

# The Promoting Role of Han Culture Communication in International Relations: A Case Study of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics

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## KEYWORDS

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## ABSTRACT

The Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, a pivotal global event amid the lingering impacts of the pandemic, disseminated Han culture elements to the world through diverse carriers. Employing the literature review method, this paper sorts out the communication paths and core connotations of Han culture during the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, analyzes the specific promoting role of Han culture communication in international relations, and refines practical insights for the effective communication of Han culture. It aims to provide references for the international communication of Chinese culture and the development of international relations in the new era.

## INTRODUCTION

The world today confronts multiple challenges, including the lingering effects of the pandemic and geopolitical tensions, making it imperative for international relations to rally around the shared values of peace and unity. The Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, which opened on February 4, 2022, with the theme "Together for a Shared Future," conveyed the essence of Han culture through carriers such as the opening ceremony, venues, and mascots. It was hailed by international media as "a spectacular feast combining visual enjoyment and technological support" and "an international event promoting the Olympic spirit" [1].

Existing studies have explored the cultural value and international influence of the Winter Olympics. For instance, Bi [1] analyzed the positive reviews of the Winter Olympics opening ceremony by international media; Hu [2] discussed the role of the Winter Olympics in shaping the national image; and Zhang [3] emphasized its historical significance

and cultural value. In interdisciplinary research, scholars often adopt the logic of "practical carrier-mechanism analysis-consensus building" to explore interactions across different fields. For example, Gu et al. [6] studied the impact mechanism of environmental economics on study tour education through transnational ecological study cases, offering insights into fostering a global perspective via practical activities. Another study dissected the formation logic of regional economic disparities from the perspectives of institutional change and factor mobility [7]; this methodology—"starting from core elements and sorting out functional paths"—provides a reference for accurately analyzing "how Han culture communication promotes international relations." Additionally, Lin & Gu's [8] research on paths to enhance the supply chain resilience of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the digital economy highlights the importance of "path optimization and collaborative cooperation" in cross-entity interactions, which aligns with the logic of Han culture communication

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requiring diverse paths to build international consensus. However, existing studies on the Winter Olympics still lack in-depth analysis of the specific logical chain between "Han culture communication and the promotion of international

relations." This paper focuses on this core issue and conducts an analysis based on the practice of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics.

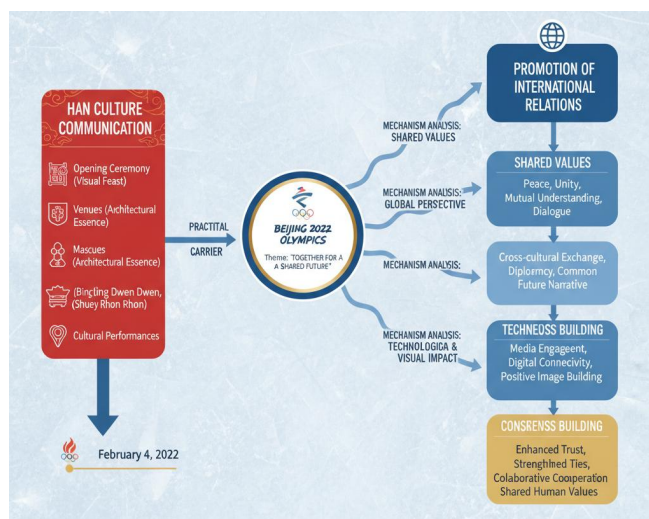


Fig.1.The Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics

## 1.The Significance of Hosting the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics

The preparation for the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics spanned nine years, from 2013 to 2022, marking Beijing as the world's first "Dual Olympic City" after hosting the 2008 Summer Olympics. Its significance can be examined from two dimensions—China and the world—and its "mutually beneficial dual-value" feature is consistent with the interdisciplinary research logic of "achieving multi-entity win-win outcomes through practical carriers" [6, 7, 8]:

- For China: It served as an opportunity to reshape the national image in the new era. Through event preparation and cultural demonstrations, China enhanced its cultural communication capabilities and international discourse power, showcasing a "diverse, united, confident, and open" great power image to the world [2]. Just as Lin & Gu [8] emphasized the role of "path optimization in improving an entity's competitiveness," the effective communication of Han culture has become a "soft power path" to strengthen China's international influence, providing cultural support for national image building.

- For the world: As the largest offline international event since the pandemic, it provided a platform for the development of global sports. More importantly, it became a landmark event for humanity to "break free from the depression caused by the pandemic and build unity consensus," which aligns with the core Olympic spirit of "peace and cooperation" [3]. This is analogous to the effect described by Gu et al. [6]—"transnational practices breaking cognitive barriers and promoting ideological resonance"—and also echoes the logic of "factor mobility driving coordinated development" in regional economic research [7]. Through the cross-border exchange of culture and sports, the Winter Olympics fostered a global consensus that "cooperation outweighs differences."

## 2.Communication Paths of Han Culture in the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics

The Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics integrated the essence of Han culture into various aspects of the event through two core carriers—"visual symbols" and "ritual aesthetics"—achieving the natural dissemination of culture. This strategy of "targeted carriers and hierarchical communication" is consistent with the interdisciplinary research approach of "improving practical effectiveness through path optimization" [6, 7, 8]; by clarifying the functional positioning of communication carriers, the international acceptance and appeal of Han culture were maximized.

### 2.1.Visual Symbols: The Concrete Presentation of Han Culture

Visual symbols, with their intuitive and accessible nature, convey cultural connotations and serve as the "basic carrier"

for international audiences to understand Han culture—similar to "primary factors" in regional economics that lay the foundation for in-depth development [7]:

- **Venues and Logos:** The design of venues such as "Xue Ruyi" (Snow Ruyi) and "Bing Yuhuan" (Ice Jade Ring) drew inspiration from traditional Chinese architectural aesthetics. Their curved forms echo the concept of "harmony between man and nature," allowing international audiences to intuitively experience traditional Chinese aesthetics. The official emblem "Winter Dream" centers on the calligraphic form of the Chinese character "冬" (winter), integrated with paper-cutting art. It not only showcases the vitality of winter sports through dynamic lines but also conveys the cultural connotation of "the combination of hardness and softness" via traditional artistic forms [5].
- **Mascots:** "Bing Dwen Dwen" takes the giant panda (China's national treasure) as its prototype, paired with an ice crystal shell. It retains the cuteness of the giant panda while incorporating ice and snow elements, highlighting China's concept of "harmonious coexistence between man and nature." "Shuey Rhon Rhon" is based on a red lantern, embedded with symbols such as doves and the Great Wall. The red lantern symbolizes "warmth and brightness," the dove represents "peace," and the Great Wall stands for "cultural inheritance." The superposition of multiple symbols enriches its cultural connotations [5]. This "multi-element integration" design aligns with the logic proposed by Lin & Gu [8]—"multi-path collaboration to enhance entity resilience."

## **2.2.Ritual Aesthetics: The Spiritual Expression of Han Culture**

The opening ceremony and torch-lighting ceremony, through aesthetic design, conveyed the spiritual core of Han culture in depth. Similar to the role of "technological innovation in improving development quality" in regional

economic research [7], they injected depth and emotional resonance into cultural communication:

- **Opening Ceremony:** Held on the solar term "Lichun" (the Beginning of Spring), the countdown video followed the sequence of the 24 solar terms, from "Yushui" (Rain Water) to "Lichun," accompanied by natural landscapes photographed by global photographers. It not only demonstrated the traditional Han cultural concept of "following the seasons and respecting nature" but also aroused emotional resonance among international audiences through "the beauty of nature." The performance segment "The Yellow River Flows from the Sky," inspired by Li Bai's poem, transformed literary imagery into a visual spectacle using digital technology. It not only showcased the profoundness and extensiveness of Chinese culture but also conveyed the international concept of "interconnected global destinies" through the symbolic meaning of "water" as "inclusive and flowing" [1]. This "imagery transformation" approach is similar to the strategy of Gu et al. [6]—"conveying abstract concepts through concrete cases."
- **Torch Lighting Ceremony:** Breaking away from the traditional "large torch" model, it adopted a "micro-flame" design. A "snowflake platform" composed of 96 small snowflakes (representing different countries) and 6 olive branches was created, and torchbearers born after 2000 embedded the final torch into the platform. "Snowflakes" symbolize "purity and holiness," "olive branches" represent "peace," and "micro-flame" embodies the Han cultural wisdom of "seeing the big from the small and safeguarding unity." The 96 small snowflakes converging into a large snowflake intuitively conveyed the spirit of "the world as one and jointly safeguarding peace" [4]. This "collaborative coexistence" design concept aligns with the logic emphasized by Lin & Gu [8]—"supply chain collaboration to enhance resilience."



**Fig.2.**Communication Paths of Han Culture in the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics

### 3.The Promoting Mechanism of Han Culture Communication on International Relations

The communication of Han culture during the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics injected positive energy into international relations through three mechanisms: "building value consensus, strengthening green consensus, and deepening peace consensus." This "multi-mechanism synergy" process is highly consistent with the interdisciplinary research logic of "multi-factor collaboration driving development" [6, 7, 8]; each mechanism functions independently while supporting one another, forming a joint force to promote the development of international relations toward peace and cooperation.

#### 3.1.Building Value Consensus: Promoting the International Community's Recognition of "People-Centered" Principles

The "people-centered" ideology in Han culture is highly consistent with the Olympic concept of "focusing on human health and dignity." The Winter Olympics emblem centers on the "human movement form," and the Paralympics logo highlights "equality between people with and without disabilities" by integrating "wheelchair tracks" and "sports lines," conveying the value that "everyone, regardless of race, gender, or ability, can participate in sports" [5]. This

value dissemination breaks down political and linguistic barriers, enabling 206 participating entities to reach a consensus on "respecting individuals and collaborating in unity," thus laying the foundation for "equal dialogue" in international relations [4]. Just as "institutional design ensures fair participation of all entities" in regional economic research [7], the "people-centered" value consensus provides a "spiritual guideline" for equal exchanges among countries, reducing disputes arising from differences in values.

#### 3.2.Strengthening Green Consensus: Promoting Global Practice of "Harmony Between Man and Nature"

The Han cultural concept of "harmony between man and nature" was transformed into tangible green practices through details of the Winter Olympics: the torch used new environmentally friendly fuels; the Winter Olympics uniforms adopted a dual-emblem design to improve reusability; and the construction of the "Xue Ruyi" venue took ecological protection into account. These initiatives not only respond to the global goal of "carbon neutrality" but also transform "green development" from a "policy slogan" into perceivable practices through cultural symbols [3]. This "concept-practice" transformation logic is consistent with the strategy of Gu et al. [6]—"conveying environmental protection concepts through study practices." It promotes the willingness of countries to cooperate in environmental protection through concrete actions, forming a "green consensus."

#### 3.3.Deepening Peace Consensus: Promoting the World to "Overcome Barriers and Move Toward the Future Together"

The Han cultural ideology of "harmony in diversity and the world as one community" was conveyed through the symbols of "breaking the ice" and "unity": the "ice-breaking" performance at the opening ceremony



symbolized overcoming international barriers; the design of the "snowflake platform"—where 96 countries jointly safeguarded the "micro-flame"—symbolized that "although countries are different, they need to jointly protect the peaceful homeland" [4]; and the official poster *Passion Connects the World* used the Olympic rings to form a Chinese knot, conveying the concept of "connection and reunion" through the symbol of the "knot" [5]. This process of "symbol transmission-consensus building" is not only similar to the emphasis of Lin & Gu [8] on "the importance of collaborative cooperation in risk response" but also echoes the logic of "factor mobility breaking barriers" in regional economics [7]. Through cultural symbols, it breaks down international cognitive barriers and strengthens the consensus of "world peace and common development."

#### **4. Insights for the Effective Communication of Han Culture**

The communication of Han culture during the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics offers practical insights for "appropriate and effective international communication." Its core logic aligns with the interdisciplinary research approach of "improving practical effectiveness through path optimization and mechanism synergy" [6, 7, 8], which can be summarized into three paths:

1. **Concretization of Carriers:** Avoid "abstract preaching" of culture; instead, select symbols familiar to international audiences—such as "giant pandas," "red lanterns," and "24 solar terms"—to lower the threshold for cultural understanding. Similar to Gu et al. [6] who "convey abstract concepts through transnational cases," this approach makes cultural communication more accessible.
2. **Universalization of Concepts:** Focus on globally shared values such as "peace," "green development," and "equality," and align Han cultural concepts with international consensus (e.g., linking "harmony between man and nature" to "green development" and

"the world as one community" to "a community with a shared future for mankind"). This avoids "one-way cultural output" and, similar to "institutional design considering the needs of multiple entities" in regional economic research [7], makes cultural communication more inclusive.

3. **Aestheticization of Forms:** Elevate cultural communication from "information transmission" to "emotional resonance" through aesthetic forms such as visual design and ritual performances (e.g., the 24 solar terms video and the "Yellow River Flows from the Sky" segment at the opening ceremony), enhancing cultural memorability [3]. Consistent with the logic of Lin & Gu [8]—"multi-path collaboration improving effectiveness"—this form of innovation enhances the depth and breadth of cultural communication.

#### **Conclusion**

In a critical period of global transformation, the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics used Han culture as a link, conveyed the core values of "people-centered, green harmony, and peace and unity" through the communication path of "visual symbols + ritual aesthetics," and relied on the three mechanisms of "value consensus, green consensus, and peace consensus." This communication not only reshaped China's image as a "confident, open, and responsible great power" but also used "cultural consensus" as a bridge to promote the development of international relations toward stability, equality, and cooperation. The underlying core logic—"clarifying carrier positioning, strengthening mechanism synergy, and focusing on shared values"—aligns with the interdisciplinary research approach of "coordinating core elements to achieve collaborative development". It provides references for international exchanges in other fields: whether in cultural cooperation, ecological governance, or economic interactions, it is necessary to adopt concrete carriers, optimize communication paths, and focus on shared goals to achieve "effective consensus

building." In the future, the communication of Han culture should continue to adhere to the principles of "concretization, universalization, and aestheticization," further leveraging the role of cultural soft power to provide stronger cultural support for building a community with a shared future for mankind.

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