

CHINA'S IMAGE AND INFLUENCE IN 2024: A PERSISTENT AMBIGUITY

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Abstract: To develop their influence, states promote an image, based on a supposedly attractive narrative, and aimed at different audiences. The discourse of the People's Republic of China focuses on economic (Belt and road Initiative), cultural (from the panda to the Confucius Institutes) and social superiority. Yet this narrative is increasingly malfunctioning. The pandemic, China's stance on the war in Ukraine, followed by political hardening and tensions with the US form a whole which, when aggregated, is reflected in the polls. China's image has deteriorated. In spite of this, the Chinese government is pursuing its seductive actions. This lecture presents the reasons for this, as well as some elements of understanding.

Bio: Olivier Arifon (Ph.D) exposes dimensions of influence (soft power, lobbying and disinformation), on regular basis at Université Catholique de Lille. He delivers these topics as visiting professor or trainer in universities or institutional bodies (France, Germany, China, Brazil, Romania, ENA, UN, embassy of Kazakhstan...). He conducts research at SicLab, Université Nice Côte d'Azur focusing on diplomacy, on China issues and on Osint and democracy. He is the author of many articles and a book, "Le Récit politique chinois, Soft, communication, influence, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2021.

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