

# Transformation of Chinese Culture's External Communication Strategies in the Perspective of the Community of Human Destiny

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**Abstract:** *China has been a diplomatic power since ancient times, From Zheng He's seven voyages to the Western Ocean hundreds of years ago to today's vigorous promotion of the Community of Human Destiny, all of them reflect China's great power style. But nowadays, most of the international discourse is in the hands of the West, and China's voice has not yet been well told and listened to. There is the problem of "not being able to speak the truth and not being able to spread the truth after speaking it", which often leads to misunderstanding by Western countries. This paper analyzes in detail the communication context, the communication dilemma, and why communication is necessary. Based on this analysis and my own insights, I propose a communication strategy that is suitable for China today.*

**Keywords:** *Chinese Culture; External Communication; Community of Human Destiny; Communication Strategies*

## 1. Introduction

From the ancient Silk Road to the current Belt and Road, China has been actively engaging in cultural exchanges with other countries and progressing with them. In the end, nations become stronger together. Through China's continuous efforts, Chinese culture continues to be recognized by other countries, increasing its international influence and appeal. However, differences in cultural expression and ideological differences create very limited Scope of transmission and some inescapable communication issues. So our country must adjust its communication strategy in a timely manner and enhance its external communication capacity.

## 2. Background to the spread of Chinese culture

### **2.1. The platformization of social life and the emergence of " Internet celebrity" as the first communicators**

With the advent of platformized life, the users of major new media platforms has grown dramatically. The presence of people from various countries on these new media. New media has become one of the main means of cultural exchange today. Some video sharers have large fan bases and their impact on cultural transmission is immeasurable. For example, the YouTube sensation Li Ziqi focuses on food production, craftsmanship and non-heritage cultural heritage, shares her fulfilling and satisfying idyllic life and physically integrates traditional Chinese craftsmanship into her daily life. Because of the high quality of the video, she has attracted the attention of a large number of netizens and has gotten netizens interested in Chinese culture. Grandpa Amu, who is known as the "contemporary Luban", attracts thousands of foreign netizens relying on his exquisite handmade wooden crafts. There are many others like them who work hard to show the living Chinese culture to the outside world. Because of their efforts, Chinese culture is becoming more and more vivid and spreading more and more widely. However, because of the high degree of freedom, the ability to control the risk of public opinion is very limited, facing the guidance of public opinion on the Internet is also in a relatively passive position.

## ***2.2. Cultural exchanges with foreign countries are constantly being enriched, but there is a lack of "leaders"***

Our country has been enriching the ways and contents of cultural exchanges in recent years. From single traditional media to major media platforms, from poetry in books to musical instruments, traditional dress, etc. However, the scope of dissemination of these products is very limited and few people are willing to learn about them. America's Starbucks, McDonald's, Hollywood can be seen all around the world, South Korean TV series and K-Pop have attracted most of the world's young people. Chanel and Saint Laurent from France, Gucci from Italy and other famous luxury goods have increased the popularity of the region and also enhance the popularity and depth of the national culture. However, the influence of Chinese own cultural products is negligible compared to these countries. The dissemination of Chinese culture has always lacked a brand that can affect and drive the development of China's cultural industry.

## ***2.3. Changing international relations and the need for cultural exchanges***

Today's international situation is constantly changing. Although peaceful development remains the world theme, there have been disputes. For example, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict which has lasted from 2021 to the present, the situation in the Middle East has been tense, and there are also many other disputes. These tense international situations reflect the importance of cultural exchanges. Because exchanges can bring about mutual understanding, and timely and effective cultural exchanges can save a lot of warfare. Cultural exchanges and mutual understanding of civilizations is not only a topic for China but also a major theme for the world today. And China has always maintained peaceful, understanding and win-win diplomatic mindset when socializing with other countries. Such thinking benefits to world peace and common development, so the spread of Chinese culture and ideas around the world will not only benefit China, but also play an important role in maintaining a relatively stable world situation.

## **3. China's cultural communication dilemmas**

### ***3.1. Some Western masses' perception of China is stuck in the past***

Western-centered theories still persist in some people's minds. Some Western countries always believe that Western culture is superior to non-Western culture. It leads to a lot of people don't wanting to understand Chinese culture in detail. As John Keay points out, most Westerners can name half Roman emperors, while few can name a Chinese emperor. China is no longer the "sick man of East Asia" of the last century, but because most people know about China through books and biased media reporting. Real China can only be recognized by a small group of people. Most people can only understand a part of China or a wrong image of China because of their limited way of understanding.

### ***3.2. There are certain differences between Chinese and Western contexts***

American cultural anthropologist Edward T. Hall, in his book *Beyond Culture* published in 1976, insightfully proposed that culture is contextual and categorized contexts into high-context and low-context, He also classified Chinese as high-context and English as low-context. Chinese has different meanings in different contexts, and the meaning of the expression is more implicit and undeclared, while the low contexts are usually more explicit and direct. Because of this, misunderstandings often appear when the two parts communicate. The high context may think that the low context is impolite, and the low context may don't understand what the high context is saying. If basic communication is difficult, cultural exchange often faces even greater difficulties.

### ***3.3. Elitization of the main body of the population***

Many Chinese Overseas Enterprises seldom publicize Chinese culture in their international communications, focusing on their products for publicity. The ever-present phenomenon of "focusing on publicity, not on communication, on products, not on stories" has not been effectively improved. Individual communication subjects generally share their own lives or opinions in a casual manner, but intentional cultural communication is rare, which can easily lead to misunderstandings and conflicts.<sup>[1]</sup> The main bodies of truly effective cultural communication are usually the mainstream media which are

as the mouthpieces of the State, as well as a number of communication elites. They have a system of communication knowledge and the ability to analyze the international situation. However, the number of people with the full range of ability are very limited. Therefore, it is difficult to increase the efficiency of dissemination by this way. The dissemination of culture to the outside world is one of China's major tasks at the moment, but the task will be not so difficult if the task can distribute to each person. But how the people who do not have specialized knowledge can effectively disseminate Chinese culture is also a major challenge.

#### ***3.4. Difficulty in translating languages accurately***

In a philosophical sense, discourse is a relational category, a form of subjective social practice and a space shared by speakers and interlocutors. Discourse is naturally interstitial in character, and intertextuality is the basic form of existence of discourse. Mediated inter-discourse refers that this media discourse that characterizes the ideologies, values, and cultural significance of different countries and peoples presents a variety of possibilities and a state of elasticity and tension in the process of its communication flow and functional realization.<sup>[2]</sup> Therefore, the accuracy of discourse descriptions is particularly important in the process of cultural transmission. The Chinese word "junzi" usually refers to a person of noble character and good moral conduct, or a person of high status. It's also an honorific title for others. However, the English translates it directly as "gentleman", which is not an accurate translation and tends to erase part of the cultural meaning.

### **4. Reasons for the spread of Chinese culture abroad**

#### ***4.1. Promoting the building of a community of human destiny and strengthening cultural exchanges***

Our country conducts diplomatic activities with the idea of a "community of human destiny", and "community of human destiny" was repeatedly advocated in the diplomatic service. " In today's world, countries are interdependent and in solidarity with each other. We should inherit and carry forward the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, build a new type of international relations centered on win-win cooperation, and create a community of human destiny". Such an idea was put forward in the 70th General Assembly of the United Nations. The building of a community of human destiny is that our country has been striving for. Cultural diffusion generates exchanges and exchanges generate understanding. Mutual understanding among nations is the basis for building a community of human destiny.

#### ***4.2. Enhancing China's international discourse at the international level and building cultural self-confidence***

Western countries occupy a large part of the international national discourse, while China's discourse compared to them is in a completely unequal position. This has led to China often being misunderstood by the West, and even deliberately misrepresenting China. In order to stop being misinterpreted, the increase in the power of speech is particularly important and urgent. It is necessary to strengthen theoretical research on international communication, master the laws of international communication, build a foreign discourse system and improve the art of communication. The wide dissemination of culture to the outside world can also build up the country's cultural confidence, and building up cultural confidence can enhance the right of international discourse and help to promote exchanges and cooperation among different cultures. Exchanges between civilizations also can contribute to cultural progress.

#### ***4.3. Breaking Western stereotypes and building a credible, respectable and lovable image of China***

The stereotypes of our country in the West are stuck in the history books of the downtrodden and the distortions of the Western media. The wide dissemination of culture can help to break down the stereotypes in the West to present a three-dimensional and realistic image of China, no longer subject to the distortions of the Western media. The Twentieth People's Congress of the Communist Party of China put forward "telling a good Chinese story, disseminating a good Chinese voice, and presenting a credible, lovely and honorable image of China" as a major task at present. The premise of establishing a three-dimensional image, the first step is to " move out", the effective dissemination of culture has become one of the most important things.

## **5. Strategic perspectives on cultural communication**

### ***5.1. Nurturing Translation Talents***

The accuracy of translation is the key to the accurate and effective dissemination of culture, so it is necessary to vigorously nurture our translators. According to the functional translation theory perspective, first of all, our country should take function and practicality as the basic cultivation thinking, and effectively improve the cultivation efficiency of cultivating talents. Secondly, it is important to learn not only to translate vocabulary accurately, but also to carefully study the etiquette of speech in communication to ensure that no one is offended in communication. Finally, there is also a focus on non-verbal communication knowledge, which consists mainly of facial expressions and body movements.<sup>[3]</sup> For example, in Korea kneeling is a sign of gratitude and respect for the others, but in China you cannot kneel easily, kneeling is a sign of submission, humiliation. That's why it's essential to understand and honor nonverbal sexuality. Moreover, when training human resources, it is necessary to pay attention to the differences in context. Translators can't be a simple translation machine, but should understand the logic and habits of the region's speech, so as to be able to communicate smoothly and not to offend others in exchanges.

### ***5.2. Enhancing national cultural confidence with a focus on breadth, everyone can become a communicator***

As China has risen to international prominence in recent years, and becomes the world's second-largest economy. The influence in the economic, political and cultural spheres has continued to rise, so the nation's cultural self-confidence urgently needs to be raised to match its own. In the past, China's "closed-door policy" brought about disasters, and then continued to learn Western technology in order to save and strengthen itself, which leads to the West has always believed that China is a country that lacks innovation. Our country by virtue of their own efforts to become more and more strong, But the nation has always believed that foreign products are better than domestic ones, and always think that their own country is inferior. Because of this, the news of going abroad to snatch is endless. Such examples constantly remind that it's necessary to enhance the cultural self-confidence of our people and not to fall into "self-orientation". Chinese cultural communication should penetrate into various industries, change the deficit in cultural communication, and realize further external communication.

### ***5.3. Adoption of multimedia platforms for dissemination***

Nowadays, the dissemination of Chinese culture is usually done in a single way. The essence of Chinese culture, such as literature, history, philosophy, and so on, usually comes from important domestic publishing houses and magazines, and the groups facing usually are foreign professional groups. The range of groups is too narrow. On the other hand, in terms of media communication, the mainstream media have dominated cultural communication, but the content of the coverage is still insufficient and the breadth is not enough. Our country should adopt a multimedia, multi-platform matrix communication form, and emphasize the popularization of the breadth of the people, civil media and enterprises. At the same time, attention should also be paid to different communication strategies in different platforms, for example: cultural communication in Tik Tok. It is necessary to use the shorter duration of the short video in line with the habits of the user to disseminate.

### ***5.4. Adopting "big stories, small people" empathetic communication***

On February 19, 2016, a seminar on the Party's press and public opinion work in Beijing delivered an important speech and emphasized the need to "enhance international discourse and focus on telling China's story". China has to change its current narrative system, it can't just have achievement narratives, political narratives, these big angle narratives are hard to be understood by people living in different environments. But emotions are common to human beings, and cultural communication will be more effective if emotions are used to lead overseas audiences to empathize. For example, when our country tells of the achievements of poverty eradication, which the West has not experienced, we can tell it through the dedication of a small person. These delicate, microscopic emotions not only evoke empathy but also reflect our country's achievements. Storytelling through a grandiose perspective is prone to run into walls of ideology, but empathic narratives can tell China's story and spread China's voice in the process of emotional resonance.

### 5.5. Intercultural communication

Interculturality, a concept developed by Habermas in his desire to transcend cultural barriers, refers to "the existence and equal interaction of different cultures and the possibility of generating common cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect".<sup>[2]</sup> Interculturality is the unity of difference and integration, people from different countries live in different environments. He influences people's thinking and way of life, in the process of cultural dissemination to the outside world, out of the social context of a cultural symbols will not be understood. Therefore, in the process of communication, we should understand the commonalities and differences between cultures, and adopt different tactics and communication methods for different regions. In the process of dissemination, we should break through nationalism and centrism, and combine traditional Chinese culture with modern culture, so that Chinese culture can go to the world.

### 6. Summary

Chinese culture is also spreading all over the world as its national power grows, and it has become an advocate and leader of the community of human destiny. China's foreign policy of insisting on transcultural communication rather than cultural hegemony and emphasizing mutual exchange rather than forced acceptance in cultural exchanges has enabled our country to achieve good results in its diplomatic career. However, with the changes in the international situation and the continuous development of our country, our foreign development strategy should be continuously adjusted and developed in order to address emerging and new issues.

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