**New Concepts of Chinas Public Diplomacy in the New Media Era**

Source: Guangming Daily

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2014-06-25

<https://theory.rmlt.com.cn/2014/0625/283736.shtml>

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Since the 18th CPC National Congress, various reports of the Party and the government have repeatedly proposed to "carry out public diplomacy", which shows that China's public diplomacy faces new development opportunities. At the same time, the tremendous changes in the new media environment have also posed new challenges to China's public diplomacy. In the new media era, all countries are facing new issues such as the internationalization of domestic politics, and the political game between countries has expanded to cyberspace - the traditional geopolitics based on geography has evolved into geopolitics based on cyber virtual space. Against this background, China's public diplomacy needs to break the working ideas and inertia that have been formed over the years and strive to establish new concepts.

**Strategic perspective: Planning China's new media public diplomacy from a national strategic perspective**

With the rise of mobile Internet and social media, the “online public diplomacy” that emerged in the past few years is facing adjustments in both connotation and extension. The diversity and variability of new media types have made the stage of international diplomacy broader, and the possibility of ordinary people participating in public diplomacy is also increasing.

In the past decade or so, the Chinese government has made great efforts to make the international community understand and trust China's peaceful development path, and has achieved good results. However, the effectiveness of these efforts is being challenged by the new media environment. According to the "2013 China National Image Global Survey Report" recently released by the Research Center for International Communication of the China Foreign Language Bureau, about a quarter of the international public believes that there is a "China threat", and 12% of the international public believes that China does not contribute much to international affairs.

There is still a long way to go to effectively build China's national image, and learning and exploring public diplomacy in the new media environment is even more urgent. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, public diplomacy has been mainly carried out through large-scale events such as the Olympic Games, international conferences, academic forums, press conferences, cultural years, and cross-border exchanges between enterprises. The exchanges and interactions between sports, culture, media, politicians and ordinary people have deepened the international community's understanding of China and also enabled my country to gain a certain reputation in the international community.

However, when the public at home and abroad begin to rely more on social media for information, the focus of shaping the national image also needs to shift synchronously. Making full use of new media to shape the national image is also becoming the choice of governments and relevant institutions. Embassies of various countries in China have opened Weibo and WeChat accounts to carry out information transmission, cultural promotion, and answer questions for the Chinese public. Non-official organizations such as media and NGOs of various countries have also opened Weibo and other communication platforms with public diplomacy functions in China. In comparison, these methods are low-cost and effective, and at the same time, they are more subtle, allowing the general public to have more opportunities to understand another country and culture. Due to the constraints of concepts and systems, China's awareness and practice of directly using new media to carry out public diplomacy overseas still has a lot of room for improvement.

The shaping of a country’s image on new media platforms is a complex systematic project that cannot be accomplished by simply adding up the work of individual citizens. As an important goal of public diplomacy, shaping a positive, appropriate, and international image that is in line with China’s interests requires the government and professional institutions to study and plan from a national strategic perspective. Many countries have launched research and development work at a national strategic level. For example, in the report “International Strategy for Cyberspace” issued by the United States in 2011, the diplomatic application value of new media was first elevated to a national strategic level; afterwards, the European Union, NATO, Canada, India, and Israel also successively issued cyberspace strategies based on their own technical characteristics. International diplomacy is undergoing a qualitative change from new media. Against this background, China has become the focus of Western countries’ ideological infiltration around the world. Planning China’s new media diplomacy from a national strategic perspective is an inevitable and necessary measure.

**The whole people’s perspective: giving full play to the initiative of the people at home and abroad and conducting public diplomacy**

Public diplomacy actively advocates the information circulation model of "government as the leader, social elites as the backbone, and the general public as the foundation". New media represented by the Internet and mobile Internet adopt the communication model of "everyone to everyone". This type of communication activity pays more attention to the feedback and participation of the target public. It is not difficult to see that there is a natural fit between the communication model of new media and the basic concept of public diplomacy.

China has the largest population in the world and a large number of overseas Chinese, so it should have the advantage of external communication on new media platforms. Among them, overseas Chinese are the natural bridge for China to carry out public diplomacy. Fully mobilizing the enthusiasm of overseas Chinese is an important concept that conforms to the characteristics of the new media era.

It must be recognized that the spontaneous communication between the public and the public facilitated by new media not only exceeds the organization and control of the government, but also has an effect that government diplomacy cannot achieve. During the March 14 incident in Tibet in 2008, Chinese people and overseas Chinese used online media to express their opinions. These people, who had no organization, spontaneously posted posts and videos about the truth of the Tibet issue on online forums, blogs, and video websites, and left messages and sent emails on the websites of Western media such as CNN to protest against false reports. Some college students even set up special websites to expose and criticize the false reports of Western media one by one. These spontaneous actions have produced good social effects: a columnist for the New York Times admitted that although he did not agree with all the views of Chinese readers in the new media, these expressions made him rethink his cognitive framework on the Tibet issue. Similar incidents have occurred in many international controversial events.

In the new media era, China's diplomatic work philosophy needs to rely more on forces outside the government and mobilize the autonomy and initiative of ordinary people. From blogs to Weibo and WeChat, the continuous emergence of digital social media has brought revolutionary challenges to the form and strategy of traditional diplomacy. Only by implementing people-oriented, interactive and technology-based policy solutions and mobilizing the participation of all people in public diplomacy can we achieve breakthrough progress.

In addition, we should also attach importance to and give full play to the role of private think tanks. Under the conditions of new media, my country's public diplomacy also has the disadvantage of a broad audience. Think tanks are the central coordinating agency for formulating national policies. They play a core role in the policy-making process and serve as a bridge between knowledge and policy, and a medium between the government and the public. The "view of China" of foreign think tanks has a very important and even decisive influence on the formation, development and change of the "view of China" of various governments and even the entire international community. Similarly, given the important role of think tanks in policies, governments, and the public, my country should also take think tanks as a breakthrough point in public diplomacy. On major diplomatic policy issues, we should influence think tanks and then influence other governments, media and the general public, so as to achieve good diplomatic results.

In general, whether it is the public interaction on new media platforms or the external exchanges of professional think tanks, the core of the whole people's view is to shift the focus of public diplomacy to the broadest possible number of ordinary people. Dialogues between countries and exchanges between cultures can only realize the value of public diplomacy in the new media era if the general public participates deeply.