



CHINA IN THE WORLD

КИТАЙ В МИРЕ

DOI: 10.22363/2313-0660-2026-26-1-77-93

EDN: TAVDME

Research article / Научная статья

The Role of Culture in China's Strategic Communication

Anastasia A. Zabella¹  , Xiangyu Kong² ¹ Saint Petersburg State University, Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation² RUDN University, Moscow, Russian Federation anastasiazabella@gmail.com

Abstract. This article examines the Chinese approach to understanding strategic communication (SC) and its relevance in the context of globalization. Cultural values and traditions are becoming important tools for creating a positive image of China, especially in the face of competition with the West. Modern challenges require China to adapt its strategic communication. Culture can serve as the basis for addressing these challenges. The study is based on structural realism, which emphasizes the anarchic nature of the international system. It argues that China should use its cultural heritage to develop its own unique approach to SC, rather than simply copying Western models. Within the framework of this theory, China's foreign policy is examined through such concepts as "peaceful development," "soft power," the Community of Shared Future for Mankind, and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which are aimed at strengthening China's position in the international arena. The methodology used includes comparative and discourse analysis to demonstrate how cultural tools contribute to the formation of China's strategic communication. The novelty of this article lies in identifying the foundations of China's SC and key cultural values. The importance of integrating Chinese culture into SC as a key tool for enhancing soft power is explained. The article outlines important milestones in the development of soft power, focusing on socialist culture. The driver of increasing interest in strategic culture under Xi Jinping is identified. Attention is also given to attempts to promote an alternative model of international governance, primarily through the BRI and the Community of Shared Future for Mankind. The value dimensions of the Western and Chinese models are also presented. The article identifies cultural characteristics of China's soft power, challenges, and adaptations to it in the context of differences in values within the country, criticism from Western countries, and the rapid development of internet platforms and AI technologies. The authors conclude that strategic culture (propaganda) plays an important role in the development of strategic communication both domestically and internationally.

Key words: China's strategic culture, Chinese model, China's soft power, China's cultural values, China's values, Belt and Road Initiative, Community of Shared Future for Mankind

Authors' contributions. A.A. Zabella: collection and analysis of information, writing of the text. X. Kong: collection and analysis of sources in Chinese. Both authors have read and approved the final version of the article.

Conflicts of interest. The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

© Zabella A. A., Kong X., 2026



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/legalcode>

Funding sources. Anastasia A. Zabella's research was supported by the Russian Science Foundation Grant No. 25-18-00699, <https://rscf.ru/project/25-18-00699/>.

For citation: Zabella, A.A., & Kong, X. (2026). The role of culture in China's strategic communication. *Vestnik RUDN. International Relations*, 26(1), 77–93. <https://doi.org/10.22363/2313-0660-2026-26-1-77-93>; EDN: TAVDME

Роль культуры как элемента формирования стратегической коммуникации Китая

А.А. Забелла¹  , С. Кун² 

¹ Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет, Санкт-Петербург, Российская Федерация

² Российский университет дружбы народов, Москва, Российская Федерация

 anastasiababella@gmail.com

Аннотация. Исследование посвящено анализу китайского подхода к пониманию стратегической коммуникации (СК). Актуальность темы обусловлена тем, что в условиях глобализации культурные ценности и традиции становятся важными инструментами формирования позитивного образа государства. Это особенно важно для Китайской Народной Республики (КНР) в контексте конкуренции с Западом. Современные вызовы требуют от Китая адаптации стратегической коммуникации к изменяющейся международной среде. Культура может служить основой для формирования ответов на эти вызовы. Исследование основано на структурном реализме, подчеркивающим анархическую природу международной системы. Внешнеполитический курс КНР в рамках данной теории рассматривается через такие концепции, как «мирное развитие», «мягкая сила», Сообщество единой судьбы человечества, инициатива «Один пояс, один путь» (ОПОП), которые направлены на усиление позиций Китая на международной арене. Методология включает сравнительный и дискурс-анализ, призванные показать, как культурные инструменты способствуют формированию стратегической коммуникации Китая. Новизна исследования обусловлена выявлением основ СК Китая и ключевых культурных ценностей Китая. Объяснена важность интеграции китайской культуры в СК как ключевого инструмента усиления «мягкой силы». Обозначены важные вехи формирования «мягкой силы» с акцентом на социалистическую культуру. Выявлен драйвер увеличения интереса к СК при Си Цзиньпине. Внимание сосредоточено на попытках продвижения альтернативной модели международного управления, прежде всего посредством инициативы ОПОП, а также Сообщества единой судьбы человечества. Помимо прочего, представлено ценностное измерение западной и китайской модели. Выявлены культурные особенности в СК Китая, вызовы и адаптация СК Китая в контексте различий в ценностях внутри страны, критики со стороны стран Запада и быстрого развития интернет-площадок, технологий искусственного интеллекта (ИИ). Авторы приходят к выводу, что стратегическая культура, включающая пропагандистские практики, играет важную роль в развитии стратегической коммуникации как внутри страны, так и при международном взаимодействии.

Ключевые слова: стратегическая культура Китая, китайская модель, мягкая сила Китая, культурные ценности Китая, ценности Китая, Один пояс, один путь, Сообщество единой судьбы человечества

Вклад авторов. Забелла А.А.: сбор и анализ информации, написание текста. Кун С.: сбор и анализ источников на китайском языке. Оба автора ознакомлены с окончательной версией статьи и одобрили ее.

Заявление о конфликте интересов. Авторы заявляют об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

Сведения о финансировании. Работа А.А. Забелла выполнена за счет гранта Российского научного фонда № 25-18-00699, <https://rscf.ru/project/25-18-00699/>.

Для цитирования: Забелла А.А., Кун С. Роль культуры как элемента формирования стратегической коммуникации Китая // Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Серия: Международные отношения. 2026. Т. 26, № 1. С. 77–93. <https://doi.org/10.22363/2313-0660-2026-26-1-77-93>; EDN: TAVDME

Introduction

Attention to the concept of strategic communication (SC) first emerged in the early 21st century in political, military, and diplomatic circles in the United States and some Western European countries. This led to the formation of a body of scholarly research (Corman, Trethewey & Goodall, 2008; Fisher & Lucas, 2010) and policy documents¹ dedicated to SC. A leading expert in the field, Dr. Christopher Paul, defines SC as “coordinated actions, messages, images, and other forms of engagement... intended to inform, influence, or persuade selected audiences in support of national objectives” (Paul, 2011, p. 4).

The term “strategic communication” is relatively new in the Russian academic discourse, and its conceptual framework has been developed in the works of a number of leading scholars. In particular, the contributions of E.N. Pashentsev should be emphasized. He defines SC as “the projection of certain long-term values, interests, and goals by a state or an interstate actor into the consciousness of domestic and foreign audiences through the adequate synchronization of multifaceted activities in all spheres of public life, supported by professional communication” (Pashentsev, 2020, p. 19–20).

In his works, K.A. Pantserev focuses less on providing an original definition of the concept and more on addressing the question: “How does the rapid development

of information technologies change the world’s communication landscape?” (Pantserev, 2025, pp. 59–62). V.A. Burlakov concentrates on the goal of SC, which is “to form within the political (and, more broadly, economic and intellectual) elite of the targeted state, firstly, a stable positive image of the influencing actor, and secondly, a stable system of cultural values aligned with those dominant in the country conducting the SC” (Burlakov, 2016, p. 10). The core components of SC are public relations, public diplomacy, and information operations (Pashentsev, 2014, p. 139). “Without strategic ‘deeds,’ there is nothing but a set of long-term communication goals related to key issues” of state development and their propagandistic coverage (Bazarkina & Pashentsev, 2021, p. 5).

The topic of Chinese strategic culture and propaganda has attracted significant attention from Western researchers. According to K.D. Johnson, “Modern Chinese culture consists of three main elements — traditional culture, communist ideology, and — in recent times — Western values” (Johnson, 2009, p. 3). Within Chinese strategic culture, two dominant strands are identified — the Confucian/Sunzi and the realist — which coexist and interact. It is this interaction that gives rise to China’s distinctive strategic culture, which can be termed the “Chinese Cult of Defense” (Scobell, 2002, p. 3). China’s foreign policy is shaped by the influence of two distinct political cultures: the

¹ See: Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication. Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics // The Under Secretary of Defense. September 30, 2004. URL: [https://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/3358/2004-09-30 %20From%20Michael%20W%20Wynne%20re%20Final%20Report%20of%20the%20Defense%20Science%20Board%20Task%20Force%20on%20Strategic%20Communication.pdf](https://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/3358/2004-09-30%20From%20Michael%20W%20Wynne%20re%20Final%20Report%20of%20the%20Defense%20Science%20Board%20Task%20Force%20on%20Strategic%20Communication.pdf) (accessed: 15.08.2025); Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments. Subject: 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Strategic Communication (SC). Execution Roadmap // Deputy Secretary of Defense. September 25, 2006. URL: https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/FOID/Reading%20Room/Other/2006_QDR_Strat_Comm_Roadmap.pdf (accessed: 15.08.2025); The Department of Defense. Report on Strategic Communication. December 2009 // The Secretary of Defense. February 11, 2010. URL: https://indianstrategicknowledgeonline.com/read_book.php?fnam=dod+report+on+strategic+communication+dec+09&tnam=Archive (accessed: 15.08.2025); Public Diplomacy: Strengthening U.S. Engagement with the World. A Strategic Approach for the 21st Century // Office of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. September 26, 2010. URL: https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/sites/uscpublicdiplomacy.org/files/legacy/pdfs/PD_US_World_Engagement.pdf (accessed: 15.08.2025).

authoritarian culture of communist ideology (“socialism with Chinese characteristics”) and the cultural moralism rooted in Confucianism. Therefore, China’s strategic culture can thus be understood as a blend of these two sets of values.²

In recent years, strategic communication has become a topic that has received increased attention from the Chinese academic community. This type of communication is primarily viewed as a tool for enhancing international exchange. The Chinese side employs several terms to denote strategic communication: strategic communication (战略传播 *Zhanlüe chuanbo*) or strategic communication (战略性传播 *Zhanlüexing chuanbo*). It’s important to clarify that the translation of “沟通” (*goutong*) into Russian means “to connect, to unite,” “message, connection,” “to come together, to converge,” “to link, to merge,” while the translation of “传播” (*chuanbo*) into Russian means “to spread, to disseminate.”

Western research on China’s strategic communication is not free from ideological clichés, such as the claim that “Beijing benefited from the COVID-19 pandemic by providing medical equipment, and the spread of misinformation about the country contributed to propaganda in favor of the PRC” (Zuppello, 2024).

Among Chinese scholars specializing in SC, Bi Yantao and Wang Jilin deserve special mention. In 2011, they proposed one of the most comprehensive definitions of SC, describing it as a process through which governments or non-governmental organizations mobilize and coordinate resources to convey information and influence designated targets in order to achieve specific strategic interests (Bi & Wang, 2011). Bi Yantao further argues that “the primary actor implementing SC is the nation-state. When individuals or organizations

participate in SC, they are merely pieces within the national strategic framework. SC is a form of international communication, and international communication, even at the tactical level, should not harm the nation’s strategic interests.” “Strategic messaging (策略传播, *Celüe chuanbo*) is not equivalent to strategic communication (战略传播, *Zhanlüe chuanbo*); the former serves the latter” (Bi, 2022, p. 27).

In turn, Zhang Li and Zhu Jini argue that “the system of strategic communication with Chinese characteristics is a balance between technological empowerment and cultural autonomy, as well as a practice that merges the instrumentality of technology with cultural subjectivity, offering a Chinese solution of universal significance for safeguarding civilizational diversity in the digital age” (Zhang & Zhu, 2025, p. 4).

According to Yang Mohan and Yin Le, the key components of China’s strategic communication included the accurate interpretation of China’s vision, the dissemination of China’s stance on various international agenda issues, and the enhancement of Chinese culture’s global influence. However, with the development of intelligent technologies, China’s international communication practice has gradually undergone digital upgrades and paradigm shifts (Yang & Yin, 2024, p. 206). Many Chinese experts discuss the new possibilities for strategic communication in the digital era, emphasizing the importance of disseminating the “correct” history of China and the “correct” voice of China (Ming, 2022).

Zhang Lei posits that the core logic of strategic communication is to overcome Western discursive hegemony, return to human-centric values and historical connections, and address universal spiritual challenges facing contemporary humanity — namely anxiety and

² Lee J. Understanding China’s Strategic Culture: A Clash of Realpolitik and Cultural Moralism // S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies. April 27, 2023. URL: <https://rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/CO23064.pdf> (accessed: 15.08.2025).

“burnout” (“内卷”, *Nei juan*) in the context of the industrial era, practical theory, and localized innovation (building a bridge between ideas of Mao Zedong and perspectives of Xi Jinping, as well as replacing Western market logic with Chinese governance logic). The pathways for implementing strategic communication, according to Zhang Lei, include:

1) content Restructuring (e.g., promoting the significance of China’s intangible cultural heritage; disseminating among Global South nations China’s model of balanced development, which offers a non-Western orientation for modernization),

2) communication Method Innovation (proactively shaping narratives, for instance, the concept of “Great Harmony Under Heaven” (天下大同, *Tianxia Datong*); explaining how Chinese culture addresses China’s developmental needs),

3) synergy between the Concepts of the Chinese Nation Community and the Human Community with a Shared Future,

4) media as a Tool for SC Implementation (building a communication network; achieving unity between political logic and social effect) (Zhang, 2024).

Lu Xiaohua notes that “in the digital era, academic communication has transcended the bounds of traditional science, acquiring significant strategic value in the field of communications” (Lu, 2021).

According to Zhong Shenjun, “Strategic communication is a process by which a communicative actor conveys information to a target audience through various channels and symbols to achieve specific strategic objectives, thereby influencing their attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. Mao Zedong possessed a profound understanding and rich practical experience in strategic planning, military strategy, and propaganda communication. He organically integrated all three components to form a strategic communication system with Chinese characteristics” (Zhong & Wang, 2023).

Thus, summarizing the perspectives of the Chinese academic community on strategic communication, it can be noted that in the People’s Republic of China, strategic communication is understood as a process by which the state or organizations coordinate resources to convey information to target audiences in order to achieve strategic interests.

Research Methodology and Methods

The theoretical foundation of this study is structural realism, a framework established by the seminal works of Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer. A central tenet of the theory is the concept of the anarchic structure of the international system, stemming from the absence of a central governing authority, which compels states to prioritize security and survival above all else (Waltz, 1979, pp. 102–103). Within this structure, the primary strategies for acquiring and maintaining power are internal balancing (building one’s own capabilities) and external balancing (forming alliances against a threat). When a state perceives a threat, it seeks to balance against it by committing significant resources to constrain and counter the potential adversary (Mearsheimer, 2014, p. 29).

Thus, within this theoretical framework, China’s strategic culture is not the primary driver of its foreign policy, but rather serves to legitimize state actions on the international stage — actions that are dictated by the imperatives of anarchy. Specifically, concepts such as “peaceful development,” “strategic restraint,” and the “Community with a Shared Future for Mankind” are not idealistic values, but rather a strategic discourse aimed at increasing China’s power, lower the balancing costs imposed by the United States and other major powers, and cultivating a favorable external environment to maintain and enhance its global status.

To achieve the stated research objectives, comparative and discourse analysis of key Chinese

political texts concerning the SC (Xi Jinping's speeches, official documents, etc.) were used.

Comparative analysis was used to contrast the Chinese value model with the Western model, which, within the framework of structural realism, can be understood as China's attempt to discursively and strategically resist the established American hegemony, using strategic thinking to mobilize resources and alter the regional and global balance of power. To identify the realist component within China's strategic culture, a content analysis was conducted to determine the frequency of use of such words and expressions such as "sovereignty," "core interests," "counter-hegemonism," etc. Thus, the chosen methodology allows us to demonstrate how cultural instruments serve the rational goals of ensuring security and strengthening China's influence in the system of international relations.

Fundamentals of Strategic Communication and Key Cultural Values of the PRC

An important component of strategic communication is strategic culture (*Zhanlüe wenhua*). Since the founding of the PRC in 1949, the country has periodically faced both internal and external threats. Many crises during the Mao Zedong period were interpreted as the result of external threats to Chinese sovereignty and territorial integrity, so the actions of the PRC, which was seen as a "victim," were presented as morally correct (Feng, 2009).

The key official document in which China's actions were justified by its position as a "victim of Western imperialism" is Mao

Zedong's report "The Current Situation and Our Tasks"³ of December 25, 1947, presented at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CC CPC). It's worth noting the legitimization of the PLA's actions through the status of "victim." Speaking about the international significance of "victimhood," Mao Zedong presented the PRC as an inspiring example for all countries in Asia and the colonial world. Anti-Western rhetoric was also used in the declaration of the period of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" to mobilize the masses.⁴

For example, official documents of that period emphasized the following points: "The decadent Western bourgeois culture has become fashionable, while socialist culture was rejected and attacked"; "The so-called American-style communism is akin to taking loans from the devil"; "The complete victory of socialism cannot be achieved within one or two generations; it will require five or ten generations."⁵

Thus, during the Mao Zedong period, propaganda was used to promote communist ideals, strengthen the CPC's power, and mobilize the population to fulfill party mandates. The main aspects of strategic culture (propaganda) in the PRC in the 20th century included:

1) ideology and control (control over the consciousness of the population through the spread of Leninism, Marxism and Maoism, as well as the suppression of alternative views),

2) mass campaigns (the "Great Leap Forward," the "Cultural Revolution," the goal of which was the physical and ideological transformation of the population, and the

³ Muqian xingshi he women de renwu [Current Situation and Our Tasks] // Lin yi xian renmin fayuan [People's Court of Linyi County]. August 23, 2023. (In Chinese). URL: https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?__biz=MzI3NTQ3MDQ0Mg==&mid=2247498327&idx=4&sn=a068e8e35fb9ac04880a228d4e6ac407&chksm=eb06fb52dc7172441a6f484b8c86583c4fbbaf352a0c1e44259ab80764f99b2aa557b0484ae&scene=27 (accessed: 25.06.2025).

⁴ Mao zhuxi zai sishi nian qian de "jiu ping su gong zhongyang de gongkaixin", zhunque de yucele qian nansilafu he qian sulian de weilai [Nine Commentaries on Chairman Mao's Open Letter to the Central Committee of the CPSU, written 40 years ago, accurately predicted the future of the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union] // Fuxing wang [The Renaissance Website]. (In Chinese). URL: <https://www.mzfxw.com/e/action/ShowInfo.php?classid=18&id=35842> (accessed: 25.06.2025).

⁵ Ibid.

implementation took place through propaganda materials: posters, slogans, films, etc.),

3) art and culture (new artistic genres were developed, such as “revolutionary opera,” and the works of cultural figures were required to adhere to the party line),

4) education (educational materials strictly adhered to communist ideals),

5) control over the media (all media were used as propaganda tools; information was controlled). Thus, the propaganda of the Mao Zedong period laid the foundation for public attitudes toward China’s ideals, culture, and history.

Wang Delu believes that China’s rise is driven by the influence of culture, not just Confucianism, but a strategic culture that is reflected in the works of Chinese thinkers and passed down from generation to generation, rooted in a worldview that allows one to see and solve the problems facing society. Only Chinese strategic methodology, based on the traditional comprehensive and holistic worldview (天下, *Tianxia*), can clearly explain the problems of globalization. According to the scholar, during the financial crisis, Chinese strategic culture and the theory of integrity (整体论, *Zhengtilun*) can be useful in addressing the challenges facing humanity. It is precisely the flexibility inherent in the theories of integrity and tact that has contributed to China’s development (Wang, 2009, p. 49).

Chinese President Xi Jinping has repeatedly referred to the ecological philosophy of harmony between man and nature (万物并育的生态理念, *Wanwu bing yu de shengtai linian*). In 2014, at the All-China International Friendship Conference and in honor of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, he first proposed the “Four Perspectives” embodying

the genes of China’s peaceful development (中国和平发展基因的“四观”, *Zhongguo heping fazhan jiyin de “si guan”*). These include the cosmic concept of harmony between man and nature (天人合一的宇宙观, *Tian ren he yi de yuzhouguan*), the international concept of harmony among all nations (协和万邦的国际观, *Xiehe wanbang de guoji guan*), the social concept of harmony in diversity (和而不同的社会观, *He er butong de shehui guan*), and the moral concept of kindness and compassion (人心和善的道德观, *Renxin heshan de daode guan*). The values of harmony between man and nature and the coexistence of all things offer a holistic approach (整体论, *Zhengtilun*), embodying the wisdom and reflection of the Chinese people on the universe.⁶

According to the text of a speech given by Lieutenant General Li Jijun at the U.S. Army War College in 1997, “The Chinese people are a peace-loving people. The two pictograms for the character for ‘strength’ (武, *Wu*) are composed of the radicals for ‘stop’ (止, *Zhi*) and ‘spear’ (戈, *Ge*). The basic logic is that the use of force is only justified to end violence. Chinese culture is tolerant of diverse beliefs and customs, as evidenced by the absence of the bloody religious wars that occurred in Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries” (Li & Tilford, 1997).

K.D. Johnson argues that “the cult of defense reveals a cultural tendency in China to define just war and active defense in ways that actually predispose China to use force when it can be rationalized as ‘defensive’ and ‘just’” (Johnson, 2009, p. 12).

The integration of Chinese culture into strategic communication is a key instrument for enhancing “soft power,” shaping an attractive national image abroad, and safeguarding national

⁶ Li Y. Yi zhengtilun de siwei fangshi wei shijie gongxian chu zhongguo zhihui [The Contribution of Chinese Wisdom to the World Through Holistic Thinking] // Sichuan Ribao [Sichuan Daily]. (In Chinese). URL: <https://4g.scdaily.cn/html/20240617/258040.html> (accessed: 10.08.2025).

interests. In 1991, China established the State Council Information Office (also known as the Office for External Publicity) as the primary news organ of the Chinese government.

Attention to strategic communication increased at the start of the new century, with the aim of ensuring China's "comprehensive national power" (综合国力, *zonghe guoli*). In the early 21st century, China launched the "Go Global" (走出去, *zou chuqu*) strategy, which was also extended to state media. A public diplomacy division was established within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Confucius Institutes and Classrooms began to open starting in 2005. At the Fourth Plenary Session of the 16th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, held in Beijing in 2004, the importance of shaping an advanced socialist culture and responding to the international situation was emphasized.⁷

Following the 17th National Congress of the CPC in 2007, the importance of "soft power" (软实力, *ruan shili*) as a lever of influence was formally established. The carriers of this "soft power" are cultural products — such as film, literature, and art — that promote and popularize Chinese values and the achievements of the Chinese people.

Nevertheless, Chinese scholars acknowledge that in the early 21st century, China's "soft power" was perceived as an instrument for defensive purposes, as the country could offer few

political values to a world dominated by Western philosophies (Li, 2008, p. 288).

The election of Xi Jinping as the new President of the People's Republic of China in 2013 marked a new chapter in the development of the international community in China. The announcement of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) represents an attempt to advance an alternative model of international governance. Xi Jinping's policy is characterized by a departure from Deng Xiaoping's concept of "keeping a low profile and concealing one's capabilities," which became evident during the working meeting on peripheral diplomacy in 2013.

That same year, two other important announcements were made: the first was during the annual National Conference on Propaganda, where the chairman emphasized the need to renew the ideas and methods of propaganda,⁸ the second was during a group training session of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPC, where Xi Jinping identified the need to fill external communications with modern Chinese values (that is, the values of socialism with Chinese characteristics (中国特色社会主义价值观念, *Zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi jiazhi guannian*)).⁹ Xi Jinping's speech at the 19th CPC National Congress in 2017 emphasized the need to improve China's international communication capabilities to project a truthful and multidimensional image of China, as well as to strengthen soft power through culture.¹⁰

⁷ The Fourth Plenum of the 16th CPC Central Committee // Beijing Review. March 24, 2011. URL: https://www.bjreview.com/special/2011-03/24/content_346089.htm (accessed: 29.06.2025).

⁸ Xijiping zai quanguo xuanchuan sixiang gongzuo huiyi shang qianguo xionghuai daju bawo dashi zhuoyan dashi nuli ba xuanchuan sixiang gongzuo zuo de geng hao [Xi Jinping Stressed at the National Conference on Propaganda and Ideological Work That We Must Take the Overall Situation into Account, Grasp the General Trend, Focus on Major Issues, and Strive To Do Better in Propaganda and Ideological Work // Gongchandang yuan wang [Communist Party Members]. August 20, 2013. (In Chinese). URL: https://www.gov.cn/ldhd/2013-08/20/content_2470599.htm (accessed: 30.06.2025).

⁹ Xijiping: Jianshe shehui zhuyi wenhua qianguo zhuoli tigao guojia wenhua ruan shili // Zhongguo gongchandang xinwen [Xi Jinping: Build socialist cultural strength and strive to improve the country's cultural soft power // News of the Communist Party of China]. January 1, 2014. (In Chinese). URL: <http://politics.people.com.cn/n/2014/0101/c1001-23994334.html> (accessed: 30.06.2025).

¹⁰ Full Text of Xi Jinping's Report at 19th CPC National Congress // Xinhua. November 4, 2017. URL: https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/19thcpcnationalcongress/2017-11/04/content_34115212.htm (accessed: 29.06.2025).

A positive image of China is also created through a national narrative, which is conveyed through the promotion of the Spring Festival, panda diplomacy, China's participation in the restoration of UNESCO sites, the export of tea culture, and so on.

The catalyst for the Chinese leadership's growing interest in strategic communication was the meeting of the 19th Politburo of the CPC Central Committee: on May 31, 2021, CPC General Secretary Xi Jinping stated the importance of China's engagement with the world.

In his address, he emphasized the necessity of establishing a strategic communication system with distinctive Chinese characteristics, aimed at enhancing the influence of international dialogue, the appeal of Chinese culture, China's national image, the persuasiveness of Chinese discourse, and the capacity to shape public opinion.

He also stressed the importance of improving the training of leadership personnel in the field of international communication, advancing research on international communication theory, establishing university disciplines, and cultivating talent in this area.¹¹

Analyzing Chinese President Xi Jinping's thesis on the need for a comprehensive system of independent intelligence, its several dimensions can be identified:

- 1) the independent intelligence system itself,
- 2) discourse,
- 3) narrative,
- 4) personnel training.

Furthermore, the speech emphasizes the concept of a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind, signaling a discernible shift from a logic prioritizing solely national interests toward a framework of complementarity among civilizations. Regarding the synergy of strategic communication actors, these encompass the state, media, businesses, and society. The state's role is to set the agenda, the media is tasked

with its dissemination, while businesses and society focus on advancing "soft" cultural influence through brands and social media.

The concept of a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind, as the value-based foundation of strategic communication, fundamentally transcends the confrontational paradigm of the Western "clash of civilizations" theory, advocating instead for equal dialogue and mutual enrichment among civilizations. It establishes an inclusive ethical framework for strategic communication with Chinese characteristics (Shi & Tong, 2023), integrating universal emotional elements of Chinese culture such as "collective harmony" (集体和谐, *jiti hexie*), "family ethics" (家庭伦理, *jiating lunli*), and the "spirit of struggle" (奋斗精神, *fendou jingshen*) into international narratives. Through storytelling, this concept forges emotional connections with global audiences, creating an "intersubjective reality" (主体间现实, *zhuti jian xianshi*) that bridges cultural divides and mitigates cognitive polarization in intercultural spaces and enables the overcoming of Western discursive traps.

In terms of discourse innovation, Chinese culture, through its "narrative system of Chinese modernization," facilitates the internationalization of its institutional advantages. On the one hand, this is achieved by transforming cooperation practices within frameworks like the Belt and Road Initiative and the digital yuan into "decentralized" models of civilizational interaction. This promotes, through economic interconnectedness, the export of technical standards and values to counter the discourse of Western technological hegemony. On the other hand, innovative forms of expression for core socialist values and the construction of "soft boundaries" that blend cultural subjectivity with openness enable the protection of cultural sovereignty and resistance against "digital colonialism."

¹¹ Xijiping zhuchi zhonggong zhongyang zhengzhi ju di sanshi ci jiti xuexi bing jianghua [Xi Jinping Chaired the 30th Collective Study Session of the Politburo of the CPC Central Committee and Delivered a Speech] // Zhonghua renmin gongheguo zhongyang renmin zhengfu [Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China]. June 1, 2021. (In Chinese). URL: https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2021-06/01/content_5614684.htm (accessed: 29.06.2025).

In practice, China implements a “glocalization synergy” strategy for the targeted dissemination of its influence. For instance, in dialogues with Western audiences, the focus is placed on personal self-improvement and the concept of harmony, while in interactions with developing countries, the emphasis shifts towards shared development. By calibrating emotional resonance, a balance is struck between “value commitment” and “empathetic communication,” thereby transforming Chinese narratives into topics of shared human concern.

Through the concept of a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind, Chinese culture plays a significant role in the global transformation of the civilizational paradigm. On the one hand, it helps to overcome the entrenched perception of non-Western civilizations as the “Other” in the post-colonial era, advancing the reconstruction of a multi-civilizational communicative order based on coexistence. On the other hand, it offers a “Chinese solution” for governance in the digital age. This solution transforms its five-thousand-year civilizational heritage into contemporary communicative innovation, thereby affirming the authenticity and discursive influence of Chinese civilization within the global “competition of meta-narratives” (Zhang & Zhu, 2025).

President Xi Jinping stated: “Culture is the soul of a country and its people. A prosperous

culture leads to a prosperous country, and a strong culture leads to a strong people” (Qi, 2022, p. 12).

Confidence in one’s own culture is crucial for a country’s prosperity and survival, as well as for the transmission of the national spirit, and for the nation’s future. Strategic culture, as a form of culture, represents the concentration of cultural concepts, values, and national characteristics in the strategic sphere, and is an embodiment of a worldview. Its essence lies in the deep integration of cultural concepts and strategic thinking. The concepts of traditional Chinese culture — “harmony among all nations” (协和万邦, *xiéhé wànbāng*), “great harmony under heaven” (天下大同, *tiānxià dàtóng*), and “the unity of heaven and humanity” (天人合一, *tiān rén hé yī*) — constitute the essence of traditional Chinese strategic culture. They emphasize overall defense, the pursuit of peace, and the achievement of great unity (Qi, 2022, p. 12).

Thus, the following cultural values of China’s strategic communication can be identified (Tables 1 and 2).

In summary, the fundamental distinctions between Chinese and Western cultural values and principles can be reduced to a priority of collectivism (as opposed to Western individualism), hierarchy, specific philosophical foundations, and a distinct worldview. These differences shape the unique identity and traditions of Chinese culture.

Table 1. Values of China’s Strategic Culture

Value Dimension	Basic Western Model	Chinese Model
Security Vision	Security through alliances (exclusivity)	General security (inclusivity)
Vision of Sovereignty	Interventionist “values diplomacy”	Equality and respect “without political demands”
Development Vision	Aid tied to commitments to political reform	“People’s welfare” as a priority: “授人以渔” (Shou ren yi yu) — “Teaching to fish” (not giving fish)

Source: compiled by A.A. Zabella and Kong Xiangyu based on: Xijiping: Gaoju zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi weida qizhi wei quanmian jianshe shehui zhuyi xiandaihua guojia er tuanjie fendou — zai zhongguo gongchandang di ershi ci quanguo daibiao dahui shang de baogao [Xi Jinping: Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Jointly Build a Modern Socialist Country in an All-Round Way — Report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China] // Xinhua News. October 25, 2022. (In Chinese). URL: http://www.news.cn/politics/cpc20/2022-10/25/c_1129079429.htm (accessed: 29.06.2025).

Table 2. Foundational Principles of China's Strategic Culture

Cultural Value	Red Line Principle (底线思维, <i>dixian siwei</i>)	Open Commitment (开放承诺, <i>Kaifang chengnuò</i>)
Sovereign Dignity	The Taiwan issue (warning to the United States)	Participation in and shaping of counterterrorism, climate, and other agendas (coalition-building)
Justice	Condemnation of the abuse of unilateral sanctions (countering hegemony)	Advancement of the UN peace agenda (reform of global governance)
Right to Development	Refutation of the U.S. thesis on overcapacity as a result of technological competition. Protection of Economic Interests	Support for African states through the establishment of agricultural centers, aid in water access, infrastructure development (integrating security and development)

Source: compiled by A.A. Zabella and Kong Xiangyu based on: Xij Jinping: Gaoju zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi weida qizhi wei quanmian jianshe shehui zhuyi xiandaihua guojia er tuanjie fendou — zai zhongguo gongchandang di ershi ci quanguo daibiao dahui shang de baogao [Xi Jinping: Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Jointly Build a Modern Socialist Country in an All-Round Way — Report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China] // Xinhua News. October 25, 2022. (In Chinese). URL: http://www.news.cn/politics/cpc20/2022-10/25/c_1129079429.htm (accessed: 29.06.2025).

Cultural Specificities in China's Strategic Communication The Interrelation of Domestic and International Strategic Communication

The concept of the PRC's comprehensive strategic culture incorporates traditional values (harmony), Marxist philosophy of struggle, and Western realism.

China's domestic strategic communication encompasses a range of aspects, among which the following are key:

1. CPC Ideology: Plays a pivotal role within the strategic communication system.
2. Collectivism: Influences the balance of interests, mutual assistance, and social harmony.
3. Confucian Values: Contribute to societal stability.
4. Harmony and Stability: Entails strict control over public opinion to ensure social harmony and political stability.
5. Centralized Governance: Decision-making is concentrated among a limited number of individuals, which helps avoid local-level conflicts.
6. National Unity: Overcoming ethnic and religious issues, promoting a common Chinese identity.
7. Economic Development: Modernization of the country.

8. Support for Innovation and Technology: Building a robust domestic R&D base.

9. Social Control: Regulation of the internet and social media.

10. Cultivation of Patriotism: Fostering national pride and patriotism.

Within the country, the leadership of the PRC actively exercises control over the mass media, which allows for shaping a correct and verified perception of various events. Representatives of state authorities, as a rule, convey coordinated positions on international platforms, creating an image of domestic political unity.

“External Communication” (对外传播, *duiwai chuanbo*) and “International Communication” (国际传播, *guoji chuanbo*) are often used interchangeably, but there are some differences. External Communication focuses on the factor of Chinese actors in this communication, while International Communication also includes the international audiences. Furthermore, Chinese scholars, when studying Strategic Communication, use such terms as “Media Propaganda” (媒体宣传, *meiti xuanchuan*) and “Media Diplomacy” (媒体外交, *meiti waijiao*).

The key aspects of China's external strategic communication include:

1. Collectivism (prioritizing the group interests over individual ones),

2. Confucian values (emphasis on harmony, hierarchy, and respect for elders);
3. Long-term planning and patience (working with a long-term perspective);
4. The art of compromise (avoiding confrontation);
5. Saving “face” (the concept of “face” is linked to respect, reputation, and social harmony);
6. Cultural exchange (promoting exchanges among students and delegations).

In its foreign policy, the PRC long adhered to the principle of “putting one’s own house in order before inviting guests” (打扫干净屋子再请客, *dǎsǎo gānjìng wūzi zài qǐngkè*) (Chen & Zhang, 2024). The core elements of this approach are ensuring internal stability, fostering economic development, and preventing external interference. Nowadays, China’s external strategic communication is shifting its focus towards multilateral formats, a direction driven by the deepening cooperation within BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). This orientation contributes to strengthening the country’s international authority.

Furthermore, China places a strong emphasis on the opportunities presented by digital technologies and social media for communicating with international audiences. The use of digital diplomacy is an important component of strategic communication, allowing China to respond to international events in real-time (Yin & Shen, 2023).

In its external strategic communication, China adheres to the logic of “strategic restraint,” where priority is given to the economy over military confrontation. An example of this is the

tactic of island-building in the South China Sea (SCS) without resorting to escalation.

China is focusing on increasing resources and infrastructure, primarily through the promotion of the BRI initiative, which was launched by Xi Jinping in 2013.

Political dialogue serves as an important prerequisite for the joint implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative. China, the participating BRI countries, and international organizations are actively establishing a multi-level mechanism for political interaction, creating synergies in areas such as development strategic planning, socio-economic policies, governance rules and standards, and jointly formulating plans and measures to advance regional cooperation. This serves as the “foundation” and “catalyst” for deeper practical collaboration. Engagement within the BRI framework is gradually evolving into a key platform for exchanging experiences, technologies, and cultural practices. It also facilitates the deepening of scientific and educational contacts among the participating nations.¹²

Through the Belt and Road Initiative, China is more effectively positioning itself on the international stage, expanding cultural cooperation and building its public diplomacy capacity. It is also strengthening financial and investment mechanisms, thereby increasingly enhancing the PRC’s attractiveness in the eyes of the international community.

The foundation of China’s external strategic communication is based on the modern embodiment of Chinese culture, which emphasizes the important diplomatic tenets of “harmony and unity” (和合, *hehe*). The Chinese side demonstrates both principled firmness in defending the country’s core

¹² Jianding bu yi tuijin gong jian “yidai yilu” gao zhiliang fazhan zou shen zou shi de yuanjing yu xingdong — gong jian “yidai yilu” wuilai shi nian fazhan zhanwang [Vision and Actions to Steadily Promote the High-Quality Development of the Joint Construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and Deepen and Implement It — Development Prospects for the Joint Construction of the Belt and Road Initiative in the Next Ten Years] // Sichuan sheng qing wang [Sichuan Provincial Information Network]. November 25, 2023. (In Chinese). URL: https://scsqw.cn/gzdt/zyhy/content_130739 (accessed: 29.06.2025).

interests and tactical flexibility in non-confrontational areas. An example of this is condemning the U.S. position and actions on the Taiwan issue, while agreeing to dialogue on areas of mutual interest, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The President of the People's Republic of China stated: "It is necessary to coordinate domestic and international situations, steadfastly follow the path of peaceful development, implement an open strategy of mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, adhere to a correct view of justice and benefit, and shape a new security concept based on joint effort, comprehensiveness, cooperation, and sustainability." China "will always be a contributor to world peace and global development, and will work to protect the international order."¹³

Challenges and Adaptations of China's Strategic Communication in the Context of Internal Value Diversity

The impact of China's strategic communication on youth constitutes a systematic project that combines ideological guidance, institutional support, technological solutions, and shaping the social environment. The Medium and Long-Term Youth Development Program (2016–2025)¹⁴ is China's first specialized national-level plan for youth development. Its

strategic communication mechanism, through multidimensional approaches, including ideological guidance, institutional guarantees, technological support, and social practices, profoundly influences the formation of young people's value orientations, development opportunities, and the effectiveness of their social engagement. Youth affairs coordination meetings, operating at all levels from national to county and organized under the auspices of the Communist Youth League, coordinate cross-departmental policy resources. For example, the "Youth Housing" program in Guangdong Province has provided public rental housing to over 7,000 graduates, while Beijing has allocated 600 apartments to address the housing needs of current-year graduates.¹⁵

In the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021–2025) periods of 9 provinces and 112 cities, specialized mechanisms for youth development have been established, promoting the inclusion of the younger generation's needs into the mainstream of public policy (Table 3).

Today, China acts as both a subject participant and an object of globalization processes, actively participating in the international agenda while preserving its cultural sovereignty. The Chinese government, on the one hand, actively promotes patriotism, and on the other, integrates into the global economy and politics. Consequently, it is compelled to seek a balance between the tasks of its domestic and foreign policies.

¹³ Xij Jinping: Gaoju zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi weida qizhi wei quanmian jianshe shehui zhuyi xiandaihua guojia er tuan jie fendou — zai zhongguo gongchandang di ershi ci quanguo daibiao dahui shang de baogao [Xi Jinping: Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Jointly Build a Modern Socialist Country in an All-Round Way — Report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China] // Xinhua News. October 25, 2022. (In Chinese). URL: http://www.news.cn/politics/cpc20/2022-10/25/c_1129079429.htm (accessed: 29.06.2025).

¹⁴ "Zhong chang qi qingnian fazhan gui Hua (2016–2025 nian)" shishi qingkuang [Implementation of the "Medium- and Long-Term Youth Development Plan (2016–2025)"] // Zhongguo gongqingtuan [Communist Youth League of China]. (In Chinese). URL: https://www.gqt.org.cn/xxgk/qnfz/202209/t20220921_789682.htm (accessed: 29.06.2025).

¹⁵ Zhong chang qi qingnian fazhan gui Hua (2016–2025 nian)" shishi qingkuang [Implementation of the "Medium- and Long-Term Youth Development Plan (2016–2025)"] // Zhongguo gongqingtuan [Communist Youth League of China]. (In Chinese). URL: https://www.gqt.org.cn/xxgk/qnfz/202209/t20220921_789682.htm (accessed: 29.06.2025).

Table 3. Key Mechanisms of Strategic Communication and Their Implementation Effectiveness

Mechanism Type	Specific Measures	Implementation Outcomes	Policy Basis
Ideological Leadership	“Young Marxist Training Project,” “Online Culture Campaign”	Over 70% of young people agree that personal development should be combined with national development	Youth Ideology and Moral Education Planning
Institutional Coordination	Joint Youth Conference, “Development City” Pilot Project	Youth satisfaction in 45 pilot cities increased by 15%	Youth Affairs Joint Conference Mechanism
Technological Empowerment	AI Precision Targeting, Youth Policy Consultation Platform	100,000 simulated suggestions with a 15% conversion rate	Feedback on the Implementation of the 14th Five-Year Plan
Practical Participation	Volunteer Service Credit System, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Support	The average age of youth science and technology innovation teams is under 35	Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Plan

Source: compiled by A.A. Zabella and Kong Xiangyu based on: Xijiping zhuchi zhonggong zhongyang zhengzhi ju di sanshi ci jiti xuexi bing jianghua [Xi Jinping Chaired the 30th Collective Study Session of the Politburo of the CPC Central Committee and Delivered a Speech] // Zhonghua renmin gongheguo zhongyang renmin zhengfu [Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China]. June 1, 2021. (In Chinese). URL: https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2021-06/01/content_5614684.htm (accessed: 29.06.2025).

China’s rapid economic growth has led to a significant increase in income for the upper stratum of society, which has exacerbated social inequality. Under the conditions of state control, young people strive for greater self-expression and access to information. Value differences in China are reflected in the fact that the younger generation is interested in popular Western values, increasingly values European education, and aspires to study in Europe. However, this does not mean that all young people embrace Western values. On the contrary, it is precisely while studying abroad that many students, through their own experience, become convinced that China is safer than a number of European countries, which strengthens their sense of national pride. Furthermore, China consistently implements the principle of “Supporting studying abroad, encouraging returning to serve the homeland, ensuring freedom to come and go, and applying knowledge in practice.” As a result, an increasing number of graduates choose to return to China.

On the one hand, traditional values are being reinforced in China; on the other, there is a growing interest in more liberal values. With regard to value contradictions, it should be noted that Confucianism, which forms the basis

of Chinese culture, emphasizes respect for elders, family values, and harmony, which contrasts with the Western emphasis on personal freedoms and individualism. In terms of work culture, the Chinese are more prone to working overtime and on weekends, as well as adhering to a strict hierarchy, which contrasts with the Western model characterized by a clear separation of work and personal life. The household registration system (*hukou*) in China restricts mobility between rural and urban areas, something unthinkable in Western countries, and causes dissatisfaction among Chinese people due to the inequality it creates and the strict migration control it maintains.

The state encourages borrowing in the spheres of economics and science that contribute to the country’s development, while strictly limiting the spread of values perceived as a threat to political stability.

Nevertheless, China has examples of successful hybridization of Chinese and Western values. Hong Kong, for example, is a fusion of British heritage (legal system, English language) and Chinese traditions (Lunar New Year, tea culture, family values). Overall, localization in China is carried out quite successfully. For instance, restaurants in the

country offer European dishes adapted to local tastes. Borrowed Western technologies are also successfully applied in China (social networks like *WeChat*, *Xiaohongshu*, *Weibo*).

The state's role in regulating the internet in China is a key aspect of the country's digital ecosystem. The China's internet censorship system, or the "Great Firewall," blocks access to undesirable websites and platforms (*WhatsApp*, *Facebook*, *Twitter*,¹⁶ *Google*, etc.), enabling the government to control the information available to users. Consequently, all topics contradicting the Party line are considered sensitive to the state and are promptly blocked. China has also enacted the Cybersecurity Law (2017),¹⁷ which requires internet companies to ensure information security. State authorities also have the right to inspect and license internet companies, which are obligated to ensure that users' personal data is used only within the legal framework. All the aforementioned restrictions lead to the creation of alternatives, such as the use of tools to bypass blocks (VPNs) or the discussion of undesirable topics through coded abbreviations.

Conclusion

Culture plays a distinctive role in shaping China's strategic communication. Despite the evolution of the CPC's ideological stances, it remains closely intertwined with traditional cultural values, such as Confucianism, as well as contemporary diplomatic practices and the tangible achievements of the country's socio-economic development in recent decades. The

key aspects of China's strategic communication are traditional values, "soft power," adaptation to modern conditions, and a communication strategy. All these elements are crucial for realizing the "Chinese Dream" while simultaneously ensuring a balance between preserving cultural identity and modernizing strategies in the face of global change.

The construction of a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind plays a significant role in strategic communication, aimed at jointly addressing global challenges. China is also leveraging the Belt and Road Initiative to appeal to an international audience, calling for united efforts in combating global challenges and promoting regional stability. This is intended to strengthen China's global reputation as a responsible actor in international affairs.

Analysis of Chinese sources and literature reveals a focus on themes related to multipolarity, regional cooperation, and technological development. China has already amassed sufficient weight to independently propose attractive alternatives, based on a symbiosis of traditional socialist and moral values embodied in the "Chinese Dream." Furthermore, China displays considerable interest in promoting AI-focused diplomacy, offering its own standards and programs, as well as providing economic aid and investments to developing countries. This expands not only economic influence, but also helps forge strategic alliances. In this context, cultural values not only support China's external economic initiatives, but also serve as a vital tool for enhancing its influence on the global stage.

Received / Поступила в редакцию: 01.07.2025

Revised / Доработана после рецензирования: 20.09.2025

Accepted / Принята к публикации: 18.12.2025

¹⁶ Social media platforms *WhatsApp*, *Twitter*, and *Facebook* (which are part of the *Meta* group of companies) are banned in the Russian Federation. The *Meta* company has been recognized as an extremist organization within the territory of the Russian Federation (*Editor's note*).

¹⁷ *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wangluo anquan fa* [The Cybersecurity Law of the People's Republic of China] // *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo zhongyang renmin zhengfu* [The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China]. November 7, 2016. (In Chinese). URL: https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2016-11/07/content_5129723.htm (accessed: 30.06.2025).

References

- Bazarkina, D.Yu., & Pashentsev, E.N. (2021). BRICS strategic communication: The present and the future. *Russia in Global Affairs*, 19(3), 64–93. <https://doi.org/10.31278/1810-6374-2021-19-3-64-93>; EDN: IYTTQM
- Bi, Y. (2022). Zhanlüe chuanbo: Suyuan, fazhan ji qi qishi [Strategic communication: Origins, development, and implications]. *Duiwai Chuanbo [External Communication]*, (6), 26–29. (In Chinese).
- Bi, Y., & Wang, J. (2011). Zhanlüe chuanbo chutan [A preliminary study of strategic communication]. *Hainan Shifan Daxue Xuebao (Shehui Kexue Ban) [Journal of Hainan Normal University (Social Sciences Edition)]*, 5, 160–162. (In Chinese).
- Burlakov, V.A. (2016). Strategic communication as a method of modern geopolitics. *Oikumena. Regional Researches*, (2), 7–15. (In Russian). EDN: WKS WL B
- Chen, H., & Zhang, W. (2024). Zhonghua wenhua guoji chuanbo xiaoneng tisheng de zhanlüe zhuanxiang [The strategic shift to enhance the effectiveness of international communication of Chinese culture]. *Xinwen Daxue [Journalism University]*, (4), 1–14. (In Chinese).
- Corman, S.R., Trethewey, A., & Goodall, H.L., Jr. (Eds.). (2008). *Weapons of mass persuasion: Strategic communication to combat violent extremism*. New York: Peter Lang Inc.
- Feng, H. (2009). A dragon on defense: Explaining China's strategic culture. In J.L. Johnson, K.M. Kartchner, & J.A. Larsen (Eds.), *Strategic culture and weapons of mass destruction: Culturally based insights into comparative national security policymaking* (pp. 171–187). New York: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230618305_11
- Fisher, A., & Lucas, S. (Eds.). (2010). *Trials of engagement: The future of US public diplomacy*. Leiden; Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004179400.i-309>
- Johnson, K.D. (2009). China's strategic culture: A perspective for the United States. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute. Retrieved from https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/101982/China_Strategic_Culture_June09.pdf
- Li, J., & Tilford, E.H. (1997). *Traditional military thinking and the defensive strategy of China*. Carlisle, PA: US Army War College Press. Retrieved from <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/monographs/182>
- Li, M. (2008). China debates soft power. *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 2(2), 287–308. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjip/pon011>
- Lu, X. (2021). Xueshu chuanbo zai Zhongguo zhanlüe chuanbo tixi zhong de hexin diwei yu duochong jiazhi [The core position and multiple values of academic communication in China's strategic communication system]. *Xiandai Chuanbo: Zhongguo Chuanmei Daxue Xuebao [Modern Communication: Journal of Communication University of China]*, (11), 26–32. (In Chinese).
- Mearsheimer, J. (2014). *The tragedy of great power politics*. New York; London: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Ming, L. (2022). Shuzi shidai tisheng guoji chuanbo xiaoneng sikao [Reflections on enhancing the effectiveness of international communication in the digital age]. *Zhongguo Keji Xinxi [China Science & Technology Information]*, 24, 143–145. (In Chinese).
- Pantserev, K.A. (2025). Strategic communication and psychological warfare: On weaponization of digital platforms. *Pathways to Peace and Security*, (1), 53–69. (In Russian). <https://doi.org/10.20542/2307-1494-2025-1-53-69>; EDN: ANFQQQ
- Pashentsev, E. (Ed.). (2020). *Strategic communication in EU—Russia relations: Tensions, challenges and opportunities*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-27253-1>
- Pashentsev, E.N. (2014). *Communication management and strategic communication: Modern technologies of global influence and management*. Moscow: International Center for Social and Political Research and Consulting. (In Russian). EDN: WLALAF
- Paul, Ch. (2011). *Strategic communication: Origins, concepts, and current debates*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9798216019596>
- Qi, J. (2022). Guanyu zhongguo zhanlüe wenhua de renshi yu sikao [Understanding and reflection on China's strategic culture]. *Sunzi bingfa yanjiu [Research on Sun Tzu's Art of War]*, 1–12(2), 1–12. (In Chinese).
- Scobell, A. (2002). *China and strategic culture*. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute. <https://doi.org/10.21236/ADA402402>
- Shi, A., & Tong, T. (2023). Quanqiu anquan zhili shi yu xia de zhanlüe chuanbo: lishi, lilun yu Shijian [Strategic communication from the perspective of global security governance: History, theory, and practice]. *Shanghai jiaotong daxue xuebao (zhexue shehui kexue ban) [Journal of Shanghai Jiao Tong University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)]*, (6), 11–20. (In Chinese).
- Waltz, K. (1979). *Theory of international politics*. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

- Wang, D. (2009). Zhongguo jueqi yao kao zhongguo de zhanlüe wenhua [China's rise depends on its strategic culture]. *Keji zhinang [Technology Think Tank]*, 10, 48–50. (In Chinese).
- Yang, M., & Yin, L. (2024). *Meiti ronghe shidai xia guoji chuanbo xiaoneng tisheng lujing tanxi. Zhōngguó méití rónghé fāzhǎn bàogào [Analysis of pathways to enhance international communication effectiveness in the era of media convergence. China media convergence development report]*. Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe [Social Sciences Academic Press]. (In Chinese).
- Yin, Le, & Shen, Zhe. (2023). Ronghe yu chong su: zhonghua wenhua guoji chuanbo de zhineng jishu yingyong ji qushi [Convergence and reconfiguration: The application and trends of intelligent technology in the international communication of Chinese culture]. *Duiwai zhuan bo [International Communication]*, 10, 31–35. (In Chinese).
- Zhang, L. (2024). Zhonghua minzu gongtongti zhanlüe chuanbo de luoji yu lujing (er) [The logic and pathway of strategic communication for the Chinese nation community (part II)]. *Jingji dao kan [Economic Guide]*, 8, 80–87. (In Chinese).
- Zhang, Li & Zhu, J. (2025). Xin xingshi xia de zhongguo tese zhanlüe chuanbo tixi jiegou: tiaozhan yu lujing [The structure of the strategic communication system with Chinese characteristics in the new situation: Challenges and pathways]. *Duiwai zhuan bo [International Communication]*, (5), 4–8. (In Chinese).
- Zhong, S., & Wang, H. (2023). Maozedong guanyu zhanlüe chuanbo de shengdong shijian ji qishi [Mao Zedong's vibrant practice and inspiration in strategic communication]. *Xinwen yu chuanbo yanjiu [Journalism and Communication Research]*, 12, 21–34. (In Chinese).
- Zuppello, M. (2024). Strategic communication: How China promotes and communicates its political agenda in Latin America. In C.R. Veney & S.O. Abidde (Eds.), *China and Taiwan in Latin America and the Caribbean: History, power rivalry, and regional implications* (pp. 229–260). Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-45166-9_10

About the authors:

Zabella Anastasia Aleksandrovna — PhD (History), Senior Research Fellow, Department of Theory and History of International Relations, Saint Petersburg State University; 1/3, Smolnogo St., Saint Petersburg, 191060, Russian Federation; eLibrary SPIN-code: 9465-8400; ORCID: 0000-0001-7082-5073; e-mail: anastasiababella@gmail.com

Kong Xiangyu — PhD Student, Department of Theory and History of International Relations, RUDN University; 10, bldg 2, Miklukho-Maklaya St, Moscow, 117198, Russian Federation; ORCID: 0009-0002-2629-0002; e-mail: 1042245022@rudn.ru