice' with 21.7%. On the other hand, 3 topics fell under the right-wing category such as 'right-wing radicalism', 'national socialism', and 'xenophobics'. Meanwhile, the third biggest topic overall was the 'random' category with a percentage of 8.3%.

### VISUALISATIONS



Co-word network analysis, based on our Twitter dataset, visualized through Gephi. This network represents which words were most used together in the tweets from our dataset, with different colors corresponding to different sub-conversations on Twitter

### Legend

- The larger the node, the more often this word is mentioned
- Purple: concerns about the strict covid lockdowns in China, and to uncensor China
- Blue: standing with protestors and that Chinese people deserve human rights; a discussion on the Canadian president who has recently expressed how Chinese people should be allowed to protest
- Green: news coverage and possible censorship in China
- Orange: trending Twitter hashtags
- Yellow: Extremist discussion

### MAIN FINDINGS

- Twitter showed a faster response towards the White Paper movement than YouTube did
- BBC's community on YouTube showed a larger left-wing response than Twitter did
- Twitter was more divided when it came to our left-wing, right-wing, neutral, and random coding
- Multiple sub-conversations arose on Twitter on the China protests

### PARTICIPANTS

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