

One Tale Many Tellers: comprehensive public diplomacy

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乳燕飞华
烘天人
子弄生烟白
渐困倚孤眠
常外谁来推绣户
又却是风敲竹
转午
映凉新浴
扇子一时似玉
枉教人梦断瑶台曲



Evolving Public Diplomacy (PD) (1)

- Conventional PD
 - An integral part of state-to-state diplomacy
 - Activities are operated solely by official actors (state leaders and diplomats) in privacy
 - E.g. educational exchange programs, language training, cultural events and exchanges, radio and television broadcasting
 - New PD
 - Composed of multiple actors and networks, operating in a fluid global environment of new issues and contexts, with a focus on non-state actors
 - The wide use of social media broadens the range of actors
 - Post new PD
 - State is back because it has the means to do the targeting, while the 'old 'new' actors – NGOs, civil societies etc, (currently) lack the capacity
 - Multi-level
- Both the sending and receiving ends as well as the transmission channels have changed

China's public diplomacy

- The general goals of China's public diplomacy
 - to serve China's foreign policy objectives and its domestic development by improving China's image in the world.
- There is a widely held view that in China, there are different actors in public diplomacy.
 - State-actors
 - Non-state actors
 - However non-state actors are all authorised by the state.
- This project argues that China's public diplomacy consists of multi-level actors
 - Case study: China story told by Tai Chi practitioners

Tai Chi (Taiji), a rich cultural art form

- Not merely a physical exercise or martial art, but embedded within it are philosophies, ideas and principles that are uniquely “Chinese”.
- “Chinese culture in practice employing movements of the body to express, interpret and promote a cultural spirit: that expresses the ancient Chinese understanding of the life, nature balance and development” (Yu ,1999 pg28).

Research questions

- By practicing Tai Chi, which embodies "Chinese values", have foreign practitioners changed their views about China (do they view China more positively)?
- Hypothesis:
 - Once foreigners/societies come to know about the Chinese philosophy, way of life, they will find out that harmony is an essential part of Chinese tradition and a country that values harmony poses absolutely no threat to the rest of the world.

Methodologies

- Survey questionnaires from 2016 to 2017 in the UK
- In-depth interviews
 - Tai Chi masters from China
 - Tai Chi practitioners in China and the UK
- Focus groups of foreign learners in China and the UK
- Tai Chi workshop participant observations

Findings (1)

- Global reach

- The popularity is explained by China's use of it to explain its development

- 中国功夫两分钟带你看懂中国经济

- <http://v.china.com/original/life/11159708/20160413/22425571.html>

- The impressive participation around the world on World Tai Chi and Qi Gong Day every year since 1999 is a testimony to China's immense reservoir of soft power.

- <http://worldtaichiday.org/>



Tai Chi, one of China's most popular cultural exports

- The figures range from 150 million to 300 million worldwide (GASPC, 2013; CCTV, 2015; Sina, 2012).
- Campbell (2007: 20)
 - "Paradoxically, it is possible that just at the point when the rest of the world seems intent on imitating the Western way of life, the West itself is actually turning away from its own historic roots and embracing an Eastern outlook" .

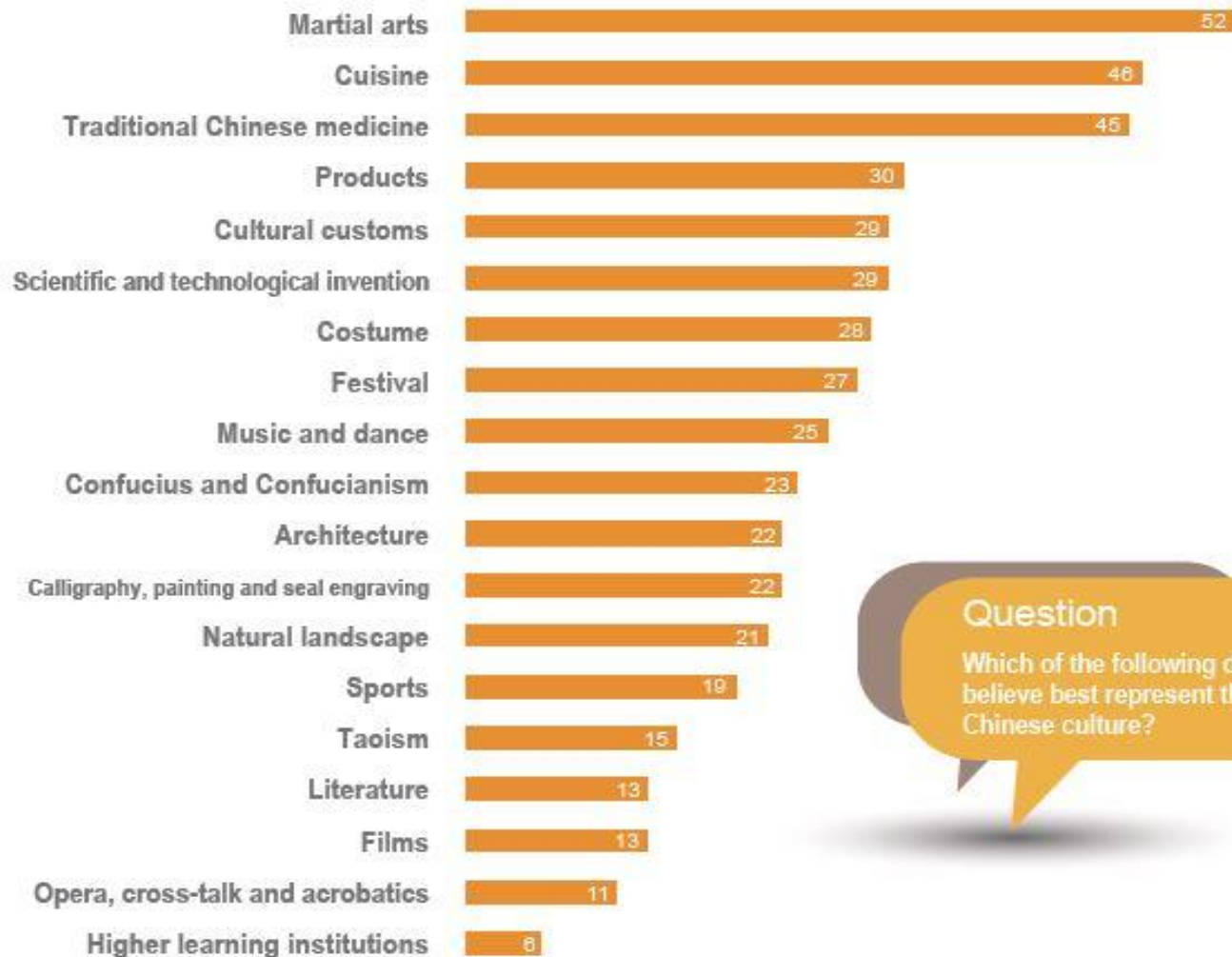
2013 CHINA NATIONAL IMAGE GLOBAL SURVEY



Chinese culture is very diverse in forms. In the eyes of the international audience, the most representative aspects of Chinese culture include, in descending order: martial arts (52%), cuisine (46%) and traditional Chinese medicine (45%). The influence of higher learning institutions and mass media products is the weakest among all the surveyed forms of Chinese culture.

Figure 7
International Recognition of the Forms of Chinese Culture

* The figure shows the percentage of each individual cultural form



Question

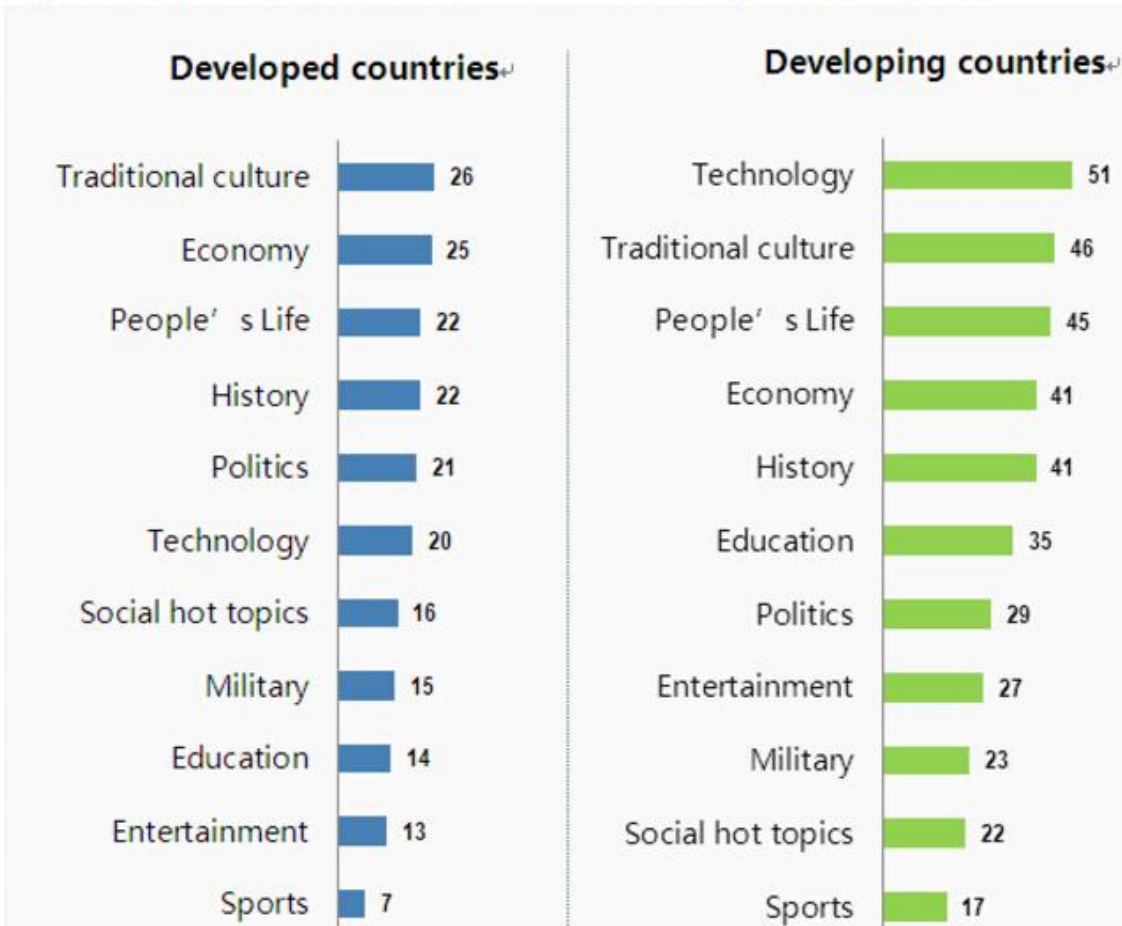
Which of the following do you believe best represent the Chinese culture?

2014 China global image survey

乳燕飞华屋
绣天人桃阴转午 晚凉新浴
手弄生绡白团扇 扇手一时似玉
渐困倚孤眠清熟
帘外谁家推绣户 教教人梦断瑶台曲
又是风敲竹

Figure 27 Information the respondents want to acquire through Chinese media

[Question: What do you want to know more about through Chinese media?]





陳氏太極拳





2017海外传拳

陈自强

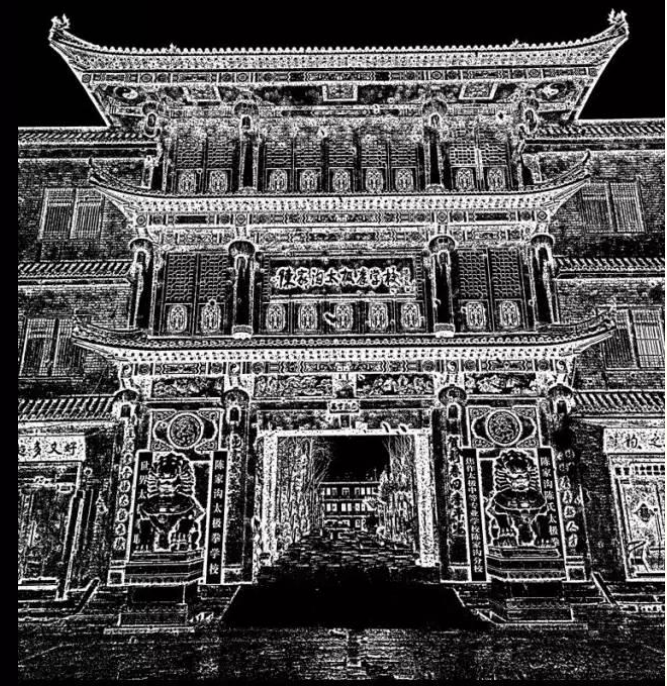
陈家沟陈氏第二十世太极拳嫡宗传人
陈家沟太极拳学校总教练
陈家沟陈氏太极拳协会秘书长
国际太极拳冠军
CCTV“武林大会”总冠军

-  2017年3月9日-3月15日 意大利 那不勒斯
-  2017年3月16日-3月23日 德国 柏林
-  2017年3月23日-3月27日 德国 克伦布茨
-  2017年3月27日-4月6日 西班牙 马拉加
-  2017年4月6日-4月10日 德国 杜塞尔多夫
-  2017年4月10日-4月17日 斯洛文尼亚 卢布尔雅那

-  2017年4月18日-4月20日 奥地利 维也纳
-  2017年4月20日-4月24日 捷克
-  2017年4月24日-4月27日 挪威 奥斯陆
-  2017年4月27日-5月1日 爱尔兰 贝尔法斯特
-  2017年5月2日-5月8日 英国 曼城
-  2017年5月8日-5月10日 英国 伦敦
-  2017年5月10日-5月17日 巴西 里约热内卢
-  2017年5月17日-5月24日 巴西 圣保罗
-  2017年5月24日-5月29日 玻利维亚 拉巴斯
-  2017年5月30日-6月15日 阿根廷 布宜诺斯艾利斯
-  2017年6月16日-6月25日 智利 圣地亚哥
-  2017年8月1日-8月7日 德国
-  2017年8月31日-9月7日 法国 波尔多
-  2017年9月8日-9月15日 波兰 华沙
-  2017年9月15日-9月18日 德国 科布伦茨

-  2017年9月18日-9月21日 葡萄牙 里斯本
-  2017年9月21日-9月28日 俄罗斯
-  2017年9月28日-10月1日 俄罗斯 圣彼得堡
-  2017年10月11日-11月21日 美国: 西雅图 圣地亚哥 芝加哥 华盛顿 费城 凤凰城 拉斯维加斯

武侠江湖不远
太极拳发源地 中国·陈家沟



太极正宗

来自陈家沟的陈自强最近2017年的行程相当于绕地球赤道近四圈 太极大师海外传拳将再掀新热潮

9th annual UK visit of Master Chen Ziqiang, Chief Coach of the Chen Village Taijiquan School

天飞
转午
映凉新浴
扇手一时似玉
杖教人
梦断瑶台曲



Findings (1)

- Masters (trainers) from China (with branches, schools, classrooms all over the world):
 - Top level in skills and techniques
 - Patriotic
 - Language skills vary
 - Work with locals for language support, for networking, and for organisation
- Masters (trainers) from outside China
 - Smooth communication
 - More on the spiritual and health benefit side
 - E.g. 'Tai Chi for Health Institute' in Australia, traveling all over to teach Tai Chi

Findings 2

- Learners of Tai Chi

- Interested in different aspects of Tai Chi but all know it is Chinese
- All participants know Tai Chi is more than just a physical form. It is about balance and harmony
- The majority learns Tai Chi first and then becomes interested in the Chinese culture and wants to know more.
- The majority has not been to China, but because of Tai Chi they develop an interest to know more about China
- The learners hold very high opinion of Taichi and hence Chinese culture

Discussions and conclusion

- China's story told by Tai Chi players (harmony)
- Advantages
 - People to people (of all ages and ranks) communication. Easy for them to accept the Chinese value it embodies
 - Good learning experience and so more likely to attract learners
 - Continuous influence, not a one-off show
- Challenges
 - Competitors such as Yoga
 - Language barrier for the more in-depth training

Model for best soft power/PD efforts

- Connection with a much broader range of actors
- Involving multi agents
 - State as facilitator providing support (language, social media, etc)
 - Grass-roots efforts at individual and organisational levels as active agents
- A great complement to state-led efforts. A resource that the government can tap into for promotion of its soft power.