The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): An Intercultural Communication Perspective.

Guo-Ming Chen
University of Rhode Island, gmchen@uri.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/com_facpubs

Citation/Publisher Attribution
Available at: https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A654657472/AONE?u=rwu_main&sid=googleScholar&xid=05852d5d

This Article is brought to you by the University of Rhode Island. It has been accepted for inclusion in Communication Studies Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu. For permission to reuse copyrighted content, contact the author directly.
The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): An Intercultural Communication Perspective.

The University of Rhode Island Faculty have made this article openly available. Please let us know how Open Access to this research benefits you.

This is a pre-publication author manuscript of the final, published article.

Terms of Use
This article is made available under the terms and conditions applicable towards Open Access Policy Articles, as set forth in our Terms of Use.

This article is available at DigitalCommons@URI: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/com_facpubs/79
**The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): An Intercultural Communication Perspective**

Guo-Ming Chen, University of Rhode Island, USA

**Abstract:** The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) represents present economic and foreign policy of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). However, while the BRI provides the PRC a great potential for its national development, it also causes uncertainty, anxiety, and criticism from other countries. For years, research has been examining the BRI from economic, foreign policy, political, or military perspective, very few of them explore it from the perspective of intercultural communication. Because the BRI itself is a process of intercultural communication, this paper attempts to examine it from five perspectives of intercultural communication, including cultural values, intercultural adaptation, intercultural relationship, cultural flow and media, and intercultural communication competence. Finally, two concepts, i.e., Chinese “World View” and “China Model”, related to the BRI and the future of the BRI due to the impact of COVID-19 are also discussed.

**Keywords:** The Belt and Road Initiative, intercultural communication, public diplomacy, national image, China Model, Chinese World View, COVID-19

**Introduction**

The ideas of “Silk Road Economic Belt” and “21st Century Maritime Silk Road”, known as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the One Belt One Road (OBOR), or Yi Dai Yi Lu (一带一路) in Chinese, were first announced by President Xi Jinping (习近平, 2013a, 2013b) in September and October during his visits to Kazakhstan and Indonesia respectively in 2013. Followed by the move of Premier Li Keqiang to include this global economic cooperation initiative in the Chinese government annual report in March 2015, the BRI officially became a major part of Chinese economic development. Since then, more and more economic explorations and cooperation between the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and other countries have been launched and implemented. According to Xi’s (习近平, 2017a) report, until 2017 more than 100 countries and regions have joined the BRI. Today, the number has reached 138 (Green Belt and Road Initiative Center, 2020).

The “Belt” refers to the overland trade route, proceeding along the Chinese traditional Silk Road. It goes through the region of central Asia from China to Europe, which is called “the Silk Road Economic Belt”. There are two routes for the “Belt”. The north route starts from cities such as Xian and Lanzhou in the northwestern area of China, extends to central Asia and Russia, and then reaches Europe. The south route starts from provinces in southwestern China, extends to central and west Asia, and then reaches countries in the areas of Persian Gulf and Mediterranean Sea. The “Road” follows the Chinese traditional Maritime Silk Road, which starts from major seaports, e.g., Guangzhou and Fuzhou, in the southeast China through South China sea, Indian ocean, then reaches Africa and extends to Europe (See Figures 1 and 1a).
As Kwang (邝志良, 2018) estimated, in the early 2018 the BRI has covered 65 countries with the area of 5,539 square kilometers (about 41.3% of the area of the earth).
It includes 4.67 billion population (about 66.9% of the global population), and the overall volume of regional economy has reached 27.4 trillion dollars (about 38.2% of the global aggregate economic volume). The statistics indicate the widespread influence of the BRI, and it will continue to greatly impact the development of human societies in a global scale.

According to the report of the PRC National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) (中华人民共和国国家发展和改革委员会, 2015), the BRI aims at “embracing the trend towards a multipolar world, economic globalization, cultural diversity and greater IT application, is designed to uphold the global free trade regime and the open world economy in the spirit of open regional cooperation”, and it “upholds the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence: mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual nonaggression, mutual noninterference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence”. In addition, the BRI is “a way for win-win cooperation that promotes common development and prosperity and a road towards peace and friendship by enhancing mutual understanding and trust, and strengthening all-round exchanges”, through which the PRC government “advocates peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit. It promotes practical cooperation in all fields, and works to build a community of shared interests, destiny and responsibility featuring mutual political trust, economic integration and cultural inclusiveness”. In a nutshell, the goal of the BRI is to “promote policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people bond” through the strengthening of cooperation among the joining countries and regions. It will provide a way for all human societies in the 21st century to reach a state of “mutual respect, win-win cooperation, and mutual learning of different civilizations”.

Because the BRI is such a huge global plan, involves so many countries and regions, promotes a great scale of benefits, and impacts various aspects of international communities, it is not surprising to see the increasing reports in media and research in academic community. The BRI by nature is an initiative for economic exchanges, thus, most media reports and academic research as well focus on the economic aspect of the BRI. However, more and more reports and research are found to extend the investigation of the BRI from economic to political, foreign affair, social, and military perspectives (e.g., 何茂春、张冀兵、张雅芃、田斌, 2015; 纽约时报中文网, 2017; 袁新涛, 2014; Overholt, 2015; Ferdinand, 2016; Swine, 2015). Unfortunately, very few of them examine the BRI from the perspective of civilization (e.g., 每日头条, 2017; Winter, 2016), even President Xi (习近平, 2017b) mentioned 15 times of “civilization” in his speech at the 2017 Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. In the speech Xi indicated that

Fifth, we should build the Belt and Road into a road connecting different civilizations. In pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative, we should ensure that when it comes to different civilizations, exchange will replace estrangement, mutual learning will replace clashes, and coexistence will replace a sense of superiority. This will boost mutual understanding, mutual respect and mutual trust among different countries”.

3
Worse, after scrutinizing the existing literature we found that there is even fewer articles dealing with the BRI from the concepts of “culture” and “communication” (e.g., 希文，2017; 张恒军、吴秀峰，2019).

It is obvious that from the goal of the BRI mentioned previously, which is to “promote policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people bond”, we can easily detect all the five sub-goals in the quote concern the basic issues that are directly related to the concepts of “culture” and “communication”. For example, “promote policy coordination” refers to the gaining of support for infrastructure plans from counterparts; “facilities connectivity” refers to smoothly going through different construction projects; “unimpeded trade” refers to the removal of barriers for the cross-national investment and economic cooperation; “financial integration’ refers to the negotiation of currency policy and the enhancement of financial cooperation; and “people-to-people bond” refers to the promotion of intercultural exchanges and mutual understanding of people in different countries (HKTDC, 2020). A common word included in all the five sub-goals of the BRI is “tong” (通) in Chinese, which means “going through via interactional or communication process”. In other words, all the activities in promoting the goal of the BRI are about interaction or communication in an intercultural context.

The concept of interaction or communication denotes the process of reaching mutual understanding between two objects through the exchange of symbols (Chen & Starosta, 2005). The “two objects” represent two persons or groups from human communication perspective, and their communication can be face-to-face or mediated. Moreover, the process of human communication is dictated by culture, especially the cultural values interactants carry during intercultural interaction. Together, it shows that the success of the BRI is founded on effective and appropriate intercultural communication. However, although a round table panel was held to discuss the important role intercultural communication plays in the BRI in 2018 (时晓莉、张赛，2018), up to this time we still do not see any published scholarly articles that examine the BRI from the perspective of intercultural communication. In order to improve this problem this paper attempts to study the BRI from five different aspects of intercultural communication.

The Belt and Road Initiative: An Intercultural Communication Perspective

As a relatively young field in the discipline of Communication Studies, the origin of the study of intercultural communication can be traced back to scholars’ research in the field of Cultural Anthropology in the late 1950s. The research legacy from Cultural Anthropology was inherited and extended by scholars in Communication Studies in the West (especially in the United States), though the study of intercultural communication may be situated in different academic disciplines (e.g., it is mainly situated in the discipline of Foreign Language in the PRC). Nevertheless, the impact of globalization trend since the early 1990s has demanded students in all academic disciplines to acquire knowledge and skills of intercultural communication
in order to become a competitive and productive citizen in global society (陈国明, 2007).

Intercultural communication refers to the exchange of verbal and nonverbal symbols between people from differing cultures (Chen & Starosta, 2005). As previously mentioned, the process of communication can be either face-to-face or mediated. They may include interpersonal communication between two persons and group communication between organizations or between countries. Hence, the content of intercultural communication can cover international communication, interracial communication, interethnic or minority communication, cross-cultural communication, and comparative mass communication (Gudykunst, 1987; Rich, 1974).

As the term “intercultural communication” illustrates, “culture” and “communication” form the key concepts for the study of the subject, and “cultural value” is the foundation of the two key concepts, which is applied to examine other concepts relating to the study of intercultural communication through the representation of linguistic symbols in order to achieve the ultimate goal, i.e., intercultural communication competence, of interaction (Chen & Starosta, 2005). Because the BRI involves different cultures and is a process of intercultural communication, this paper employs the five main concepts of intercultural communication to analyze the BRI: cultural values, intercultural adaptation, intercultural relationship, cultural flow and media, and intercultural communication competence.

**Cultural Values**

Culture is the foundation of human communication, and its essence is embodied in the values it attributes. Cultural values serve as the guidance of thoughts and behaviors of members of a cultural group. They give the direction for human action and the choice of decision making in the process of communication. From the perspective of international communication, as Jian and Huang (姜飞、黄廓, 2018) stated, cultural values serve as the foundation for a nation to claim its own identity; they form theory or principle of the nation’s international discourse and further construct image of the nation.

Like the concept of culture, cultural value is a highly abstract concept, thus in order to empirically study cultural value scholars have to narrow down the scope of the concept to “cultural value orientation”, which allows scholars to mirror it on the basis of direct or indirect observation of human behaviors. Over the years scholars in different disciplines have tried to establish a variety of models that can be used to study cultural values (e.g., Condon & Yousef, 1975; Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 1984; Kluckhohn & Strodbeck 1961). Chen and An (2009) further listed the differences of cultural values based on paradigmatic assumptions between East and West (see Figure 2).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ontology</th>
<th>East</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Holistic</td>
<td>Atomistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>submerged collectivistic</td>
<td>discrete individualistic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Axiology</th>
<th>Epistemology</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmonious</td>
<td>Confrontational</td>
<td>Interconnected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>direct expressive</td>
<td>reciprocity we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indirect</td>
<td>dialectical</td>
<td>hierarchical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subtle</td>
<td>divisive</td>
<td>associativ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adaptative</td>
<td>sermonic</td>
<td>ascribed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consensual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agreeable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. A list of cultural values between East and West. (Chen & An, 2009, p. 204)

The figure clearly shows the contrast of cultural values between Eastern and Western cultures, and the differences often cause barriers of mutual understanding in the process of intercultural communication, which in turn lead to unnecessary confrontation or conflict.

The study of cultural values has important implication to the BRI. The BRI is a cross-national project on a global scale, in which participants are from different countries and regions with a different set of cultural values. Although the BRI mainly involves in economic activities, there is no question that the awareness of differences of each other’s cultural values is the basis of successful interaction and cooperation for achieving the goal of the BRI. It will also directly affect the outcome of intercultural adaptation, the development and maintenance of intercultural relationship, and other aspects of intercultural communication in the process of implementing the BRI. As Chen (2010) argued, knowing the differences of cultural values and effectively applying them to one’s behaviors in interaction is the decisive factor for being competent in intercultural communication to achieve communication goals.

A caution is that from the perspective of human communication it is crucial to know that the differences of cultural values between two cultures do not infer an insurmountable gap for reaching mutual understanding. It will be impossible for people or countries to
reach mutual respect and trust if the chasm caused by cultural differences cannot be bridged. As Chen (2009a) pointed out, people should avoid dichotomizing the differences of cultural values by treating them as an “either-or” situation. In other words, differences and similarities simultaneously exist among cultures. The key to successful intercultural communication is to “seek common grounds while accepting differences” or “seek harmony but not conformity” (和而不同) that is based on the universal aspect of human cultures (Chen, 2015a).

Chen continued to argue that to tackle the problem of “either-or” or dichotomy thinking on the differences of cultural values, it is necessary to use “as if” or “tend to” when addressing cultural differences. For instance, we should say that Asian people “tend to” be more indirect or act “as if” they are more subtle than Westerners in interaction. The expression leaves a space of commonality for people from differing cultures to reach rapport, rather than demonstrates the stereotype that all Asians “are” indirect, agreeable, or reciprocal, and all Westerners “are” direct, expressive, or independent in the process of communication. Chen (2009a) further criticized that for the convenience of research intercultural communication scholars tend to dichotomize cultural values into two opposite extremes. The dichotomy problem often results in the pessimistic view that misunderstanding is inevitable, or mutual respect and understanding are unreachable in the process of intercultural communication. To understand this first and foremost misperception about cultural values is essential for the success of the BRI.

The bottleneck the BRI faces recently also can be explained from the perspective cultural values, in addition to other factors. A report by Shi (施予, 2018) shows the RWR Advisory Group found that from 2013 to 2018 there are about 234 out of 1,673 infrastructure projects of the BRI encounter resistances or obstacles in participating countries and regions along the Belt and Road. It was found that most of the problems were triggered by the mismanagement embedded in differences of cultural values between the PRC and other BRI participants.

In addition, the negative impact on the BRI due to different cultural values was also reflected in the criticism of James N. Mattis, the former U.S. secretary of defense, who claimed that the PRC is using the BRI to expand its geographical territory as exercised in the Ming Dynasty and demand its participating countries to become the PRC tributary states (皇金, 2018). Nevertheless, from the perspective of the PRC government the BRI is founded on the traditional Chinese cultural value of “world harmony” (shì jiè dà tóng, 世界大同), which aims to promote cultural diversity and destiny on the basis of acceptance, tolerance, and empathy. How to improve the problem of lacking attention on the potential impact of cultural values on the BRI that leads to the unexpected predicament should be a good lesson to learn for the future development of the BRI.

**Intercultural Adaptation**

Intercultural adaptation or adjustment is the primary concept in the early study of intercultural communication. In the early stage of preaching God’s words to the aboriginal
groups in remote areas, Catholic priests must face different languages and cultures, thus how to adapt to aboriginal societies in order to accomplish the mission of God becomes the first problem they need to overcome. From that moment, some of the priests with the background of cultural anthropology have started to observe and study the process of intercultural adaptation. Since Oberg (1954) coined the term “culture shock” in 1951 in an academic convention to describe the nature of intercultural adaptation, research on the concept has created a large amount of literature, including theories, principles, and practical information.

Nevertheless, most research of the concept treats the process of intercultural adaptation as a one-way adjustment. By focusing only on how sojourners adapt to the host culture when they enter a new culture, it neglects that intercultural adaptation also involves the way how the host nationals adapt to the newcomers. In other words, intercultural adaptation should be a mutual process in which both sojourners and host nationals make efforts to adapt to each other. Hence, Chen (2013a) proposed a heuristic argument that intercultural adaptation is a process of boundary game. It is a “process in which two cultural beings carrying different cultural values endeavor to reach a state of harmonious equilibrium through equal interaction” (陈国明, 2014, p. 591-592). Intercultural adaptation is therefore built on the basis of mutual understanding, respect, and acceptance of cultural differences, and moves to develop a holistic, equal space of co-existence. Through this continuing, interdependent, and transforming process of interaction, the boundary line between the two cultures is gradually developing into a new interdependent space, which was labelled the “third culture” (Casmir, 1993) or “interculturality” (Dai, 2012).

Chen (2015b) theorized this new co-existing space as the ideal “global community” of future human society, which is characterized by the landscape of cultural integration. Chen employed the Chinese Taiji Yin-Yang Model to further explicate the space (see Figure 3). A and B in the figure symbolize yin and yang and represent two different cultures; and the curve line between A and B indicates the boundary line between the two sides. It is assumed that the boundary line will be gradually expanded from a line into a culturally overlapping area or border, and further to a frontier through constant interpenetrative and transformative interaction between the two cultural beings.

![Taiji Yin-Yang Model](image)

**Figure 3.** The Taiji Yin-Yang Model of intercultural adaptation (Chen, 2013a, p. 4)

Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the development from the two isolated cultures of non-contact before interaction to an integrated culture after interaction. The diamond area refers to the integrated space, the third space, or the space of interculturality, and to maximize the
area becomes the ultimate goal of future global community in the new century (Chen, 2017). Chen (2015b) argued that the larger the area is, the more successful intercultural adaptation is, and it is the guarantee of a peaceful co-existence of human beings in the space. It is worth mentioning that this new interdependent area does not infer the diminishing of one’s cultural identity. Instead, it refers to the establishment of a flexible cultural identity without rigidly holding one’s own cultural values. As Starosta and Chen (2003) pointed out, only in this space can people temporarily release the clench of one’s own culture values through peaceful and productive interaction to reach the goal of intercultural communication.

![Figure 4. Two isolated cultures before interaction.](Chen, 2017, p. 150)

![Figure 5. Integration of two cultures after interaction.](Chen, 2017, p. 151)

A productive boundary game between two cultures based on intercultural communication is dependent on the acquirement of “boundary wisdom” (bian ji zhi hui, 边际智慧). Because of cultural differences, the contact or border line area between two cultures often shows a higher degree of ambiguity and uncertainty, which in turns will increase stress and difficulty in the process of interaction. “Boundary wisdom” provides the mechanism for uncertainty reduction and converts the unfamiliar “abnormal” situation into a controllable normal circumstance (陈国明, 2009). Chen (2015b) asserted that “boundary wisdom” is equivalent with the concept of “intercultural communication competence.” Looking the concept of “boundary wisdom” from the perspective of Chinese history of territory expansion in different dynasties, we can find that the genuine combination of “boundary wisdom” and “expansion consciousness” (tuo bian yi shi, 拓边意识) witnesses a way of using open-mindedness to face and accept “odd things from foreign lands” (su fang yi wu, 殊方异物).
The launch of the BRI is identical with the boundary game of intercultural adaptation. When people of two cultures with different cultural values engage in economic activities, as indicated in Figures 3-5, they are playing the intercultural boundary game. If Culture A in the figures represents the PRC, it includes those people such as infrastructure workers, management, negotiation team, media representatives, and other employees in the workforce of the BRI. How to equip this group of frontline employees with an appropriate degree of boundary wisdom will be a measure of the success of their intercultural adaptation and the overall implementation of the BRI. Although there is no scholarly research on intercultural adaptation directly about the BRI, a few studies have been done in the context of the Confucius Institutes (CI). For example, scholars and practitioners have been investigating and developing the effective way of training CI’s Chinese management, language teachers, and volunteers to foster the ability of intercultural adaptation in the host culture. In other words, it is to train and educate CI’s employees to acquire the abilities of knowing cultural values, respecting cultural differences, and appropriate behavioral skills in the process of intercultural interaction, so that the cultural boundary line can be expanded to a larger area of mutual understanding (陈国明, 2011), and the goal of CI in promoting Chinese culture and language can be obtained (安然、刘程、王丽虹, 2015; 黄湄, 2016; An, He, & Chen, 2018).

It is hoped that this expanded boundary space embedded in the implementation of the BRI can be maximized and ultimately becomes the co-center of global community. People living in this culturally integrated community will not be marginal persons or strangers anymore (Park, 1928; Rogers, 1999). Instead, they are like members in the same family, co-sharing the responsibility for constructing sustainable intercultural relationships, participating in the process of continuous production, and enjoying shared cultural meanings (Chen, 2015b). It is only in this ideal state of intercultural adaptation, can the BRI be empowered with cultural relativity characterized by cultural interpenetration, integration and transformation, and move beyond the traditional confinement of center vs. periphery, power vs. powerless, authentic vs. inauthentic between different countries (Cohen, 2000; Shils, 1975). In the arenas of politics and foreign affairs Fernandez (2000) developed the theory of “peripheral wisdom” to stipulate the boundary wisdom, which may also serve as a good reference for promoting the BRI.

**Intercultural Relationship**

People cannot be an isolated island; we need to live in an interrelated network in order to survive as human beings. Similar to this, any groups, including organizations, cultures and countries, as well need to rely on a sound relationship with other groups to sustain and develop their own life and history. The purpose of relationship development is to satisfy the three universal needs of inclusion, control, and affection for human beings (Schutz, 1966). In the process of intercultural communication, it is more difficult to develop relational ties than in an intracultural context due to the impact of different cultural values. It demonstrates that intercultural relationship development is a highly complicated and dynamic process, in which more misunderstanding and conflicts will appear.
As discussed previously, the development of equally co-existing third space is based on the concept of “cultural synergy” (Casmir, 1993). According to Adler (1980), cultural synergy demands mutual understanding of the two interactants, and through the process of mutual adaptation and negotiation to integrate both cultural values for the development of mutual cooperation and achievement of the task goal. Casmir (1993) indicated that the development of intercultural relationship in the third space usually follows the stages from contact, need, dependence, to interdependence; and cultural dialogue is the foundation for smooth movement of the four stages (Dai, 2010). It is undeniable that intercultural relationship in the third space embedded in cultural synergy is an intricated connector, and only the establishment of this connector can activate “the holistic nature of interaction and lead to the emergence of mutual identification, so that a sustainable mutual adaptation can be unlocked to alleviate cultural tension and conflict and transform cultural differences into a dynamic and creative factor” (陈国明, 2014, p. 593).

The description above shows the degree of difficulty for the development of intercultural relationship in the third space. However, it is even more difficult to examine the process from Orbe’s (1998) co-cultural theory, which involves the concept of power in the process of intercultural communication. Because the power structure usually is unequal before the interaction of two parties, how to keep the balance and equality of power to release oppress or being oppressed for both sides or the predetermined strong or weak power between two countries through assimilation and acculturation processes is a critical question the BRI needs to answer.

It is inevitable that misunderstanding and conflict often are apparent in the process of intercultural relationship development, because cultural values are embedded in thinking patterns, language expression, and communication behaviors of interactants (单波、肖珺, 2015; Dai & Chen, 2017). For example, during the 2008 Beijing Olympic games the PRC government attempted to utilize success of the event to transform its national image of authoritarianism, backward, air pollution, and political corruption into a positive one. Unfortunately, although the PRC government used “New Beijing, New Olympics” as the propaganda slogan, dubbed the game as “Green Olympics”, “Humanistic Olympics”, and “Technology Olympics”, and has begun to polish the city, build green Olympic stadium, and give international news agencies more open access years before the game, it was still unable to achieve the expectations of changing the national image (Syed, 2010). The reason for this misperception is that a different set of cultural values dictate the way of broadcasting that results in the reporter’s focus on issues such as the violation of human right, environmental pollution, and political corruption in China and ignores the agenda set by the PRC government (Dai & Chen, 2014a). A suggestible view is that the misunderstanding was not caused by the intentional discrimination or attack on the PRC, but instead caused by the reporters’ Western cultural values of free expression and human right that are reflected in their news reports (Murray, 2011).

It can be seen from the example of the 2008 Beijing Olympics that the development of intercultural relationship in the process of the BRI is closely related to inherent national image of the PRC. As Fan (2002) mentioned, the success of a brand is associated with the national image of the country it belongs to. Therefore, it will be beneficial to the BRI if a highly visible and positive national image of the PRC can be created through the making
of an effective agenda setting on the issues of domestic and international policies and the promotion of public relations of the PRC and the BRI (Manheim & Albritton, 1984).

National image is also inseparable with the concept of soft power. Soft power mirrors a national image that is based on the deeds of virtue. The difference between soft power and hard power is that soft power relies on four elements while dealing with one’s counterparts: (1) use communication and negotiation to persuade, (2) use the foresight of policy to attract, (3) use a high degree of emotional quotients to understand, and (4) has the ability to develop and promote a productive mutual relationship; while hard power employs organizational or national power to overcome its counterparts (Nye, 2006). Nye (2008) also emphasized that in this highly complicated global society, a more effective way to build a positive national image is to use both soft and hard power interchangeably based on the need of the situation. Nye (2008) used “smart power” to name the integration of soft and hard power, and the concept is closely linked to public diplomacy. He specified that the practice of traditional public policy mainly aims to develop soft power, but in order to succeed in contemporary world it needs to rely on “smart power” through the understanding and practice of trust, self-reflection, and civility rooted in the heart of soft power.

For the implementation of the BRI, it is urgent for the PRC to evaluate its own public diplomacy policy, so that a positive national image and a sound intercultural relationship with participating countries and regions can be established. The concept of “public diplomacy” was first mentioned by Edmund Gullion in 1965. It deals with how a government influences the public attitudes via implementation of a foreign policy by focusing on the cross-national movement of information and ideas. Gullion asserted that public diplomacy has a broad scope, which mainly includes non-traditional international relations, public opinions formed by a government in other countries, interaction with private interest groups of another country, concern and report of the impact of foreign affairs and policy, interaction with foreign diplomats and news agencies, and handling cross-cultural communication process. Later in the United States more emphasis was laid on the concept of “communication” for the content of public diplomacy. For instance, Tuch (1990) stipulated that public diplomacy is the process of a government’s attempt to create a favorable communication environment in a foreign country, and its major goal is to improve outsiders’ misperception or misunderstanding towards the United States. Moreover, the meaning of public diplomacy used in the earlier time is more similar to the concept of “propaganda” (Stephens, 1955). Although the two concepts were separated later, their relationship is still close in recent years, denoting that it needs to go through the process of propaganda in order to achieve the goal of public diplomacy.

Research on the Chinese practice of public diplomacy over the years found that the expected outcome was not reached, even if the PRC invested a huge amount of personnel, materialistic, and financial resources to promote its national image through different channels such as the Xinhua News Agency, the China Daily, and CCTV/CGTN to promote public diplomacy. As Creemers (2015) found, two reasons can be accounted for the less successful outcome of the PRC public diplomacy. First, the PRC public diplomacy is operated by its propaganda agency; and second, the PRC treats soft power as a commercial
concept, which is a quantifiable, absolute, and can be used as a defensive and offensive tool.

It is well known that the communication system of the PRC Propaganda Department is a top-down process dictated by the central government. The disadvantage of this kind of operational system is reflected in the lack of taking care of needs of the market and issues concerned by people. The credibility of propaganda is therefore reduced, and public opinions are often neglected. This in turn leads to the failure of soft power because of passive, authoritarian, and inconsistent problems of the propaganda system. As a result, the PRC continues to struggle in peacefully participating in the international communication process for global governance which is founded on the political and social ideas of global citizenship (Zhao, 2013).

In addition, Shambaugh (2007) pointed out that the PRC propaganda operation continues to show improvement, but it still incapable of facing the impact of globalization. The PRC Propaganda Department is a bureaucratic unit controlled by the Communist Party, the information is always scrutinized, and the process of message dissemination is not opaque enough. It becomes highly difficult for this system to face challenges from the rapid development of commerce and technology and the complexity of global public affairs. Obviously, it is hard for the system to establish a positive intercultural relationship in the global society; and sadly, a positive intercultural relationship is an indispensable element for the success of the BRI.

Although the PRC has gained some success in promoting its national image by means of soft cultural diplomacy, it is still a long way to go for a satisfactory result. According to Tian and Deng’s (2018) analyses, it is Peng Li Xuan, the PRC first lady, who is constantly promoting the PRC national image through cultural diplomacy. Mitchell (1986) indicated that culture as a significant part of public diplomacy often creates a beneficial eternal environment and boosters the effect of public diplomacy that increases the power of a nation’s influence and a positive national image. Tian and Deng (2018) found that through her graceful behaviors rooted in elegant Chinese culture and playing the role of a humanitarianism advocate during President Xi’s foreign trips in recent years, Peng Li Xuan effectively assisted her husband to promote public diplomacy and convert the negative national image of the PRC. Nevertheless, although this does not indicate the victory of the PRC foreign policy, the integration of soft cultural diplomacy and traditional public diplomacy may serve as a good example to follow for the strategy of promoting the PRC public diplomacy in the future. This also includes the newly use of social media, such as the digital “panda engagement” through Twitter, for the promotion of the PRC public diplomacy (Huang & Wang, 2020).

It is no doubt that the constant criticisms and predicaments of the BRI urge the PRC government to contemplate a more effective way to improve its national image through public diplomacy by means of building a mutually benefitted relationship with countries and regions along the sides of the BRI. Examples of criticisms include, for example, Page and Shah’s (2018) report in the Wall Street Journal. The report describes the setback of the BRI in Pakistan, and the accusation of Western countries that blames the BRI as the resurrection of colonialism in Africa. It also reports that when James N. Mattis visited Africa in March of 2018, he openly criticized that the BRI in Africa is a kind of neo-
colonialism that brings about dependency to the PRC, and African countries need to be alert on the future development of the BRI in African Continent. The report from Thu (2018) also referred to the aggressiveness of the PRC military in the South China Sea and other regions has caused counterattack from other countries.

No matter what these incidents arisen from the BRI are true or not, the problem gives the PRC government a great opportunity to reevaluate the project and produce a more sustainable strategy for the implementation of the BRI. In other words, as Zhou (周公瑾, 2018) suggested, it is necessary for the PRC government to have a holistic and objective analysis on the new challenge the BRI is facing with a calm and clear mind.

Cultural Flow and Media

The rapid development of communication technologies, especially the new media, has pushed the trend of globalization to its highest level. Chen (2012) stated that the emergence of new media not only greatly intensifies relationships among human societies to a highly interrelated and intricate level, but also simultaneously challenges the meaning and practice of intercultural communication in traditional sense. New media is changing the nature and application of cultural values, intercultural adaptation, and intercultural relationship discussed in this paper. Thus, it is vitally important to consider the relationship between media and culture when dealing with human affairs at the present time, including the project like the BRI.

Culture is dynamic; it flows within a country and between nations carried by different media through various channels. Similar to the ancient Chinese Silk Road, through which commodities and merchandises were delivered to foreign lands by means of humans, animals, and ships, culture is moving around with the breakthrough of time and space. Although the pace of movement was slow, after the accumulation over a thousand years a through silk road was formed. The constant and prolonged cultural and economic exchanges on the silk road in turn increase and promote cross-continental cultural activities and the development of human civilization.

After the Industrial Revolution in Europe and the United States in the early 19th century, the expeditious development of communication and transportation technologies completely has transformed cultural, economic, and other activities in human society. The recent development of new media, with its distinctive characteristics of digitalization, convergence, interactivity, hypertextuality and virtuality, has maximized the impact of globalization (Chen & Zhang, 2010; Flew, 2005). The integration of new media and globalization trend has shrunk the world, compressed time and space, linked every corner of the world, and enhanced competitive and cooperative relations among people everywhere (Chen & Starosta, 2000). It has greatly expedited the speed and complexity of cultural flow. According to Zhang (张玉佩, 2017), there are three types of cultural flow, namely, media imperialism, cross-national flow, and diachronic movement, and they are built respectively on the theories of internationalism, Marxist paradigm, theories of representation, theories of reception, and theories of identity (Alleyne, 2009).

The media imperialism model of cultural flow is originated from Marx’s economic theory on the exploitation of labor. It dictates that the exploitation of workers by capitalists led to flood of cultural and commercial products from the West to the third world in the
last century. The dominance of Western power over the Third World made the flow of commodities, culture, and media a one-way direction, and tragically further resulted in the colonization and marginalization in politics and economy of the Third World (Straubhaar, 1991). Cross-national flow of culture is based on the theories of cultural relationship and proximity. It claims that geographical proximity provides an opportunity for the easy access of cultural products, but the convenience of cultural contact and commodity exchanges also produces the problem of asymmetrical dependency. Moreover, the proximity or relationship woven by the flow of culture also illustrates the fact that it becomes easy for culture to break through geographical boundary and closely connects two distant countries to initiate mutual influence between them (Straubhaar, 1991). Finally, in addition to the synchronic or horizontal movement among geographical areas, the flow of culture also shows its diachronic or vertical movement within a nation. The diachronic movement of culture not only reflects, but also promotes the transformation of a society and the life change of ethnic groups within the culture (张玉佩, 2017).

The media imperialism model of cultural flow apparently has become obsolete in contemporary interdependent global society. It is inappropriate for any country trying to resurrect the soul of this model, and the chance of success for any attempt of this in modern time is also extremely slim. Unfortunately, the BRI suffers from criticisms embedded in this model from its inception. The neo-colonialism criticism mentioned by Page and Shah (2018) above is a good example of employing the model of media imperialism of cultural flow by Western countries to criticize the BRI as a kind of cultural and economic colonialism. In addition, unequally historical phrases such as “chaogong” (朝贡) and “kowtou” (叩头) were used to describe the BRI (Schuman, 2018). Targeting this problem, President Xi affirmed in a 2009 overseas Chinese social gathering in Mexico that the PRC never had the intention to export revolution, hunger and poverty, or to torture Chinese people. Unfortunately, Xi’s claim seems still unable to relieve the worry and suspicion from the West.

The issue becomes even more entangled when the criticism is related to President Xi’s idea on Chinese “Tianxia Guan” (World View, 天下观). It is the intention of the PRC that through the BRI the PRC can propose its traditional worldview of openness, inclusiveness, responsibility, shared destiny, and righteousness to promote the construction of a harmonious world (董明利, 2016) and serve as the guideline of the PRC geopolitical relations with other countries (储殷, 2018). The problem is that the Tianxia Guan is colored with the character of traditional China-centrism. Even the PRC government argued that the Tianxia Guan is a historical thought based on the concept of harmony, which is completely different from the ideas of cultural imperialism or colonialism, in the eyes of Western countries the Tianxia Guan is equal to concepts like monarchy, colonization, chaogong, or kowtou. Western countries concern that the execution of the Tianxia Guan will challenge the existing world order by replacing the leading role in constructing the coming global society. Therefore, it is an urgent task for the PRC government to first let Western countries understand, via the channels of propaganda and public diplomacy, that the Tianxia Guan is the pursuit of a mutually beneficial and co-existing human society; and then moves one step further, through the process of negotiation and dialogue, to attract and
persuade Western countries and those participating members of the BRI to co-build a cooperative relationship. This is also a way to warrant the success of the PRC “Zou Chu Qu” (go global, 走出去) strategy in the process of reconstructing the new world order.

**Intercultural Communication Competence**

Intercultural communication competence (ICC) is the ruler for the measurement of successful intercultural interaction. The ultimate goal of intercultural communication education or training is to equip participants with ICC in order to become successful and productive global citizens. The success of the BRI, as a process of intercultural communication, is as well greatly dependent on the degree of ICC participants possess. The significance of the concept has resulted in a large amount of literature from the research of ICC (Dai & Chen, 2014b; Deardorff, 2009). Among the studies of ICC, the triangular model of ICC (Chen, 2010) shown in Figure 6 is the most suitable one applied to the analysis of the BRI.

![Triangular model of intercultural communication competence.](Chen, 2010, p. 180)

The model is comprised of three dimensions: intercultural awareness, intercultural sensitivity, and intercultural adroitness or effectiveness (Chen & Young, 2012). Intercultural awareness refers to the cognitive aspect of ICC. It is the process of understanding one’s own and counterpart’s cultural values through learning in the process of intercultural communication. The awareness of one’s own cultural values and based on the understanding of people as cultural beings to learn about one’s counterparts’ culture is the key to opening the door of successful intercultural communication. Intercultural sensitivity represents the affective aspect of ICC, which shows the ability to, in addition to intercultural awareness, acknowledge, respect, and even accept different thoughts and behaviors caused by cultural differences in the process of intercultural communication. Intercultural adroitness demonstrates the behavioral aspect of ICC. It requires the ability to apply both intercultural awareness and intercultural sensitivity to the context of intercultural communication by knowing how to act appropriately and effectively during the interaction.

Thus, for the BRI to succeed how to train its employees to equip with the ability of ICC becomes a significant factor. As mentioned previously, the BRI covers more than one
hundred countries and regions in the continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe, which shows a great diversity of cultures. Only through intercultural awareness of customs and beliefs in different countries involving in the BRI, fostering the ability of intercultural sensitivity towards cultural differences, and further displaying intercultural adroitness in the process of intercultural interaction, can harmonious relationships be established to reduce mutual misunderstanding and conflict to a minimum level.

From a different angle we can see that the acquisition of ICC provides the BRI an opportunity to reinforce the importance and necessity of cultural diversity and the connectivity of local and global cultures (Sorrells, 2013). This also allows the BRI to challenge the predicaments caused by the Eurocentrism, which is characterized by aggressive individualism, chauvinistic rationalism, and ruthless culturalism and leads to the marginalization of non-Western countries (Asante, 2006). This by no means refers to the attempt of using the BRI as a tool to create an Asian or African cultural center through the acquisition of ICC (Asante, 2007; Miike, 2006). Instead, it alludes to the opportunity for establishing a multicultural co-existing human society in the process of dialogue or even confrontation with the Eurocentrism. In other words, it demands that in the process of co-governing and reforming the world system, the PRC needs to embody the ideal of global community based on the distinguishing feature of Chinese culture. This ideal global community also displays the principle, strategy, and mission of the PRC public diplomacy (杨晖, 2018).

Discussion and Conclusion

From Deng Xiaoping’s “hiding its light” (tao guang yang hui, 韬光养晦) and “wading across the stream by feeling the way” (mo shi guo he, 摸石过河) policies to Xi Jinping’s “China Dream” (zhong guo meng, 中国梦) and “go global” (zuo chu qu, 走出去), and to the slogan of “made in China 2025” (中国制造 2025) (国务院发布“中国制造 2025”, 2015), it clearly shows the PRC ambition to join the global society to co-govern world affairs. It also displays that the rapid development of the PRC in the last five decades has moved the country to a well-off level and is gradually leading the country to a great power, and the BRI is the mark of the development in this process. The BRI not only represents the PRC key economic and political plan, but also shows that it will give the PRC a great potential of future development in economy, politics, and culture. However, it also will be accompanied with uncertainty mainly due to the worries and criticisms from especially countries in the West, who tend to consider the BRI as a means the PRC uses to influence global politics.

It is important to understand that facing international doubts and negative views on the BRI call for both a peaceful solution from the PRC government and attention from news report and academic research. Unfortunately, the existing literature from news report and research of the BRI mostly focuses on the aspects of economy, foreign affairs, politics, and military, very few of them deal with the issue from the perspective of intercultural communication. This is the reason why this paper aims to explore the BRI from the five perspectives of intercultural communication, namely, cultural values, intercultural adaptation, intercultural relationship, cultural flow and media, and intercultural
communication competence. By doing so, it is not the intention of the author to over highlight or exaggerate the crucial role of intercultural communication in the implementation of the BRI. The author only wishes to argue that intercultural communications should be the foundation of the BRI. It is hoped that the analyses of the BRI from the perspective of intercultural communication can produce some positive contribution to understanding and implementation of the project, which may also help to develop a future world of mutual trust, mutual benefit, and peaceful co-existence.

Three related issues regarding the BRI deserve discussion here. First of all, the uncertainty of the BRI continues to increase due to the criticisms of Western countries, and is getting worse owing to the trade war between the PRC and the United States. More and more discussions have emerged on how the PRC should proceed the BRI while facing these barriers. For example, recently the Global Times proposed some rational solutions on the problems caused by the trade war between the PRC and the United States (张迪, 2018). The report triggers hot discussions on the claim of the “neo-hiding its light” (新韬光养晦) (凌云, 2018). The idea of the “neo-hiding its light” seems to be a thoughtful and acceptable suggestion, which may function to correct the myth or fallacy of slogans like “comprehensive transcendence” (全面超越论) and “amazing China” (厉害了, 我的国) based on the overzealous claim from the populism. It is a fact that the PRC is a large country, but it is still questionable whether the PRC is already a superpower. Hence, knowing the real situation of the country with a clear and calm mind through self-reflection, improvement, and breakthrough should be a good way for the PRC to sustain its steady development.

The hexagram of Qian (乾卦) of the Book of Changes or I Ching can be used to explain this situation. The original practice of the “hiding its light” is mirrored by the first line (爻) of the hexagram, which is the moment of “潜龙勿用” (qian long wu yong), meaning that the dragon is hiding in deep water, or it is not time for action yet. The present condition can be represented by the second line. The line states that “见龙在田” (xian long zai tian), referring to the dragon is appearing in the field. It reflects the strength of the PRC produced by the rapid development of economy over the last decades. However, the emergence as a strong game player will be inevitable to encounter the resistance or criticism from surrounding countries. To a certain point the PRC needs to decide how far it can go to face the challenge. In other words, the PRC needs to see if the situation demands the change of strategy or make a detour by entering the third line of the hexagram. The third line conveys the message of “continuing to make earnest efforts days and nights with vigilance” (zhong ri qian qian, xi ti ruo, 终日乾乾, 夕惕若) to avoid unnecessary conflicts with others, and then “jumping back to the deep water” (huo yue zai yuan, 或跃在渊) dictated by the fourth line of the hexagram to temporarily be a hiding dragon or “hiding its light” again while being observant and diligent. When the time comes, as the fifth line of the hexagram says, it is the right moment now for the dragon to fly in the sky” (fei long zai tian, 飞龙在天) to peacefully and productively work with other countries in the global society.

Zhou (周山, 2014) argued that although the Qian hexagram is characterized by its emphasis on exerting oneself constantly or striving unceasingly, the progress of this earnest
effort to improve oneself is actually conditioned by the three concepts of endurance (ren, 忍), worry (you, 忧), and repentance (hui, 悔). It illustrates the flexibility of adapting to the situation embedded in the interplay between Yin and Yang forces, and this flexibility can serve as a workable reference for the BRI.

Second, the BRI brings about the debate on the so-called “China model” (zhong guo mo shi, 中国模式). From the perspective of intercultural communication, we can see that there exist universal values, such as the pursuit of power, achievement, and hedonism, in different cultures (Schwartz, 1992), but it is difficult to find a universal model of problem solving in human societies. Although the domination of Western models in the world has been over two centuries, it by no means infers that the Western models are fit or can be transplanted to other societies due to the differences of cultural values. Similarly, it is also not valid to argue that non-Western models, e.g., the Asian economic or cultural model, can be applied or transplanted to Western societies. Thus, any model tinted with a specific culture’s feature will be subject to the challenge of competition and adaptation in the application to a different society. Because the Western models are considered as invalid for the BRI to follow, scholars have begun to ponder and discuss what then will be a suitable China model the BRI can rely on for its sustainable development.

More and more scholars from different disciplines have endeavored to construct various models based on Chinese culture (e.g., 邵培仁, 姚锦云, 2018; 谢清果, 陈昱成, 2018). On the micro- or middle-range level, in addition to the above example of using the hexagram of Qian to explain the discourse of “hiding its light” applied to the BRI, more attempts for developing a China model were found in the fields of interpersonal communication and management. They include, e.g., Cheng’s (成中英, 1995) C theory of Chinese management, Zeng’s (曾仕强, 2005) theory of I Ching management, Chen’s (陈国明, 2004a, 2004b) theories of human relationship development based on the eight hexagrams of I Ching and Chinese harmony, Chen’s (2009b) I Ching theory of human communication, Chen and An’s (2009) Chinese model of global leadership, and G. Chen’s (2013b) and M. Chen’s (2002) Chinese models of the middle-way (中道) management. In the areas of economy and politics the Chinese “World View” (天下观) or “Tian-Xia Doctrine” (天下主义) and “China Model” are the two theories most explored that are directly related to the BRI. The efforts to develop models or theories from the Chinese cultural perspective that are used to explain the rapid development of the PRC reflects China’s ambition to co-govern the global society with other countries.

Based on the interpretation of the statement of “Looking at the world, we are facing a major change that has not been seen in a century” of President Xi’s talk (习近平, 2017c), the theory of Chinese “World View” is considered as a strong sense of mission delineated in Confucian teachings, though Western countries criticized it as the reemergence of “chougong” or “kowtou”. Nevertheless, from the perspective of Chinese history the Chinese “World View” is rooted in the spirit of “li” (rite, propriety, 礼), which denotes an unequal relationship but specifies a system of peaceful co-existence with the emphasis of righteousness rather than greed. Yang (杨晖, 2018) contended that the system can provide protection of economy, culture, and politics for participating countries and regions in the process of implementing the BRI.
It is a good effort for using the Confucian concept of “li” to interpret the Chinese “World View” of the BRI, which can connect the process of China’s new modernization with Chinese traditions. The question is that how can this Chinese “World View” successfully dialogue and integrate with presently dominating Western civilization remains a great challenge. As mentioned previously, facing the impact of negative national image presently, it is crucial for the PRC government to seek an effective way to tackle this predicament through the process of intercultural propaganda and constructive public diplomacy, which is based on ethical human relationship and world order originated from the Chinese “World View”.

The “China Model” aims to answer the question raised by President Xi (习近平, 2017b): “What is the socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era”. It should be a model of major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, but opinions are still varied for how to apply this Chinese model to the world stage. Undoubtedly, the successful transformation of Chinese society due to the rapid development of economy in the last five decades must refer to that there is an objective model existing in it that guides the great achievement in China. The dilemma is that a more accurate face or map of the model still remains to be drawn, which also indicates that this hidden model is still on the stage of change. In other words, it shows that the model of economic development in China is still an unstable one and subjects to constant revisions when the PRC continues to interact with other countries globally.

As Yao (姚洋, 2011) pointed out, it seems to be more appropriate to use “China experience” (zhong guo jing yan, 中国经验) or “Chinese way” (zhong guo dao lu, 中国道路) to replace “China Model”, but no matter which term is used, they ought to include four common elements: elitism, meritocracy, effective system, and neutral government. Zheng (郑永年, 2015) further indicated that the soul of all the various perceptions of “China Model” shares the same idea that it is a unique type of mixed Chinese economic and political model, and it is not a fixed universal model so far. As the PRC is rising in this global society, it can be expected that competition, cooperation, and confrontation between the “China Model” and other existing models will increase. It is worth keeping an eye to observe how the “China Model” is embodied through the BRI in the future.

Finally, the unexpected attack of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) is shaking human society and restructuring the world order now. The COVID-19 has lessened the nature, pace, and scope of the BRI activities due to its impact on global economy, especially the fundamental change in global supply chains (World Economic Forum, 2020). Combined with the US-China trade friction, the prospect of the BRI future looks even dimmer. The COVID-19 pandemic may not lead to the worst scenario from authoritative forecasts, including the collapse of world economy, social and political turmoil in some countries, reshuffling of the world order, and curtail of the global connectivity (Tonchev, 2020), but the PRC certainly will face some short-term impact from the COVID-19. For example, the funding shortfall resulting in the decrease of needed resources in the BRI may cause political and social instability in China, and the demand for infrastructure in the joining countries and regions of the BRI may be severed due to the lack of funding which will weaken Chinese investment. For the long-term impact the COVID-19 definitely will bring about a different BRI, and it may not be more embraced by the rest of the world. However,
Tonchev continued, because the BRI is “a symbol of China’s emergence as a leading global leader and a big chunk of Xi’s legacy”, the PRC will find a way to perpetuate the project, like using the “mask diplomacy” strategy to introduce a safe health system to the BRI. As Chinese traditional teaching stipulates that crisis is always a turning point for a better future (wei ji ji shi zhuang ji, 危机即是转机), the present unpredictable world situation is providing the PRC an opportunity to face the challenge based on traditional Chinese wisdom, which may possibly reside in the perspective of intercultural communication.

Correspondence to:
Guo-Ming Chen, Ph.D.
Department of Communication Studies
University of Rhode Island
Kingston, RI 02881
Email: gmchen@uri.edu

References
习近平（2013a）。 “习近平在纳扎尔巴耶夫大学的演讲（全文）”。 见 http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_chn/zyxw_602251/t1074151.shtml
习近平（2013b）。 “携手建设中国－东盟命运共同体”。 见： http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2013-10/03/content_117591652.htm
习近平（2017a）。 “携手推进‘一带一路’建设 - 在‘一带一路’国际合作高峰论坛开幕式上的演讲”。 见： http://www.xinhuanet.com/2017-05/14/content_41501866.htm
习近平 (2017b)。 习近平重要讲话双语实录：在“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛开幕式上的演讲。 见： http://www.catl.org.cn/2017-05/15/content_41501866.htm
习近平（2017c，12月28日）。“习近平接见2017年度驻外使节工作会议与会使节并发表重要讲话”。新华网。 见： http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/leaders/2017-12/28/c_1122181743.htm
中华人民共和国和发展国家发展和改革委员会（2015）。“推动共建丝绸之路经济带和21世纪海上丝绸之路的愿景与行动”。 见： http://www.ndrc.gov.cn/201503/t20150328_669091.html
安然、刘程、王丽虹（2015）。“孔子学院中方人员跨文化适应能力研究”。 北京：中国社会科学出版社。
邝志良（2018）。“‘一带一路’推动全球”。 见： http://orientaldaily.on.cc/cnt/finance/20180222/mobile/odn-20180222-0222_00275_001.html
成中英 (1995)。《C理论：易经管理哲学》。台北：三民书局。
何茂春、张冀兵、张雅芃、田斌（2015）。“‘一带一路’战略面临的障碍与对策”。《新疆师范大学学报：哲学社会科学版》，第3期。
时晓莉、张赛（2018，7月26日）。“学界研讨‘一带一路’倡议与跨文化传播”。中国社会科学网。见：http://news.ccssn.cn/xz/bwyc/201807/t20180725_4510648.shtml?from=timeline&isappinstalled=0
邵培仁、姚锦云（2018）。“本土之路三十年：华夏传播理论的建构实践（1988-2018）”。《中国传媒报告》，第3期，第4-18页
张玉佩（2017）。“导读：文化流动的模式与另类想象”。《中华传播学刊》，第6期，第3-15页。DOI:10.6195/cjcr.2017.31.00
周山（2014）。“读易随笔”。北京：海豚出版社。
姚洋（2011）。“中国模式及其前景”。见：https://wenku.baidu.com/view/1c91b 6170b4e767f5acfc6db.html


姜飞、黄廓（2018）。 “论新时代中国特色社会主义核心价值观国际传播的新思路”。《中州学刊》，第 1 期，页 164-172。


袁新涛（2014）。“一带一路”建设的国家战略分析。《理论月刊》，第 11 期，页 5-9。

黄湄（2016）。“大机构观与中国道路：孔子学院发展比较研究”。北京：外语教学与研究出版社。

谢清果、陈昱成（2015）。“‘风草论’：建构中国本土化传播理论的尝试”。《现代传播（中国传媒大学学报）》，第 9 期，页 59-64。

曾仕强（2005）。“管理大道：中国管理哲学的现代应用”。北京：北京大学。

董明利（2016）。习近平“天下观”的理论渊源、现代诠释和中国方案。《中学政治教学参考：下旬》，第 11 期，页 8-10。


