

傳播論壇

「宣傳憂慮症」：中西公共關係學的 「閼限性」探蹟及公共性轉向

劉曉程^a、王浩^a

^a蘭州大學新聞與傳播學院，蘭州市，中國大陸

摘要

站在西方現代公共關係學 100 年及中國公共關係學 40 年的歷史節點，回溯「宣傳」如何從學科發軔時的「元命題」，淪為不便討論的道德問題而非學術概念。本文引入「閼限性」作為自反性工具，逆向重思中西公共關係學皆有、但指向各異的「宣傳憂慮症」。研究發現，西方現代公共關係學長期糾結於如何處理「壞宣傳」的問題，通過告別宣傳在民主進程中的建設性作用、接受宣傳的當代指稱、將公關宣傳史視為「不道德前史」，宣傳被主流公共關係學「納入性排除」。在中國，「公共關係」分別於 1930 及 1980 年代兩度引進，其間雖時隔半世紀，但引進之初皆試圖匯入國家本土「宣傳」實踐。然而，在改革開放與經濟權力的「毛細管作用」下，中國現代公共關係學選擇了一條親市場、弱政

劉曉程，蘭州大學新聞與傳播學院教授。研究興趣：公共關係、策略傳播。電郵：liuxch@lzu.edu.cn

王浩，蘭州大學新聞與傳播學院博士研究生。研究興趣：公共關係史、公共傳播。電郵：18935393976@163.com

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治的發展路徑，長期以來弱化了對國家政治宣傳實踐應有的理論闡釋力。近年來，全球公關學界呈現出將公共關係「斂合」回「宣傳」研究的新勢頭，本文據此提出全球公共關係學的「公共性轉向」(publicity turn)，詳梳中西學界的研究側重，以期紓解公關的宣傳原罪論。

關鍵詞：宣傳、公共關係學、閼限性、公共性轉向

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“Propaganda Anxiety”: Exploring the Liminality of Public Relations Studies in the East and West and the Turn Toward Publicness

Xiaocheng LIU^a, Hao WANG^a

^a School of Journalism and Communication, Lanzhou University, Lanzhou, Mainland China

Abstract

Standing at the crossroads of Western modern public relations over the last century and China’s public relations over the last four decades, this study investigates how the notion of “propaganda” has grown from an academic idea into a difficult moral issue since its origin in the discipline. This study introduces liminality as a reflexive conceptual tool to reverse the anxieties over propaganda that prevails in both China and Western public relations scholarship, but the cause and particular direction of concern are different. According to the study’s findings, modern Western public relations scholarship has long struggled with how to deal with propaganda and its negative connotations. By abandoning propaganda’s positive function in democratic processes, accepting contemporary criticisms of propaganda, and dismissing the trajectory of public relations propaganda as having an immoral prehistory,

Xiaocheng LIU (Professor). School of Journalism and Communication, Lanzhou University. Research interests: public relations, strategic communication. Email: liuxch@lzu.edu.cn

Hao WANG (Ph.D. Student). School of Journalism and Communication, Lanzhou University. Research interests: public relations history, public communication. Email: 18935393976@163.com

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propaganda has been inclusively excluded from mainstream public relations scholarship. In China, the idea of “public relations” was introduced twice, once in the 1930s and again in the 1980s. However, under the ripple effect of China’s economic reform and opening policy, the public relations industry in China emphasized the market, depoliticizing its social role. This approach has been considered an obstacle to theory-building around the country’s practice of propaganda in the political realm. In recent years, global public relations academic research has shown a renewed momentum of converging public relations scholarship with publicity research. This study characterizes this trend as the “publicity turn” of global public relations research and further elaborates on its implications for addressing the negative overtones of public relations as equivalent to propaganda.

Keywords: propaganda, public relations, liminality, publicity turn