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## EU-CHINA IDEOLOGICAL COMMUNICATION: PRACTICES, APPROACHES AND SIGNIFICANCE

Zeren LANGJIA<sup>1\*</sup>, Jian SHI, Jean Monnet Chair<sup>2</sup>,

<sup>1</sup>*Joint PhD researcher of Sichuan University of China and Ghent University of Belgium. Postal address: Wangjiang Road 29, Chengdu, 610064, Sichuan Province, China.*

<sup>2</sup>*Professor/PhD Supervisor, Centre for European Studies, Sichuan University. Postal address: Wangjiang Road 29, Chengdu, 610064, Sichuan Province, China.*

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### \*Correspondence author:-

*Email:-[Zeren.Langjia@UGent.be](mailto:Zeren.Langjia@UGent.be)*

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### Abstract:-

*The EU-China relationship is one of the most important bilateral relations in the world, but this does not deny the need to deepen mutual communication and understanding. To this end, communication at the ideological level comes to the fore because ideological communication as an in-depth cultural and civilizational dialogue can encourage people from both sides to know each other in a deeper approach and eventually exert more profound impact on mutual perceptions. Therefore, the author emphasizes the necessity and importance of studying ideologies and contexts of their origins for EU-China people-to-people dialogue, formulates five approaches to realizing a meaningful and productive ideological communication, and highlights the significance of ideological communication to promoting mutual understanding and bilateral relations in general.*

**Key Words:-** *EU-China Relations; Ideological Communication; People-to-People Dialogue*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Productive ideological communication will certainly improve mutual understanding between the EU and China. However, it will not be easy to reach the end considering the complicated conceptual interpretations on ideology. Ideology is one of the most frequently used categories, whose contents are most complex, meanings are most ambiguous, and attributes are the trickiest in the history of the twenty-first century western thoughts (Ji 2005: 1). Likewise, Eagleton (1991: 1) also argues, “NOBODY has yet come up with a single adequate definition of ideology, [...] this is not because workers in the field are remarkable for their low intelligence, but because the term ‘ideology’ has a whole range of useful meanings, not all of which are compatible with each other.” Hence, not only is ideology difficult to define, but also it is variously interpreted. Besides, as Heywood (2012: 23) points out, “For much of its history, ideology has carried starkly pejorative implications, being used as a political weapon to criticise or condemn rival political stances.” For instance, Karl Marx employed ideology to “refer to ideas that serve the interests of the ruling class by concealing the contradictions of class society, thereby promoting false consciousness and political passivity amongst subordinate classes”, while some of definitions and formulations conceived by later Marxists, who regards ideology “as the distinctive ideas of any social class, including the working class”, are neutral (Heywood 2012: 23). The latter’s interest in ideology is, therefore, closely “linked to Antonio Gramsci’s theory of ideological hegemony” (Heywood 2012: 24) that embodies the ideology of ‘civil society’. Moreover, others are commendatory as conservative thinkers treat ideologies “as elaborate systems of thought that orientate politics towards abstract principles and goals and away from practical historical circumstances” (Heywood 2012: 23). This article takes its neutral interpretation of “a body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group or class” (Eagleton 1991: 1) and the wider use of the social-scientific definition of ideology that “the term no longer carries political baggage and can be applied to all ‘isms’ or action-orientated political philosophies” (Heywood 2012: 24). According to this neutral interpretation, “one might well term one’s own views ideological without any implication that they were false or chimerical” (Eagleton 1991: 2). In this sense, the EU and China could consider their own views ideological without any implication that they were false or true to each other. The point is that whether their ideologies are true or false, communication makes sense of ideological diversity.

Ideological communication is of great importance for understanding of social ideology in general and political value of a particular political entity. Given that the ideas are the core and vehicles of each culture and carry the cultural connotations, the study of ideas—ideology—comes to be both necessary and important. Ideology can be categorized into cultural, political, economic, social ideology, and so forth, but the bases of all the different ideologies are social ideas against a backdrop of particular social era and social context.

“Ideology is a cultural entity,” so to some extent ideological communication is equal to cultural communication or very closely related to cultural values. This is not enough, however, to develop an effective transcultural ideological communication because proper approaches come to be equally important and intercultural communicative space needs to be created to share and popularize ideological information so as to make sense of interactions. Last but not the least, ideological communication will help those practitioners of EU-China relations see through socio-cultural phenomena to comprehend the essence and deepen mutual understanding of their respective social and diplomatic behaviors.

## II. Communication of Ideological Values

Just as its name implies, ideological communication deals with ideologies and dialogues, such as political, economic, cultural, and social ideologies. However, the modern European and Chinese ideologies have rooted in the different historical and cultural soil and thus produce ideological ambiguity. That is the very reason why it is crucial to promote and develop ideological communication between the EU and China. While modern European ideologies have been developing under the capitalist canopy, the Chinese ones are characterized in socialism. Capitalist and socialist ideologies are quite different, incompatible and even irreconcilable, but they could be bridged. However, the fundamental prerequisite is that the gist of ideological communication is to share and learn different ideologies and ideological values rather than to inculcate or force others to accept one’s own ideologies. With regard to ideological communication, several things are very important: ideologies, historical contexts of ideologies, and the connection between ideologies and national ethos. Unfortunately, the differences are usually overestimated and overemphasized so that people neglect the commonalities that are supposed to be the areas where they can make progress on ideological communication.

Ideologies are very divergent between Europe and China. While modern European ideologies include liberalism, conservatism, nationalism, and ecologism, Chinese ones are like communism, nationalism, Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and so on. Hence, it is firstly very necessary to comprehensively know what the specific ideology means (i.e. the content of the ideology) and then to have a good knowledge on its historical context, from which it originates. For instance, what is liberalism? Why is there liberalism? How does it come into being? Do people accept it or not? What is its impact on social development and people? Thirdly, ideologies are intimately connected with national ethos, and they are interdependent and symbiotic. Ideology is not merely the source of national ethos but also its product. Therefore, any attempt to develop an in-depth cultural understanding through some cultural representations or characterizations will not contribute to meaningful and productive communication. Particularly, civilization and culture are *too huge to define*, so they are *too complex to deconstruct* them in order to specify their components.

Epistemologically, both civilization and culture are singular, but they are countable nouns from a perspective of ethnography. Each ethnic group or nation has its particular culture and civilization. In this sense, it should be ‘European Civilizations’ or ‘European cultures’ in plural rather than ‘European civilization’ or ‘European culture’ in singular because Europe is composed of various nations and ethnic groups. And it is the same in the Chinese case. Even then, however, it is hard to know about them. Ideology, as a cultural entity, is a system of ideas and values that are very helpful to approach different cultures.

The essential parts of cultures are the ideas. Many social ideologies originate from Europe, and they are based on historical and cultural stories shared (to some extent) by Europeans. Democracy, freedom, humanity, and so on, are very important European social and democratic values. They are the most significant and meaningful ideas that should be advocated, promoted and communicated, but their meanings vary from one generation to another, from nation to nation. Sometimes new social meaning need to be added to them; sometimes the original meanings need to be updated; and sometimes some old ideas need to be eliminated. Therefore, ideological communication had better get started with some common ideas held by both the EU and China and then expanded further.

Ideology and ideological values are interconnected and interdependent. “The core of ideologies is the ideological value that represents the essence of ideologies” (Guo 2014: 10), and these values include economic, political, and cultural values, among which “economic value is the basis, political value is the core, and cultural value is the guidance” (Guo 2014: 130). Economic value is the foundation of various ideologies and essentially restricts the realization and its degree of other ideological values. If the economic value is inadequately practiced, then other ideological values lose the premise and potential of being well realized. Political value, as the nerve centre of various ideologies, has strong cohesiveness and influence with regard to unconsciousness, rationality, and desire, will and so on at the spiritual level. Certainly, political value and ideology depend on particular political entity and system. For instance, in a non-democratic country, political ideology may be shaped by a small group of people or even by a single dictator, whereas the situation in a democracy will be more complex because the process of political ideological formation covers a wide range of participants. In this sense, political ideology in the case of the former reflects the ideological interests of a small group of people, while the latter represents the political values of more people from all walks of life. Moreover, even though it could draw a small conclusion that political ideology is helpful to understand a particular political personality of democratic countries, political entity in a non-democracy it will not reflect the political values of the public. Cultural value of ideologies is very attractive and takes advantages over other forms of ideological values to launch a charm in the ideological fields. Because of this, ideological subjects usually make good use of this function of cultural value to develop activities of ideological value creation and realization, and ideological audiences are easy to firstly perceive the ideological values from cultural value (Guo 2014: 132).

Some typical concepts where Europe holds different interpretations are: democracy, the idea of state, and united in diversity. Democracy means citizens’ political participation; transparent decision-making, policy-making system, human-oriented policy, and so on. “As a kind of ideology and governmental formation, democracy is closely related to capitalism because democracy provide an illusion—everyone was born equal and has equal rights—that conceals the nature of economic exploitation” (Ji 2005: 73). Surely, it is a Marxist view that the term democracy conveys a false consciousness that misleads people. However, it is such an important political value in the EU that guarantees citizens to know what is going on in Brussels and everything that they are supposed to know.

With regard to the idea of state, Jacques argues, the relationship between the state and society in China is very different from that in the West, who overwhelmingly seems to think—in these days at least—that the authority and legitimacy of the state is a function of democracy, indicating that the problem with this proposition is that the Chinese state enjoys more legitimacy and more authority amongst the Chinese than any Western state. He offers two reasons to explain: firstly, because the state in China is given a very special—it enjoys a very special significance as the representative, the embodiment and the guardian of Chinese civilization and of the civilization-state, which is playing a kind of spiritual role, and secondly whereas in Europe and North America the state’s power is continuously challenged, the power of the state in China has not been challenged and the Chinese state has had no serious rivals.

In addition, “United in diversity”, first coming into use in 2000, signifies “how Europeans have come together, in the form of the EU, to work for peace and prosperity, while at the same time being enriched by the continent’s many different cultures, traditions and languages” (Net 1). It means, “the many different cultures, traditions and languages in Europe are a positive asset for the continent” (Net 2). Undoubtedly, it is a very new and important concept in the EU and during its integration process, and especially it is indicative of the Union’s cultural value that is certain to exert great impact on its internal cultural policy-making and external relations with regard to cultural fields.

“Unity in diversity” expresses an idea of “unity without uniformity and diversity without fragmentation” (Lalonde 2015) that shifts focus from unity based on a mere tolerance of physical, cultural, linguistic, social, religious, political, ideological and/or psychological differences towards a more complex unity based on an understanding that difference enriches human interactions. Hence, to have a clear idea about the EU’s cultural diversity policy requires a need to know the connotation of the motto and to know the social and cultural context where it is posed.

In the following section, some social values within the Chinese ideological context will be discussed. While in the West the main content of ‘ideological and political education’ is to cultivate talents, who could safeguard capitalist institutionalism, based on the value of individualism and to propagandize the bourgeois ideological system to show the superiority of bourgeois political system, “in contemporary China, the main content of ideological and political education is to firmly arm people’s minds and educate the masses with Marxism, Mao Zedong’s Thought, Deng Xiaoping’s Theory, the important thoughts of ‘Three Represents’, and the concept of scientific development” (Yan 2014: 2). In general, the aim of ideological and political education is to “inculcate citizens with the mainstream ideologies and popularize the dominant ideologies amongst the public to follow so as to ultimately safeguard the interests of the ruling class” (Yan 2014: 1).

Unity as a prioritized political value has been strongly propagandized and promoted in China. According to Martin Jacques, the most political value for the Chinese is unity, and is the maintenance of Chinese civilization. This is certainly related to China’s multiracial backgrounds, without which it is unnecessary to propagandize the notion of national unification. Against a backdrop of this situation, the national unification as a political value plays a role of guiding

principles for the Chinese political ideology. Jacques points out that the West tries to know China in Western concept by using Western ideas, just as they made wrong judgment on the handover of Hong Kong because the West used its nation-state “one nation, one system” mentality, to explain China’s civilization-nation mentality “one nation, many systems”. China’s Dream became very popular since a few years ago. It is also considered as a contemporary social value popularized among the Chinese public. While “the American dream is codified as “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” in the U.S.”, President Xi Jinping defined Chinese Dream as “national rejuvenation, improvement of people's livelihoods, prosperity, construction of a better society and military strengthening” (Net 3). Seen from this, China Dream is more about a goal of the country than about action-orientated principles.

Wu Jianmin, Former Chinese Ambassador to the United Nations, thinks “the official definition of the Chinese dream is reemergence of China,” and “Of course, there are few on it. There’s wealth, obviously, by continuing to grow, continuing this economic rise; but it’s also about strength, and about establishing China on the world stage. So these are the two important parts and not always necessarily going in the same direction” (Net 4) added Evan Osnos, Former Beijing Correspondent, The New Yorker.

Mr Xi’s “Chinese dream” slogan is exceptional, though. Its demotic air can be read as a dig at the stodgy catchphrases of his predecessors: the “scientific-development outlook” beloved of Hu Jintao; the even more arcane “Three Represents” cherished by Mr Hu’s predecessor, Jiang Zemin. It makes no allusion to ideology or party policy. It chimes, quite possibly deliberately, with a foreign notion—the American dream. But it is calculated in its opacity. Previous slogans, such as Deng Xiaoping’s “reform and opening up”, could be broadly understood in terms of policy. The dream seems designed to inspire rather than inform. (Net 5)

President Xi dares people to have a dream for themselves and for the country’s future. This invitation does not “de-link the future from the best values of the past, from different periods of the past” (Net 3). “Australian Aboriginal paintings are part of Aboriginal dreaming and often depict tracks along the landscape. These are described as pathways from one place to the other, containing landmarks that are identifiable to the knowing. The dreams of Chinese people are also pathways to individual and collective happiness and through China’s actions as a good and leading member of the world community could lead to a new path to peace and sustainable development for the international community” (Net 3). The China Dream corresponds to the need to improve the spiritual cultivation of Chinese people, whose situation is believed far to match with China’s rapid economic growth. “The deepest spiritual values derived from Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism may be reduced to the term Ren-Yi which I translate into a prescription for ‘kind and correct’ behavior or benevolent rectitude” (Net 3). Certainly, Ren Yi is a very important moral value.

Except the abovementioned newly established social value, Confucianism is an age-old Chinese ideological value that has been exerting impact upon Chinese people. Confucianism upholds the relationship between sovereign and subject, father and son, husband and wife etc.

Nevertheless, it lays special emphasis on subjects’ subordination to the sovereign; son’s obedience to his father; and wife’s fidelity to her husband. Hence, one aspect of social relation of guanxi is between sovereign and subject. It is obvious that Confucianism advocates a hierarchical relationship between these people according to their social strata and family positions, speaks for the authority of the sovereign, the father, and the husband, and suppresses the subjectivity of the subject, the son, and the wife. Does the hierarchical relationship exert some impact on the social relationship between Chinese people? Given that Confucianism became the dominant ideology in Chinese feudal society From the Han Dynasty,, and lasted for over 2,000 years, it has been very influential.

During the last 2000 years, the hierarchical relationship did not change a lot and had much influence on family social relationship between parents and children. For instance, one core aspect of Confucianism is filial piety, and both Confucius and Mencius emphasized it. However, it stresses a unilateral respect: children are supposed to show respect for their parents, but parents are obligated to do that. Then how does it work in an era where we emphasize mutual respect? Additionally, filial piety has its specific content, and there are three forms of unfilial conducts, among which no posterity is the worst. If these principles are still used to evaluate the relationship between parents and their children, there is a slim hope to establish a harmonious family relationship in modern society. Moreover, the value of filial piety neglects not only the position of celibates including religious personage and those who just keep single but also the interests of LGBT. Both Confucius and Mencius did not talk about them, but certainly they cannot be excluded from social groups or they are considered unfilial because they do not have offspring. To some extent, it becomes unacceptable. After all, there are many other ways to show filial piety to parents, and it unnecessarily means that a person must get married and has a child so as to respect or please parents. It is a selfish requirement for the celibates and LGBT. Another important aspect is the social relationship among acquaintances. Confucianism emphasizes kinship instead of fraternity. While advocating that a harmonious family is regarded as the fundamental factor of a harmonious society, Confucianism did not pay much attention to the fraternity between families and people without consanguinity. That makes people circle around their own family interests rather than the community or social interests. Although good family relationship is a fundamental basis of a well-organized society, fraternity between people beyond the spectrum of kinship means more for a socially well-organized country. In this sense, a brief conclusion could be drawn that Confucianism exerts much influence on Guanxi but has its own limitations in social values that need to be updated and infused with new ideas and vitality.

Apart from all the previous values, *See through phenomenon to grasp the essence* is more regarded as an important approach to understanding culture, not least regarding international and multicultural communications. Good and updated interpretations of different cultures matter most in the cross-cultural communication. Nevertheless, people are easy to ignore the connotation and potentials of cultures. For instance, Christmas is differently celebrated in China. Even though it is celebrated for the purpose of commercialization, it is also a process of transmitting and communicating cultures to people. If the celebration is not based upon the historical stories and contexts, people do not get the meaning of celebrating

such a festival. They do not exercise any religious rituals and have no idea about why people celebrate Christmas Day. It is such a pity to give attention to the form instead of the content. The worse is that the form is not followed in the correct way. Maybe it is because China is not a Christian country and there is no reason for Chinese people to celebrate Christ's birth. However, it is such a beautiful thing to know the story behind the story and to share the happy moment with others from different cultural backgrounds. To celebrate Christmas does not mean one has to believe in Christianity, but learning to have belief in something that could keep one's spirits up is also positive and inspiring. More importantly, it is a very important way of approaching other cultures and people, where lies the meaning of cross-cultural communication. Festival period is a good time to convey ideological values.

Culture is an abstract concept, so, to have a better and comprehensive understanding of culture, people are supposed to both consciously and unconsciously recognize it. The point is that not all people could sense the culture without any indicator. "Culture must be largely a matter of ritual observance and behavior," since "most people lack the capacity for any very remarkable self-consciousness" (Eagleton 1991: 114). More exactly speaking, culture must be largely represented through a matter of ritual procedures, because rituals are nothing unless they are endowed with cultural connotations. For many people, rituals are part and parcel of culture because they partly get access to culture through what they see, experience, and exercise during the rituals. The point is that even though these rituals are helpful to understand cultures, they could not deliver the core idea of cultures. However, ideas and rituals are interdependent, and they confer social meaning on each other. As mentioned above, rituals without cultural ideas means nothing, and vice versa. Ideas that are not ritualized or practiced in day-to-day life produce nothing meaningful and valuable. Therefore, both ideas and rituals are what are supposed to be mostly communicated. In terms of whether they could be effectively exchanged, it also depends on how they are approached and communicated.

### **III. Approaches to Ideological Communication**

It will be very necessary to design an echelon of ideological communication model considering the wide range of audiences. The ways of communicating cultures are important because different approaches produce and achieve different results. Generally, intergovernmental dialogues could provide policy support and set the cultural communication orientation. Education plays a major role in developing an effective and productive ideological conversation. Dialogue amongst citizens is perceived as the optimal democratic way of ideal approaches to each other. Moreover, the Internet and online communicative space have a very huge potential to obtain and share the information because increasing number of netizens prefer to get information online.

#### **Intergovernmental Dialogues**

According to the definition of EU-China High-Level People-to-People Dialogue (HPPD) (Net 6), "The HPPD is the overarching mechanism which accommodates all EU-China joint initiatives in the field of people to people exchanges. These initiatives stem from the conclusions of leaders' dialogues and senior officials' meetings where long-term objectives are set, best practice is exchanged and areas for future cooperation are explored." Over the last decade the EU and China have been closely cooperating in the areas of education, culture, multilingualism and youth. "Cooperation consisted of regular policy dialogues at government level, as well as concrete outputs in terms of joint projects and events" (Net 6).

The bilateral official dialogues are meaningful because the intergovernmental culture-oriented dialogues and particularly policy documents open a window of intercultural communication at the policy-making level, set the legal basis for mutual cultural exchange, and attach importance to mutual cultural exchange. Such dialogues and documents are not only for guidance, but more of symbols, signaling the mutual willingness to learn from each other through cultural communication and advocating a more widespread cultural understanding beyond the intergovernmental scope. They are ambiguous, grandiose, and abstract, however, on the ground that these official documents are mainly drafted out of symbolic guidance and significance. It still takes a lot of efforts to put these policy documents into practice. Yet all for this, the policy documents are a good beginning and prerequisite of subsequent intercultural communication.

#### **Educational Cooperation**

Althusser endows cultural systems (or cultural institutions) with ideological state apparatuses that are mainly composed of religion, education, family, media, and cultural factors, and others (Ji 2005: 76). According to Althusser, education is one of the most important ideological state apparatuses. Education, especially academic exchange, is an effective way of acquiring cultural knowledge and developing an in-depth and profound communication between countries with different ideological backgrounds. The main targeted groups are university students, researchers, and professors. They have several approaches to understanding ideologies. Firstly, it is a good way to acquire knowledge through college-scheduled courses and intensive readings, to experience exotic cultures and life styles that probably go much beyond the knowledge scope of the textbooks, to systematically learn the history of ideologies, and to experience the social ideologies that exert impact on their daily behaviors and shape a particular routine life. Secondly, through research-orientated study, they have the chance to develop an in-depth and systematic study on specific ideologies. Thirdly, considering their academic backgrounds, they have competence to launch an interactive discussion with others with different ideological backgrounds. They are capable of dealing with information and categorizing divergent social ideologies. Moreover, generally speaking, college students, researchers, and professors have much better ability not only in effectively promoting their own cultures and delivering social ideologies, but also taking in nutrition from other cultures and social ideologies.

Their understanding of both own and others' cultures is more comprehensive, reliable, and profound. In this sense, they have the competence to play the role of communicating European and Chinese social ideologies. Furthermore, in order to improve the efficiency, academic exchange should be only granted conditional on better ideological communication. Additionally, research institutes also play a very important function of studying social ideologies. BACES, Brussels Academy of Chinese and European Studies, was established against a backdrop of increasing need for research on Chinese and European studies, including social values and ideologies. Being capable of doing research both in depth and width, these institutes highly specialize in their own particular fields and often offer suggestions for the policy-makers. Their specialization sometimes turns out unsuccessful, however. Specialized knowledge is almost used for and limited to a small group of educated people, but it is hard to be popularized among common citizens. Hence, it is quite necessary and important to make the and obtain effective and sustainable results; and the need for more collaboration and less competition, which could translate into more effective mechanisms for mutual degree recognition. Presentations of panel 2 recommend the need to continue cooperation, which shall be based on the principles of equality and joint benefit; the need to choose the right partners for cooperation, in order to make sure that programmes are sustainable, meet the global challenges and bring out the best of both education systems; the need to maintain a strict quality control system and to facilitate credits transfer and recognition; and the need to find appropriate financing for present and new initiatives (also involving the private sector), as well as to make visible existing financing opportunities. Finally, presentations of panel 3 recommend the need to update present cooperation (through joint academic projects, joint research teams, joint consulting activities for governments and enterprises...); the need to do more than 'occasional cooperation' and to increase areas of cooperation; the need to increase knowledge about China in Europe (there is presently a cognitive asymmetry: more knowledge in China about Europe than in Europe about China); and the need for Chinese Universities to make further use of the possibilities offered by the Jean Monnet programme/activity. specialized knowledge easy to understand and expound the research result for citizens. In doing so, the research institutes have a far-reaching and extensive influence on their audiences.

### **Publics-oriented Communication**

Publics-oriented communication could be divided into two types: interactive communication model and knowledge impartation-oriented communication model. In the first model, all participants from both sides have some basic knowledge on mutual cultures and ideologies, so they have competence to launch a meaningful cultural and ideological conversation. In doing so, they could practice what they have learned and test it through their discussion, deepen and widen their extant knowledge, and make the unknown known and the known clearer. This type of communication is best developed among educated people, such as between EU officials and Chinese students, China officials and EU students, and the EU and China students, whether in formal or informal dialogues. The model should be very inclusive so that those who have the knowledge to discuss could join the conversation and freely share their ideas.

The knowledge impartation-oriented communication model is mainly suitable for and oriented to those who have no ideas about other cultures and ideologies. For these people, some institutes or knowledgeable people guide and impart knowledge for them. They are not hoped to communicate cultures but to learn about other cultures and behave decently so as to show respect for the native and local cultures. It sounds ridiculous to teach adults how to behave well, but as long as there are problems that lead to cultural conflicts, some measures have to be taken. In doing so, rude and improper behaviors could be reduced, which is actually good for building up good international image and eventually lower the psychological resistance from others. Undoubtedly, it is indirectly promoting mutual communication. According to the basic principles of the model, the optimal targeted groups should be tourists regarding the remarkably increasing number and opportunities. This model will expand the reach of its influence, and more people will benefit from it. In terms of how to operationalize the model, to connect travel agency with cultural affairs bureaus, culture industry and even cultural studies centres and to promote cooperation among them will be very effective and fruitful. Tour guide should be required to have a good knowledge on the cultural and ideological stories, on the native lifestyles and local customs, and on cultural commonsense. Language is the fundamental premise of a meaningful conversation, but it should not be the only requirement for tour guides. Without language ability, communication for sure is nothing. Through cooperation with different culture concerned institutes, cultural knowledge pamphlets should be drafted and distributed for the tourists before they get started their travels. Tourists are encouraged to surf the Internet and read the web information concerned before they leave for traveling. Cultures, cultural stories, customs, ideologies, and ideological origins should be uploaded and shared on the particular tourists-orientated websites. Tour guides as well as all tourists actually have the responsibility for learning and knowing something about countries that they are going to visit because this is a way of showing respect for the natives and local cultures, of leaving good impression on others and creating good image of their own cultures, of more importantly promoting cultural ideologies and protecting cultural heritages. If necessary, auxiliary conditionality could be added as a visa requirement, but this may reduce the commercial interests.

For example, to hold 'culture week' in each other's country is a good way of improving cultural publicity among the public. During the culture week, more participants will join the activities to experience exotic cultures. Some Chinese may have no idea about European cultures or ideologies, and vice versa in the case of Chinese cultures. By doing so, they are not hoped to have a conversation at the ideological level, but they could improve the general cultural or ideological recognition of mutual cultures. These cultural activities or initiatives should mainly aim at providing them with access to bilateral cultures so that they could have a basic knowledge on the different cultures and then may promote their cultural consumption and taste. These activities could be held at the plaza, along the shopping mall, on the streets, and so on. The activity sites are easy to find and the content could be very flexible. Moreover, if the organizers offer some coupons for

those who actively participate or well perform in the activities, they will appeal to more people. In addition, these coupons could be ticket coupons of tourist spots, such as museums, churches, temples, so as to further encourage tourists and citizens to get closer to cultures and cultural values. The organizers should also prepare some material resources to distribute to those who have no access or difficulties in accessing to the Internet. Furthermore, the organizers could also cooperate with culture industry and produce some innovative cultural products that could be very good and effective reminders of cultural connotative meanings.

### **Common Public Communicative Space**

The EU puts much emphasis on its construction of European Public Sphere because it recognizes the importance of an overarching communicative space where all dialogical citizens have the chance to freely discuss issues about the EU without the limitation of their social identity and strata for the sake of eventually addressing the deficit of democracy.

The Internet becomes the most important instrument and approach, and it is the first choice for European students to know about China. With the rapid technological development and update, people prefer to do many things online. More importantly, they begin to become the main social group of consumption, and have strong intention of going abroad to experience different cultures and enrich their lives. Hence, it becomes very necessary and urgent to improve the Internet access and to create a common online communicative space where they could not only communicate their own cultures to others but also obtain information about other cultures. They could do very well preliminary preparation for their travel in this online sphere before they physically experience and enjoy other cultures in person. Moreover, this is also an interactive, horizontal and multidirectional space where they share their opinions on cultures, discuss cultural issues, and share travel experiences. In doing so, they could realize ideological communication in the vernacular that can reach a larger audience. Furthermore, the space will be very environmental-friendly, informative, and inspiring. All this helps people get access to cultures wherever they are and whenever they want. In order to improve the online information quality and offer something that goes beyond superficial tourist promotional information, the web page should be designed and the information should be specialized by professionals respectively. This certainly requires teamwork or cooperation between different cultural departments concerned. Consequently, the portals not only offer information that help people know what they should do, but also knowledge that assist people to have a better and maybe in-depth understanding of other cultures.

Therefore, only with combination of these different types of communication models and various approaches can a more comprehensive and down-to-earth cultural and ideological communication be realized. Whether it is the intergovernmental policy or educational function or publics-oriented conversation or virtual communicative space, each plays its own role of displaying and representing cultures. Considering the different levels of education received, the communicative approaches are supposed to represent its gradualness. The optimal situation is that they are quite complementary to each other because there is no single approach that could realize the ambition of cultural and particularly ideological communication alone.

### **IV. Significance of Ideological Intercommunication**

Ideology exerts great impact on people, their thinking pattern, behaviors, decision-making, desire, worldview and so on. It is an invisible but strong force that drives people everywhere.

More importantly, ideological intercommunication will be conducive to improving people's recognition of a variety of social aspects.

### **Ideology, Religion and Human Desire**

For Freud, religion is the same as ideology because it plays the function of ideologies and both religion and ideology are false consciousness that produces an illusion that could psychologically meet the desire of humans (Ji 2005: 50-51). The reason why religion is so powerful is that it could "meet the oldest, strongest, and most lasting desire of human beings" and "religious power is the power of hope" (Freud 1962: 51). This makes sense why so many people are religious believers. In this sense, both ideology and religion spiritually guide personal development because they are close to the true desire that people have. Ideology stimulates the growth of desire and represents the desire. In other words, ideology is usually deceitful but acceptable for the particular social groups. For example, the slogan 'everyone was born equal' is much better than 'everyone was unequal' because the former is closer to the true desire of people, though the latter is truer in reality.

### **Cultural Journey and Personal Development**

In addition, it is very essential to learn about the greetings, the goodbye rituals, the before-meal ceremonies, the food, and the clothes. If some catch your fancy, you might even try them! This will help you understand people from other cultures. It is normal that there may be lapses in communication: Even the best communicators fall short when jumping across the vast cultural chasm. Humor and non-defensiveness are the best bridges at such times.

To communicate cultures is to share their own cultural stories and to learn things from the other's cultures. By doing so, people could have a better recognition of their own cultural significance and deepen their understanding of their own cultures; they could increase their knowledge on other cultures and enlarge their horizons; they could cultivate their mind through taking in nutrition from diverse cultures; and they could also better know themselves and improve their cultural connoisseurship. All this is helpful for them to form a critical thinking. Consequently, to be critical and knowledgeable is a tacit prerequisite of shaping a personality in an all-round way.

### **Ideology and Clearing Away Cultural Misunderstanding**

Since 2012 all these activities have been integrated under the EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue (HPPD), the third pillar of EU-China relations, complementing the other two pillars – the High Level Economic and Trade Dialogue and the High Level Strategic Dialogue.

To have an ideological communication is to develop an in-depth cultural interaction and to get closer to cultural roots. The ideological communication is of the essence because it exerts great impact on behaviors, habits, and particularly at the more profound level the way of thinking and the structure of mindset. As a result, it is unreasonable and impractical to change mutual ways of thinking or assimilate each other's patterns for the purpose of developing an effective intercultural communication. Instead, it takes efforts to bridge the gap. By doing so, not only are people able to show respect for their cultures and preserve cultural diversity, but have a better understanding of each other and enjoy the coexistence of cultural differences. Intercultural communication without ideological foundation will not yield a truly functioning dialogue between different cultures. Reversely, superficial cultural exchanges give rise to discord between European and Chinese cultures because those who do not have clear idea about foreign cultures frivolously jump to generalizations and conclusions and then become judgmental, which makes people feel repulsion and repugnance that probably lowers the further willingness and intention of promoting mutual understanding. Hence, people-to-people dialogue must be inclusive and flexible.

### **Zeitgeist and Historical Continuity**

Ideologies are generally invariable and stable for a while, so they are ideal factors to study cultures of a people or nation. Through these different ideologies of different epochs and nations, people could catch the zeitgeist of a particular society or era. The zeitgeist reflects the daily custom, moral value, social atmosphere and trends, providing people with social guidance and action principles in general. Particularly, people and nations know how to socialize with others and to judge their value orientation according to the zeitgeist.

Ideology is also a firm line of continuity between the past and the future. Many elements have influence on the ideological formation. On the one hand, it is the product of the past; on the other, it exerts impact on the future. To some extent, ideologies for a certain range of time possess certain degree of the sameness. From this point of view, ideological communication deals with not merely the surface cultural phenomena, but more importantly the commonness and *sameness* behind the various representations. An effective ideological communication is supposed to be very helpful to have a better understanding of national ethos.

### **National Cultural Bloodline and Political Trust**

Ideology is a kind of bloodline of a people or nation or country. It is the relatively constant national cultural bloodline that plays the main role of shaping the *stateness* or political *personality*. To know a polity is to know its political ideologies and culture, upon which the mutual political recognition is essentially based. Surely, political actions are equally important. It is said that there lacks a political trust between EU-China relations. Then how could it be resolved? What are the rationales of good political trust supposed to be? Why and how should we trust each other? The answers to these questions obviously depend on political knowledge on each other: How much do they know about their opponent's political culture and ideologies? The political ideologies and their evolutionary history represent the political value orientation, through which both sides could know the shared values and determine the degree of political trust that they could grant to each other. To realize this goal or reduce political distrust, it takes political ideological communication. Making promises or paying lip service cannot resolve the political trust deficit.

After all, both the EU and China expect a lot from the HPPD that "should help build mutual trust and consolidate intercultural understanding between EU and China" (Net 6). As previously mentioned, political value is the most important part of the ideological values. This is because political ideology is the most influential force to shape the worldview of certain group or society or nation, and it is also the leading thought of the political entity in power. It is based upon other various ideologies, but it plays a decisive role in the fate of other ideologies because the central entity or unit of political and cultural life is the nation (state).

### **Ideological Communication: Mature People-to-People Dialogue**

Intercultural communication becomes a very important diplomatic stand of EU-China relations, and people-to-people dialogue is regarded as an effective and down-to-earth approach to realizing intercultural exchange. Nevertheless, in order not to make the people-to-people dialogue stay at the superficial level, to design a functioning people-to-people dialogue system seems to be quite necessary so that it can produce some realistic significance for mutual cultural promotion and communication. In this sense, ideological communication, as an advanced level of intercultural exchange, has the potential to further push mutual cultural understanding, making people seriously and carefully deliberate on cultural affairs. Ideological communication focuses on in-depth ideological framework that underlies the social structures and trends. When people could see through the cultural appearances to get to its essence, it is certainly a very mature action of and progress in knowing other cultures.

Some mature actions in intercultural communication: to understand relativism because some things are relative to some particular cultural or linguistic framework. People with different cultural backgrounds may have completely different value systems, but this does not mean that they are wrong. It is always good to find the intersection of different cultures, to leave some space for each culture to keep itself different, to communicate with people based on sincere respect for their cultures, to be tolerant of others and their differences. Consequently, an inclusive communication will promote mutual understanding.

### **Ideology and Cultural Diplomacy**



According to Yan (2014: 3), “Ideology, as a system of views of superstructure, guides national foreign policy-making and provides a yardstick and defence system for its foreign policy.” For instance, in the case of Cold War, liberal theorists were encouraged to “identify similarities between fascism and communism, both being inherently repressive ‘official’ ideologies which suppressed opposition and demanded regimented obedience” (Heywood 2012: 24) and “the Cold War mentality refers to the overemphasized function of politics and military, and the over-highlighted opposition of ideologies and values” (Yan 2014: 3).

Whether two ideologies are similar or different, it relies on politics and its principles. According to Garcha, “Culture is a broad concept describing the basic things in human mentality and behaviour such as language, tradition, ideology, approaches and style (Garcha).” In this sense, international negotiation, as a part of the human activity, is connected with problem solving which is oriented towards peaceful means of dispute resolution (Kremenjuk 1991: 47). More importantly, negotiation is a process of communication between actors (states) seeking to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome on some issue of concern (Cohen 1997: 10), so this means that ideological communication will be good for a successful international negotiation. Usually, “diplomatic negotiation is made up of a rather structured exchange of proposal between accredited representatives” (Cohen 1997: 10) and thus they could the function of “guiding principles” (Ji 2005: 20).

Additionally, to use cross-cultural approaches effectively requires training, education and experience to discover how to get beyond one’s own cultural stereotypes and misconceptions (Kimmel 1994: 191). Garcha argues, “By providing training in cultural diplomacy, many of the significant challenges revealed thus far could be prevented. Without such training, international negotiators are likely to rely on their own subjective cultural assumptions.” He further adds that “Though we live in a globalized world where culture seems irrelevant as international ties increase, the battle for cross-cultural negotiation consensus is far from over. Indeed, as the circle of international actors widens to include individuals from all walks of life, the possibility of misunderstanding and miscommunication may actually increase.”

### **Interdependence of Legalization and Ideology**

“Legalization is on the one hand the source of ideologies, and, on the other, the product of ideologies” (Ji 2005: 59). According to Fromm, ideology is an illusion (Fromm 1962) because people are usually lost in illusion and daydream, and hope their dreams to come true. However, the ideas such as “to be born equal” and “rule the roost” are all illusory, and the masses are inculcated with these illusions or ideologies by government, media, school, family and society (Ji 2005: 58-9). Moreover, the masses are completely at its beck and call, regard it as the outcome of their own independent thinking, and then consider it as the original motivation of their behaviors (Ji 2005: 59). The very reason why people are crazy about such kind of self-deceptions is because they are so eager to perfectly legalize their desire, emotion, thought and behaviors, and the motivation of legalization is the most fundamental reason why ideologies are perfectly filtering into people’s minds (Ji 2005: 59). Obviously, the legal function of ideologies is influential on the harmonious relationship of the government and its people. Therefore, cultural factors may hamper relations in general, and “even complicate, prolong, and even frustrate particular negotiations where there otherwise exists an identifiable basis for cooperation” (Garcha). Fortunately, the skill and experience of diplomats can very often play the role of preventing incipient misunderstandings from getting out of hand.

### **V. Conclusion**

Ideological communication between the EU and China is of great importance to launching and developing an effective and fruitful bilateral people-to-people dialogue. Ideologies and ideological contexts are helpful for people to understand and appreciate cultural differences through having a good knowledge on historical evolution and social development. The various approaches, including intergovernmental dialogue, academic exchange, public-orientated communication, the launch of cultural activities, and the construction of a communicative space, represents the gradualness with regard to the different types of audiences and the inclusiveness so as to more participants having access to bilateral cultural and ideological communication.

Eventually, it is undeniable that international actors could understand each other better through observing their psychological desire that is strongly believed to be related to ideology, probably eliminate the misunderstanding between actors with different ideological and cultural backgrounds, possibly establish good political trust when they have clearer idea on the thinking pattern and motivation of each other, and is good for building up better diplomatic relations because a good ideological communication assists international actors to predict the policy intention and motivation. Considering all these aspects, ideological communication between the EU and China will be very helpful to promote mutual understanding and bilateral relations.

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