

Public Diplomacy: Transcending the Differences between China and Europe

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Abstract: China and European countries are good partners in many fields, and improving China-EU relations is in accordance with the interests of both sides. However, opinion poll showed that the positive attitudes toward China in many European countries declined rapidly in recent years. In the meantime, most Chinese thinks highly of EU and China-EU relations though they know very little about them. There are many reasons that may explain the phenomenon, but public diplomacy is one of the important factors. Because of different historical experiences and cultural traditions, China and European countries have distinct practice and theoretical sources of public diplomacy, thus leading to different results. In faced with huge unbalance in public diplomacy, how can China and European countries do to transcend the differences? With the leadership changes in both China and Europe, there is much work to do to improve China-EU relations in the perspective of public diplomacy

Key words: public diplomacy; China-EU relations; opinion poll; the differences

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“There are so many marvelous spectacles in Europe impressing us, such as antiquity of Athens, magnificence of Rome, gorgeousness of Paris, whimsy of Barcelona, revival of Berlin. However, if you demand to describe the impression of Europe in one word, it is declining that haunts in our minds. That is to say, in our eyes, Europe is like a fading nobleman. By contrast, when Europeans look upon Chinese, it is something like a declining aristocrat seeing a newly emerging upstart.” The above words are from the blog of “Backpackers of Sixty Yeas Old” named Zhang Guangzhu and Wang Zhongjin, who are common Chinese, but uncommon in a sense. The couple began to travel worldwide in their sixties five years ago, and they have been to dozens of courtiers in Europe, North and South America so far. You may accept or refuse their opinions with many reasons. No matter what you think, it is one way how Chinese and Europeans view one another.

Striking Contrast of Public Views

In terms of economic power and world influence, China and European Union are two potential poles in an increasingly multi-polarized world, and the two sides also lay more stress on each other. Then, how do Chinese and European people really view China-EU relations? In 2007, a research group at the Institute of European Studies of CASS (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) did a survey about Chinese views of China-EU relations in several cities of China like Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Xi’an and so on. The interviewees covered the public in various walks of life, including ordinary citizens, experts (officials, scholars and entrepreneurs),

employees concerned with European affairs, and university students. Researchers have designed many variables in the questionnaire, and some can be borrowed to show the Chinese views of China-EU relations as Table 1^①.

Table 1. Chinese public views of China-EU relations in 2007

		ordinary citizens	officials, scholars and entrepreneurs	employees concerned with European affairs	university students
relationship judgment	friend/cooperation	93.7%	98.6%	95.5%	96.1%
	foe/competitor	5.5%	0.9%	4.0%	3.1%
	others	0.8%	0.5%	0.5%	0.8%
leadership change	have influence	61.6%	62.8%	64.6%	71.8%
	no influence	25.0%	29.1%	20.9%	24.1%
	no idea	13.4%	8.1%	14.4%	4.1%
current situation	good	80.3%	89.9%	76.7%	81.2%
	bad	9.4%	6.6%	11.8%	11.2%
	no idea	10.4%	3.5%	11.4%	7.6%
prospect confidence	good	64.6%	83.0%	70.2%	85.5%
	neutral	17.1%	10.0%	16.2%	8.5%
	bad	5.7%	1.7%	3.0%	2.7%
	no idea	12.6%	5.4%	10.5%	3.2%
familiarity self estimation	familiar	34.1%	44.0%	44.2%	36.5%
	unfamiliar	65.9%	56.0%	55.8%	63.5%

Note: The data are calculated based on the report of 2007 made by Institute of European Studies at CASS.

From the data, we may at least draw three conclusions: firstly, overwhelming majority of Chinese (more than 90 percent) think highly of China-EU relations, though most of them admit they know very little about Europe; secondly, most Chinese are optimistic about the current situation and prospect of China-EU relations; thirdly, about 60 to 70 percent of Chinese surveyed think the change of leadership in major European countries will affect China-EU relations. You may think the result of one survey can be doubtful. Ok, let take another set of data made by the same group in 2008. In order to make the result more believable, researchers gave out samples in all the Chinese provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions except Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau. Of course, the questionnaire was also improved on the basis of the last year's experience. Here are some items chosen in Table 2^②.

Table 2. Chinese public views of China-EU relations in 2008

degree of familiarity with EU	familiar	25.9%
	unfamiliar	55.3%
	no idea	8.6%
overall impression on EU	good	34.2%
	neutral	48.6%

^① 中国社会科学院欧洲研究所“中国人看欧盟”课题组：《中国公众对欧盟及中欧关系看法的调查与初步分析》，参见李慎明主编，《中国民众的国际观》（第1辑），社会科学文献出版社2009年版，第108-154页。

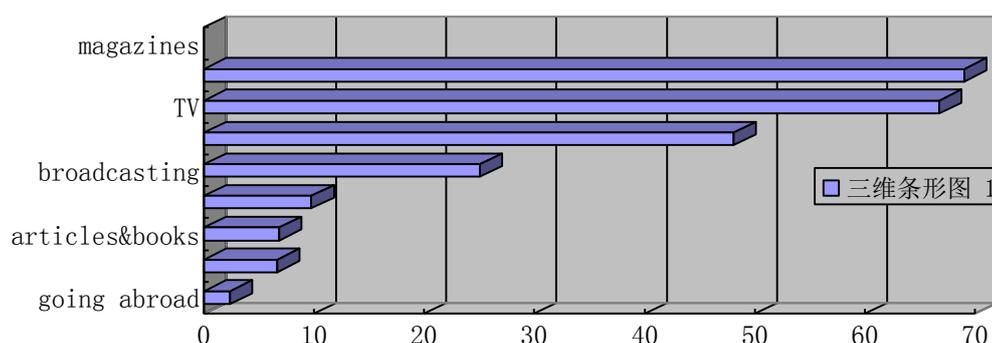
^②李慎明：《中国民众的国际观》（第2辑），社会科学文献出版社2012年版，第1-19页。

	bad	9.4%
	no idea	7.8%
EU's influence on China	big	82.6%
	small	9.9%
	no idea	7.5%
importance of China-EU relations	important	87.5%
	unimportant	7.4%
	no idea	5.1%

Note: The data are calculated based on the report of 2008 made by Institute of European Studies at CASS.

Figures in Table 2 confirm the first conclusion in the above. That is to say, most Chinese are not familiar with Europe, but they do have a good impression on it and attach much importance to China-EU relations. Here arise three questions: in the first place, what are the factors that cause Chinese know little about Europe? Generally speaking, China and Europe are not close neighbors in geography, which is a natural obstacle for contacting with each other; affairs in Europe are complex and changing fast, which often have little to do with the Chinese public; the reports and introduction of Europe in Chinese media are not enough. The second question is how Chinese get to know Europe? According to the survey, we may sequence the ways in which Chinese know about Europe as in Figure 1. From the most frequent to the least ways, they are newspapers & magazines (68.0%), TV (66.7%), Internet (48.1%), broadcasting (25.1%), textbooks (9.8%), professional articles & books (6.9%), friends & colleagues (6.7%), going abroad (2.4%).^① The sequence shows that Chinese depend more on indirect ways instead of direct ways to know about Europe. For the last question, since most Chinese know little about Europe, how can they think so highly of Europe, which seems contradictory? There are many reasons that can explain the phenomenon, but successful public diplomacy of Europe in China is one of the important factors.

Figure 1. How do Chinese know about Europe?



Note: The figure is from the report of 2008 made by Institute of European Studies at CASS.

In the meantime, you may be curious about how Europeans see Chinese. According to the survey of Pew Research Center in 2007, “there are some signs that this has already begun to occur in Western Europe where worries about China’s economic power are on the rise.”^② It said, “Several European countries also cast a worried eye on the Middle Kingdom with majorities in

^① 同上，第 132-178 页。

^② Andrew Kohut, *How the World Sees China*, December 11, 2007, Pew Research Global Attitudes Project web site, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2007/12/11/how-the-world-sees-china/>.

Italy (61%), the Czech Republic (58%), Germany (54%), France (51%) as well as Turkey (53%) saying they hold an unfavorable view of China.”^① Pew’s survey in 2008 showed that the number of people with positive attitude towards China declined in 9 countries. Among the total 24 countries surveyed, France had the biggest declining rate (from 47% in 2007 to 28%). Other countries worried more about China’s increasing military and economic power, and more than 70% people in France, Britain, Germany, Spanish, Russia and Poland thought it was not good for their countries.^② In the report of 2008, it pointed that “In addition to anxieties about China’s role in foreign affairs, there is significant concern about China’s growing economy in some countries, especially the U.S. and Western Europe.”^③ However, the most ridiculous is that the report said “In Western Europe, majorities believe either that China has already replaced the U.S. as the world’s leading superpower or that it will at some point replace the U.S.”^④ For such a result, there were both objective and subjective causes. For instance, China did enjoy a fast development and had a lot of resounding issues in those years, such as Olympic Games, Wenchuan earthquake, climate problems, which were objective reality. On the contrary, values are quite subjective, which may cause the decline of Europeans’ positive attitudes towards China. However, no matter what causes they were, an undeniable fact was that China did a poor public diplomacy in Europe. As Doug Miller, Chairman of GlobeScan, comments, “Our poll results suggest that China has much to learn about winning hearts and minds in the world. It seems that a successful Olympic Games has not been enough to offset other concerns that people have.”^⑤

From the above analysis, it is clear that public diplomacy is one of the important factors to affect public views of both Chinese and Europeans. Then, there are some questions to answer: Are there any differences of public diplomacies between China and European countries? If yes, what are they? And what are the factors leading to the differences? Thus, we have to look back to the very beginning of the so-called “public diplomacy”.

Distinct Traditions & Theoretical Sources

According to Nicholas J. Cull of the USC Center on Public Diplomacy, “The earliest use of the phrase ‘public diplomacy’ to surface is actually not American at all but in a leader piece from the London *Times* in January 1856. It is used merely as a synonym for civility in a piece criticizing the posturing of President Franklin Pierce.”^⑥ However, he pointed out that the term “public diplomacy” in modern meaning “was coined in 1965 by Edmund Gullion, dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University and a distinguished retired foreign service officer, when he established an Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy. An early Murrow Center brochure provided a convenient summary of Gullion’s concept: ‘Public diplomacy... deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as diplomats and foreign

^① Ibid.

^② See Pew Research Global Attitudes Project: *Some Positive Signs for U.S. Image: Global Economic Gloom - China and India Notable Exceptions*, June 12, 2008, <http://www.pewglobal.org/files/pdf/260.pdf>.

^③ Ibid.

^④ Ibid.

^⑤ Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA), *Views of China and Russia Decline in Global Poll*, February 6, 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/06_02_09bbcworldservicepoll.pdf.

^⑥ Nicholas J. Cull, “*Public Diplomacy*” *Before Gullion: The Evolution of a Phrase*, USC Center on Public Diplomacy web site, <http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/pdfs/gullion.pdf>.

correspondents; and the process of intercultural communications’.^①

The concept and definition has evolved by various practitioners over time, such as Hans N. Tuch (August 1990), Carnes Lord (October 1998), Jill A. Schuker (July 2004), Alan K. Henrikson (April 2005), Crocker Snow Jr. (May 2005). Among so many different definitions of public diplomacy, there are some important points that can be summarized. Firstly, the ultimate purpose is to promote national interests. As the United States Information Agency (USIA) pointed, “Public diplomacy seeks to promote the national interest and the national security of the United States.”^② As a matter of fact, national interests are the superior aim and fundamental purpose of public diplomacy. Secondly, government is the main sponsor of public diplomacy, and there are many specific implementing actors. In *Dictionary of International Relations Terms*, “Public diplomacy refers to government-sponsored programs intended to inform or influence public opinion in other countries.”^③ However, Crocker Snow Jr., director of the Edward R. Murrow Center for Public Diplomacy, had a different opinion on the subjects of public diplomacy. He pointed out, “Public diplomacy that traditionally represents actions of governments to influence overseas publics within the foreign policy process has expanded today – by accident and design – beyond the realm of governments to include the media, multinational corporations, NGO’s and faith-based organizations as active participants in the field.”^④ Thirdly, the objects of public diplomacy are foreign publics and governments. This point is clear in Gullion’s definition above. Besides, Alan K. Henrikson mentioned “the purpose of influencing the politics and actions of other governments”^⑤. Fourthly, the means of public diplomacy are diversified. There are many methods and instruments that are used in public diplomacy, such as personal contact, performances in other countries, traditional and new social media, and exchange programs. In the era of network information, the Internet becomes an increasingly important instrument for practicing public diplomacy.

Although the phrase “public diplomacy” firstly appeared in Europe, Europeans did not continue using it after the coining. They preferred “cultural diplomacy” to “public diplomacy” because of their tradition and the purpose to promote national interests. Philip M. Taylor, professor of Leeds University in Britain, studied the origin of British cultural diplomacy in the 20th century. He pointed out that the purpose for Britain to make cultural propaganda overseas was to remove misunderstanding and reflect the real democratic system and life.^⑥ Generally speaking, public diplomacy comes directly from international propaganda, while cultural diplomacy maybe is the earliest form of public diplomacy essentially. According to G. R. Berridge and Alan James, professors of Leicester University in Britain, public diplomacy was a term used by diplomats for propagating purpose in the late 20th century, which was different from open diplomacy and convention diplomacy.^⑦ Here, the so called “public diplomacy” was the same with traditional propagation in nature. This unique logic of Europeans about non-state diplomacy really makes sense. In practice, cultural diplomacy can be traced back to the early European missionary work in

^① Ibid.

^② *About U.S. Public Diplomacy: What Public Diplomacy is and is not*, Public Diplomacy Alumni Association web site, <http://publicdiplomacy.org/pages/index.php?page=about-public-diplomacy>.

^③ U.S. Department of State, *Dictionary of International Relations Terms*, Dept. of State Library, 1987, p. 85.

^④ *Definitions of Public Diplomacy*, web site of Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy at Fletcher School in Tufts University, <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/Murrow/Diplomacy/Definitions>.

^⑤ Ibid.

^⑥ See Philip M. Taylor (1999), *British Propaganda in the 20th Century: Selling Democracy*, Edinburgh University Press, p.77.

^⑦ See G. R. Berridge, Alan James (2001), *A Dictionary of Diplomacy*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

other countries to publicize the belief of Christianity. Germany paid much attention to international propaganda and cultural diplomacy, and began to establish “German Schools in Foreign Countries” (deutsche Schulen im Ausland) in 1878. In 1912, Karl Lamprecht, a historical and cultural expert from Leipzig University in Germany, presented the concept of “German foreign cultural policy” for the first time. After that, “Germany Academy” (Deutsche Akademie, DA) was founded in 1925 under the Weimar Republic. In 1951, Germany replaced the DA with the present “Goethe Institute” (Goethe-Institut, GI), the non-profit German cultural association operational worldwide, to promote the study of the German language abroad and encourage international cultural exchange and relations. France is also one of the first European countries to practise cultural diplomacy. As early as 1883, France established “French Alliance” (Alliance Francaise) to promote the learning of French in its colonies and other parts in the world. Similarly, Britain founded its own international educational and cultural agency called the British Council in 1934, which was inspired by Sir Reginald (Rex) Leeper’s recognition of the importance of “cultural propaganda” in promoting British interests. Interesting enough, Britain took active part in cultural diplomacy practice, but it avoided using the term “cultural diplomacy”, not to mention “public diplomacy”. For example, the British Council is the most authoritative organization to conduct cultural diplomacy, but its work is called cultural relations by the British.

Cull thought it was in the 1990s that the term public diplomacy finally entered common use in foreign policy circles outside the US.^① Europe is no exception to the rule. Take Britain for example, the Blair government established the Public Diplomacy Strategy Board (PDSB) in 2002, an advisory committee designed to improve the cohesion, effectiveness and impact of the UK Government overseas. In 2003, PDSB defined public diplomacy as “work which aims at influencing in a positive way, including through the creation of relationships and partnerships, the perceptions of individuals and organisations overseas about the UK and their engagement with the UK, in support of HMG’s overseas objectives.”^② However, adopting the term “public diplomacy” does not mean public diplomacy in Europe is the same with that of the US, although they have similar purposes. In short, Europeans’ public diplomacy in present time still pays much attention to the level of culture.

The concept of public diplomacy came to China in the 1990s too, when some Chinese scholars began to introduce the knowledge of public diplomacy abroad. For example, *Diplomacy Abroad* (1990), a collection of translated papers edited by Zhou Qipeng and Yang Chuang, was the first book to mention public diplomacy in China, introducing the background and theories related to public diplomacy. However, the first monograph of public diplomacy in China maybe was *Output America: U.S. Information Agency and American Public Diplomacy* (2000) written by Han Zhaoying. The author mainly introduced early public diplomacy practice in the US, the involvement of U.S. Information Agency – the key organization of conducting public diplomacy in the US, and American public diplomacy practice in the Soviet Union as well as in China during the period of Cold War. Since then, books and articles on public diplomacy appeared in large numbers, and the study of public diplomacy in China began to thrive. Since almost all the materials of public diplomacy were from the United States and there were no public diplomacy traditions in China, theories of public diplomacy in China owed a heavy debt to the US scholars. As a result, the understanding of public diplomacy in China is more like that in America instead of

^① See Nicholas J. Cull, “Public Diplomacy” Before Gullion: The Evolution of a Phrase, USC Center on Public Diplomacy web site, <http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/pdfs/gullion.pdf>.

^② Public Diplomacy Strategy Board, *Terms of Reference*, as agreed in 2002, www.fc.gov.uk.

European countries, which lead to different public diplomacy practices between China and Europe.

However, although there was no real public diplomacy in China for a long time after the founding of the People's Republic of China, China did develop similar diplomatic forms in practice, such as "people diplomacy", "folk diplomacy" and "international publicity". As the diplomatic forms with Chinese characteristics, people diplomacy and folk diplomacy actually had the same source, because the fundamental interests of people and the nation were not contradictory. Therefore, people diplomacy and folk diplomacy were identical in meaning in the early time, but the term "folk diplomacy" did not appear then. In fact, the concept of "folk diplomacy" was first used in China's Japan diplomacy, and it began to appear in official discourses in 1959. However, the Chinese government's people diplomacy was embodied more by international publicity and public diplomacy after the reform and open to the outside world. In 1980, the International Communication Group was founded to help the Central Committee of the CPC with the work of international publicity. In 1991, China established the State Council Information Office (SCIO) to coordinate all the agencies for international communications, but its duty was changed into introducing China to foreign countries instead of publicizing China, which was increasingly close to the requirements of modern public diplomacy. In the new century, public diplomacy aroused more attention from the Chinese leadership. For instance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) set up "Department of Public Diplomacy" in 2004. In addition, Chinese President Hu Jintao stressed the important status and functions of public diplomacy in the 11th diplomatic envoys meeting in 2009, which meant public diplomacy in China was firstly enhanced to a strategic position.

Different Means and Models

As analyzed above, China and European countries have different theoretical sources and understanding about public diplomacy. Therefore, there must be differences in practical conducting of public diplomacy, which may lead to different results. Specifically speaking, the differences of public diplomacies between China and Europe are as follows:

To begin with, actors' roles in conducting public diplomacy are different. In China, scholars are heavily influenced and restricted by the concept of public diplomacy from the US. For example, Gullion's definition paid much attention to leading role of the government, and some Chinese scholars unconsciously advocate exerting the dominant role of the government though most of them do not deny the roles of non-state actors. Besides that, China has a strong and effective government, and non government organizations in China are still weak to some extent. Therefore, as Ingrid d'Hooghe of Leiden University in Netherlands said, "In China, the general understanding of public diplomacy coincides with the state-centred approach."^① On the whole, stressing the government's leading role is not wrong, but overdoing the government and neglecting other actors' roles will lead to an exactly opposite effect, because official messages are seldom fully trusted by the public, especially the people in other countries. On the contrary, governments of European countries often move behind the scenes and authorize "the third part" organizations to plan and operate public diplomacy. Take "Goethe Institute" for example, it is a relative neutral organization, which can be easily accepted by the public both at home and abroad. In this way, the administrations may keep flexible and achieve good results. What are the reasons? First of all, European countries, in the long practice of cultural diplomacy, have accumulated

^① Ingrid d'Hooghe, *The Rise of China Public Diplomacy*, Netherlands Institution of IR, July 2007, http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2007/20070700_cdsp_paper_hooghe.pdf.

much experience and cultivated many such organizations, which enable European governments to do so. In addition, by using “the third part” organizations to conduct public diplomacy, European countries can effectively avoid the negative influence caused by occasionality of politics and economy. Thus, different roles of the actors in implementing public diplomacy lead to different results.

In the second place, targets of public diplomacy are different. It is known that the public and the government in other countries are the main targets of public diplomacy. In a sense, the public are the direct target, while the government is the ultimate target. However, most Chinese public diplomacies for Europe take European governments as direct targets, which have both advantage and disadvantage. On the one hand, this method is an effective mean to achieve the goal of influencing other governments’ policy. In fact, the public diplomacies conducted by both special government agencies (eg. SCIO and MFA) and the leadership are often aimed at influencing the governments and leaders of European countries. History has proved it is an effective way to conduct public diplomacy. On the other hand, underlining too much on the governments abroad will sometimes cause negative effects. Generally speaking, most European countries have weak governments and strong societies. Therefore, only getting promises from the governments do not necessarily mean the goal will come true, and it may even go other way if their people get dissatisfied. In contrast, European countries’ public diplomacies for China usually have clear targets, namely, certain social groups. For example, “Germany-China Moving Ahead Together” is a successful case of public diplomacy. The target of the activity is the new middle class in Chinese cities, especially in the second-tier cities like Nanjing, Chongqing, Shenyang, Wuhan, Taicang. As the project director Michael Kahn-Ackermann said, “Compared with other stratum, they can accept newborn things more easily and have more power as well as social influence. As for values, the new middle class emphasize self-accomplishment and self-fulfillment. They will be the important group to promote the communication and cooperation between Germany and China.”^① Therefore, clear and sound orientation of “audience” is critical for the success of public diplomacy.

What’s more, types of public diplomacy are different. In light of different perspectives, many scholars tried to classify public diplomacy, such as Carnes Lord (1998), Mark Leonard (2002), Daniel Ostrowski (2007), Nicholas Cull (2008), Eytan Gilboa (2008), Zhou Qing’an (2011), just to name a few. However, most scholars’ divisions are based on the means or contents of public diplomacy. Take American professor Carnes Lord for example, his classifications are overseas broadcasting, cultural exchange and political activities.^② However, British scholar Mark Leonard and his colleagues divided public diplomacy into reactive, proactive and relationship building according to its purpose and length of effects.^③ In addition, Chinese scholar Zhou Qing’an classified public diplomacy as defensive (or passive) public diplomacy and offensive (or active) on the basis of its nature. According to him, the former includes restorative model and constructive model, while the latter covers influencing model, permeating model and overturning model.^④ His classifications are quite enlightening, which are helpful to explaining different

^① 《德中携手迎接城市化进程的挑战》, 2008年5月7日, 参见“德中同行”网站, http://www.dezhongtongxing.com/news_detal_90.shtml.

^② Carnes Lord, “The Past and Future of Public Diplomacy”, *ORBIS*, Vol. 42, No. 1, Winter 1998, p. 49-72.

^③ Mark Leonard, Catherine Stead, Conrad Smewing, “Public Diplomacy”, *The Foreign Policy Centre*, 2002, <http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/35.pdf>.

^④ 周庆安:《从模式演变看冷战后公共外交的转型》,《欧洲研究》2011年第4期,第19-31页。

results of public diplomacy between China and Europe. Generally speaking, China's public diplomacies lay more emphasis on restorative model, constructive model and influencing model, most of which belong to defensive or passive type though there is a small ratio of influencing model. In contrast, most of the European public diplomacies are influencing model and permeating model that belong to active type, regardless of multilayered diplomacy of Germany and Britain or humanity-oriented diplomacy of France. Reasons for that are complicated, but it can be explained in two aspects. Above all, China and European countries are in different stages of social development. China is a huge developing country, experiencing a fast growth, and is eager to keep a good external development environment. Therefore, China is unwilling to make trouble and have to cope with all the emergencies and crisis whenever they arise, no to mention intervening affairs in the outside world. Yet, most European countries are quite developed and pride of their achievements, so they want to share their modes with others by more influencing or permeating means. As far as culture is concerned, the traditional Chinese culture is introverted and peaceful. It thinks highly of self-improvement and rejects dissemination and show-off. However, European culture, as the origin and core of west culture, is open and strong. It advocates freedom and rationality, thus leading to the combination of radical individuals and rational collectivity. Consequently, different cultural characteristics make a far-reaching impact on Chinese and Europeans' preference of public diplomacy. Conversely, different choices of public diplomacy may result differently.

Transcending the Differences

So far, we have answered all the questions in the end of part one. Then, should we improve the present situation of public views? Is it possible to transcend the differences? What should China and European countries do in the perspective of public diplomacy to strengthen the China-EU relations?

To answer the first question, we need to know the functions or significance of public diplomacy. According to Joshua S. Fouts and Douglas Thomas, professors from Southern California University of the US, "It involves not only shaping the message(s) that a country wishes to present abroad, but also analyzing and understanding the ways that the message is interpreted by diverse societies and developing the tools of listening and conversation as well as the tools of persuasion."^① James Glassman, the founding executive director of the George W. Bush Institute, said, "Public diplomacy, like official diplomacy and like war, when war becomes necessary, has as its mission the achievement of the national interest."^② In Hans Tuch's opinion, public diplomacy is "a government's process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about an understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies."^③ However, Chinese scholar Tang Xiaosong summarized three basic functions of public diplomacy: short-term function is to handle ordinary foreign affairs complementing the traditional diplomacy; mid-term function is the preventative arrangements for strategic communication; long-term function is to construct relations among

^① Joshua S. Fouts, Douglas Thomas, *Public Diplomacy and Virtual Worlds*, presentation at DiGRA 2005, <http://summit.sfu.ca/system/files/iritems1/273/91a5a0ae3911f519bd6317ed5f4d.doc>.

^② James Glassman, *Public Diplomacy in the Twenty-First Century*, speech at the Council on Foreign Relations, June 30, 2008, <http://www.cfr.org/diplomacy/public-diplomacy-twenty-first-century-rush-transcript-federal-news-service/p16698>.

^③ Hans N. Tuch (1990), *Communicating With the World: U. S. Public Diplomacy Overseas*, New York: St. Martin's Press, p.3.

nations.^① After overviewing functions of public diplomacy, its importance is self-evident. Given the poor result of opinion poll of China's image in Europe, it is an urgent task for the Chinese people and government to improve the public diplomacy. As for Europeans, their public diplomacy in China has been successful by now, but nothing is efficacious forever. First of all, Europeans' continuing negative attitudes towards China will not only harm the image of Europe in the mind of Chinese people and leadership, but also hinder or restrict behaviors and policies of European governments. What is more, if European countries could not solve their own problems over a long period of time, and if Europeans continued holding negative attitudes towards China, the situation could change as Chinese people know more about the China-EU relations. Therefore, it is wise for Europeans to do their jobs in order to maintain their national interests at utmost.

In recent years, Chinese leadership has paid much attention to public diplomacy in Europe, but the reality seems to be that "no matter how well China is developing its public diplomacy, things sometimes still go utterly wrong"^②, even trigger the so-called "China's Soft Power Threat"^③. It should be admitted that there are significant differences in culture, social development stage and political system, and that misunderstandings will not be easily removed. However, there is a favorable situation to transcend the differences between China and European countries. Firstly, improving China-EU relations is in accordance with the interests of both sides. China and all the European countries have the desire to strengthen the relations, which is the important motivation to transcend the differences. Secondly, there is a good basis for further cooperation among China and European countries. As we all know, European Union is the largest trade partner and the most important technology source of China, while China is the second largest trade partner and the fastest growing market of EU. In the aspect of investment, Europe is one of the five largest FDI sources of China, while China's FDI in Europe began to soar after the global financial crisis. Furthermore, there are broad common interests between China and Europe in the reform of international financial and monetary system. All of the above may lay solid foundation for China and Europe to go beyond the differences. Thirdly, there are some advantageous conditions to transcend the differences. China has not only realized a fast growth in economy, but also made great progresses in society and politics, which is increasingly contributory to removing the obstacles between China and Europe. Moreover, the cultural communication is helpful to reducing misunderstanding. In a word, if both China and Europe persevere in enhancing mutual trust, it is possible to transcend the difference in the long run.

In order to strengthen China-EU relations, China should take measures to improve the public diplomacy. Firstly, it is better for the Chinese government to "retreat" a bit in public diplomacy, giving full play to non-state actors. According to d'Hooghe, "The non-state groups that have an impact on China's image abroad include: academics and (transnational) epistemic communities; NGO; overseas Chinese communities; friendship associations; twin sister organizations; students; and tourists."^④ With the rapid development of Chinese society and economy, a large number of non-governmental organizations spring up in China, more and more students and tourists go

^①参见唐小松：《论中国公共外交的两条战线》，《现代国际关系》2007年第8期，第42-46页。

^② Ingrid d'Hooghe, *The Rise of China Public Diplomacy*, Netherlands Institution of IR, July 2007, http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2007/20070700_cdsp_paper_hooghe.pdf.

^③ Erich Follath, *The Dragon's Embrace: China's Soft Power is a Threat to the West*, Spiegel online, July 28, 2010, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/the-dragon-s-embrace-china-s-soft-power-is-a-threat-to-the-west-a-708645.html>.

^④ Ingrid d'Hooghe, *The Rise of China Public Diplomacy*, Netherlands Institution of IR, July 2007, http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2007/20070700_cdsp_paper_hooghe.pdf.

abroad, who exert an increasingly important influence on policy-making in various fields. Nowadays, there are more than 40 million overseas Chinese living in more than 130 countries, and they play a role in promoting Chinese culture and lobbying for Chinese political interests. In the future, China should allow and encourage more non-state actor to exert influence in public diplomacy. Secondly, China may make full use of all kinds of instruments in public diplomacy. As d'Hooghe said, "Most instruments used by China to conduct public diplomacy do not differ much from those used by other countries."^① They usually refer to media, publications, internet, development aid, commercial deals, cultural events and "Confucius Institutes". These instruments are important for China to conduct the public diplomacy, but their functions are restrained for certain factors, such as language, culture, ideology, values. Hence, how to take more advantage of them is a problem to solve. Thirdly, reasonable targets in China's public diplomacy are needed. As has already been said, most European countries have a strong society, which means the middle class and the NGOs are influential. Therefore, China's public diplomacy for Europe should lay more emphasis on them, helping them know more about China to achieve a better understanding of China.

As for Europe, there are also three suggestions. The first, contrary to China, the roles of European governments in the public diplomacy for China need to be strengthened. Because of the history and cultural tradition, most Chinese are accustomed to normality, formality, regularity and order. In their eyes, the public diplomacies conducted by governments are more formal, which shows the degree of importance. Therefore, activities of public diplomacy conducted by European governments in China will attract more attention from the Chinese public. The second, the history and reality of China require more consideration from European governments. Historically, China repeatedly managed to maintain a big united feudal autocratic empire after each social upheaval and division, which made Chinese hold in awe and veneration for authoritativeness and especially cherish peace and unification. Any words and deeds harmful for China's peace and unification will be resisted by the Chinese public. Thirdly, it is helpful for European governments to do more work to guide the will of their own people. In general, explaining diplomatic policies to the people of its own country does not belong to the domain of public diplomacy but of public affairs. However, the public affairs in diplomatic work mainly concern providing the internal public, media and other agencies with the information of the government's aims, policies and activities. Its utmost goal is to get the support of the public at home by making them learn about the government's policies and aims. Therefore, doing more work on the domestic public is beneficial for European governments, since they are usually weak governments. After all, if the policies are supported by the public, it is much easier to be successful.

All in all, China and European countries are good partners in many fields, and improved public diplomacy is sure to make a stronger China-EU comprehensive strategic partnership. Although there are still some misunderstandings, obstacles and differences between China and European countries, the new leadership in relative countries will continue making efforts to reduce differences, strengthen cooperation and improve China-EU relations.

^① Ibid.