

How is China Applying **Soft Power** globally?

中国如何全球性使用软实力？

Transnationalism, Interdependence and Power
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TOPIC: How is China applying soft power globally?

The verbal announcement that Old Dominion University, the university I attend, has just signed an agreement to create a Confucius Center in Norfolk, Virginia, came as no surprise. China is increasing its soft power globally and it has just touched my neighborhood. Confucius Centers are just one example of China's soft power. Along with about 60 other U.S. universities, such as UCLA, ODU joins the growing group since the first Center was opened in University of Maryland.¹ Soft power is attractiveness and these Centers serve as attraction magnets specifically targeting the American public. Who can argue with 2,000-year old Confucius ideas of keeping one's promises, the importance of education, respect for one's parents and ancestors and public service? Others call this type of soft power an important part of China's foreign propaganda strategy to ease China's "peaceful rise."² Are the other 700 Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms³ established in 150 countries worldwide,⁴ effective ways to strategically dispel that China's economic might and control of global money and resources are nothing to fear? Are these Centers the *yin* for the *yang* of getting what they need to sustain their power? The answer to both is probably *yes*.

What is soft power? Academic Joseph Nye best coined the term *soft power* as simply a form of power, one way of getting desired outcomes. He said it relies on the positive sense of alluring, and the attractiveness one acquires when others are drawn to its culture and ideas. Corporations, institutions, transnational terrorists, celebrities, and both governments and NGO's (non-government organizations), all use their soft power to achieve outcomes. China is no different, and they do have quite a reputation and history for effectively using it.

Nye states that soft power relies on three resources: culture, political values and foreign policies. But what good is soft power if you cannot change another's behavior? Nye argues that positive attraction is a big piece of soft power behavior change. Three clusters of qualities are typical of the agent and the action of positive attraction, according to Nye: benignity or how one relates to others, competence, and charisma or one's relation to ideals, values and vision. If you have all three, as the Confucius Centers do, Nye calls this the recipe for converting resources into power behavior.⁵

¹ The Economist, Oct 22, 2009, A Message from Confucius, <http://www.economist.com/node/14678507>

² Heng, Yee Kuang. Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Who is the Softest of them all? Evaluating Japanese and Chinese strategies in the "soft" power competition era. School of International Relations, UK. 2009

³ Hartig, Falk. Confucius Institutes and the Rise of China. Journal of Chinese Political Science. Vol. 17, 2012.

⁴ Peking University. Nov 4, 2011. http://english.pku.edu.cn/News_Events/News/Global/8865.htm

⁵ Nye, Joseph. The Future of Power. 2010.

Argument:

Soft power is an alternative to using hard power (military) or coercion or economic means. Nye does caution that hard power, i.e., military force is still needed. In fact, a carefully selected combination of both soft and hard power, or smart power, is ideal. Combining the “right mix” of resources into successful strategies is the key to smart power. This paper will explore what China is doing to increase its soft power globally to ensure it has the “right mix” of resources ready in its smart power toolkit. However, let me preface this paper by saying that China is most definitely striving for the smart power mode, as evidenced by its recent \$111B on domestic security in 2012.⁶

Sources of China’s Soft Power

According to Nye

Three major areas of resources that China is using to capitalize on soft power, consistent with Nye’s theory, are: Institutions and Policies, Culture and Values, and Media and Information. China appears to be tackling all three at a feverish pace. Upon analysis, there is a yin for every yang of soft power, constantly complementing and balancing.

After years of international isolation, China has entered the global arena like everyone’s new best friend. After decades of "Hide brightness, cherish obscurity," China's leaders have realized that maintaining political stability on the home front will come from actively managing events outside China's borders. As a result, Beijing has launched a "go out" strategy designed to remake global norms and institutions. China is transforming the world as it transforms itself, remaking the rules of the game.⁷ Bilateral and Multilateral Initiatives are a key part of their soft power.

Institutions: Bilateral and Multilateral Initiatives

China has become a born-again regional multi-lateralist, reversing its earlier disdain for multi-lateral organizations.⁸ Most notably, China joined the World Trade Organization (manages global rules of trade) in 2001, even though they espoused state-owned enterprises instead of the free market system.⁹ China uses bilateral and multilateral organizations to their fullest, and claiming a developing country status. It’s WTO clout will be tested shortly. U.S., EU, and Japan filed WTO suits today against China for export limitations of their rare earth minerals, producing 97% of the global cache.¹⁰

⁶ Tibet Sun. China to spend \$111B on domestic security in 2012 by Chris Buckley/Reuters. March 5, 2012.

⁷ Economy, Elizabeth C. The Game Changer, Coping with China’s Foreign Policy Revolution. Foreign Affairs. Nov/Dec 2010.

⁸ Kurlantzick, Joshua. Charm Offensive. Yale University Press. 2007

⁹ Angang, Hu. China in 2020: A New Type of Superpower. The Thornton Center Chinese Thinkers Series. Brookings Institution Press DC 2011.

¹⁰ U.S., Japan, EU file disputes against China. WTO website. March 14, 2012.
http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news12_e/dsrfc_13mar12_e.htm

Europe

Premier Wen Jiabao hosted 2 representatives from the EU-China Summit. The main question was whether China's Valentine's gift would be a larger financial stake in Europe, at a time when EU is struggling to secure the continuity of the Euro. Wen signaled the possibility of increased support, as its top priority is risk-aversion. China is dependent on the EU for the largest part of its exports as well as a world away from a dollar-dominated system is in China's long-term interests. "Support" may also mean buying up European assets especially energy.¹¹ The recent Euro woes brought dialogue, collaboration, and lots of soft power negotiations. One way that soft power works, per Nye, is that an actor makes active efforts to create attraction and soft power by public diplomacy, exchanges and assistance. This scenario is a combination of hard power (loans) and soft power (dialogue, collaborations, policies, institutions), or "smart" power. What a tangled web we weave. China helps Europe, and a month later, Europe files a WTO suit against China about rare earths.

Non-government actors may easily utilize soft power. The above Euro Crises decision now has some new implications for China, especially in this election year. The 'netizens' of China are well aware that it makes no sense for Chinese "toil and sweat" to be needlessly expended on European "laziness and welfare." Articulating China's national interest will be a delicate exercise for Chinese leaders. China will add monetary support through the IMF in cooperation with other partners like Japan and BRIC. This will enhance China's say in the IMF. And so it would and should.¹²

Canada

Canada's Prime Minister announced collaboration with China on issues including natural resources and science and technology. The President of the CMIC, Canadian Mining Innovation Council, is an industry-led partnership of companies, governments and academia, all engaged with increasing the amount and focus of research and innovation in the Canadian exploration and mining industries. CMIC is working on major research initiatives in mineral exploration, mining extraction, mineral processing, energy efficiency, tailings management and environmental stewardship and announced a partnership with China in February 2012.¹³

Canada may be willing to partner with China. Iceland is not. **Iceland** recently rejected a Chinese developer's bid on land because it did not meet legal requirements on foreign ownership. Some raised questions on regional security because of Iceland's strategic location in the Arctic where a number of nations are competing for resources. The

¹¹ Parello-Plesner, Jonas. China's Stake in the Euro Crises. East Asia Forum, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org> March 4, 2012.

¹² Drysdale, Peter. China to the Rescue in Europe? East Asia Forum. <http://www.eastasiaforum.org> March 5, 2012.

¹³ CNW Canada Newswire. Canada Mining Innovation Council applauds bilateral initiative with China. Ottawa. Feb 8, 2012. <http://www.newswire.ca/en/story/918351/canada-mining-innovation-council-applauds-bilateral-initiative-with-china>

investor was suspected of being a “soft” surrogate for Chinese expansionism, since most investors represent State-owned enterprises.¹⁴ The Chinese multimillionaire accused Iceland of being discriminatory in its rule that Iceland’s citizens must hold 80% of shares in firms, although China has similar regulations about ownership of land and of companies in China. Interestingly, only weeks later, economically burdened Iceland, announced it will adopt the Euro and join the EU, to maintain its sovereignty.¹⁵

China and its Asian neighbors sponsored a China-Eurasia Expo in September 2011, for the purpose of promoting bilateral trade. They say they are resurrecting the Silk Road, thus opening old connections with inland Asian regions. Pakistan, already a trusted neighbor, attended and signed a bilateral trade cooperation agreement with China. In fine print, it mentions that Xinjiang, a far Western Province, hosted the Expo and christened the future hub of regional economic activities. It will balance East and West China and transform Xinjiang into a mega industrial area as well as promote bilateral trade. Riots and violence have been present here, where half of the population are Uighur Turkish Muslims, in this oil-rich region and are not happy with all of the Chinese government attention and Chinese Han migrants.¹⁶ Bilateral relations with resource-rich Kazakhstan, a Western neighbor, have recently been strengthened.¹⁷

China watchers have said that 2011 is a ‘tipping point’ for China and its honeymoon of using soft power is waning. China’s push outwards has happened faster than its most ambitious leaders could have expected. But as it extends its reach to diversify investments, protect oil interests, patrol shipping lanes and support overseas workers, it risks unexpected ripostes.¹⁸ Every superpower eventually faces this dilemma.

In Burma (sandwiched between China and India) and elsewhere, China’s state-owned energy and extractive firms often engage in direct negotiations with top leaders for energy and mining-related contracts, sometimes operating without sufficient planning or information. This has been the case in much of Latin America, where certain Chinese firms prefer “behind closed door” negotiations with national leaders (Chavez, Correa, and Morales, for example) to lengthy arbitration or complex bidding processes, void of regulations. As a result of this preference, however, China ended up “stepping on a few toes,” in Burma, especially in cases where the interests of a country’s leaders aren’t well aligned with those of its population.¹⁹ Burma citizens have successfully rioted, concerned

¹⁴ Thomson Reuters Beijing. Chinese Developer Livid at Iceland’s Rejection of Resort. Nove 27, 2011.

¹⁵ Valdimarsson, Omar R. Bloomberg. Iceland Will Adopt Euro or Other Currency, Prime Minister Says. March 10, 2012

¹⁶ Global Times. Xinjiang’s Future About More Than Resources. An interview with Li Gang, Ministry of Commerce Research Project, Xinjiang 12th Year Plan. Sept 15, 2011.

¹⁷ The Express Tribune International Herald Tribune. China-Eurasia Expo: Initiatives to promote bilateral trade welcome says Awan. Sept 4, 2011.

¹⁸ Parello-Plesner, Jonas, and Parag Khanna. Stop Fretting About Beijing as a Global Policeman. China-U.S. Focus, Jan 17, 2012. <http://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/stop-fretting-about-beijing-as-a-global-policeman/>

¹⁹ China’s Burma Blues: A Lesson in Risk Assessment. Inter-American Dialogue, China and Latin America. Dec 1, 2011 <http://www.chinaandlatinamerica.com/2011/12/chinas-burma-blues-lesson-in-risk.html>

not only about the social and environmental impact of China's projects, but also about the nature of their country's broader relations with China. There is concern that Burma is becoming "China's vassal state," according to former military commander and veteran democracy activist Tin Oo. China is thought to be unfairly exploiting Burma's natural resources, namely, their treasured Irrawaddy River. Following Keohane and Nye, Chinese leaders were able to be attractive and alluring to Burmese leadership, but they both underestimated the power of the people who perceived this environmental travesty as aggression from China and a perceived betrayal of their trust in their leaders. Perhaps China should have followed Nye's 2-step model of soft power where publics and third parties are influenced, and they in turn affect the leaders of countries?²⁰

The right geography means energy and energy means power. Closely related to the Irrawaddy River, the Mekong River, the heart and soul of SE Asia, starts from China near Tibet (Upper Mekong), and runs through the Lower Mekong countries of Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, flowing out to the South China Sea. Over 60M people depend on food, water and transportation from the largest river in SE Asia. The Mekong River Commission (MRC) is attempting to slow down China's thirst for energy by preventing the building of up to 8 hydropower dams.²¹ It remains to be seen whether China will work with the Commission. It will be a test of China's smart power. China has begun to use hard power by policing due to security issues on the River.²² Lower Mekong Countries have secured the International Community's attention, namely, the World Bank and Germany, for financial assistance. As Keohane and Nye state, working with institutions such as the MRC, if perceived to be fair and transparent, are important to obtain the international seal of approval and in maintaining soft power credibility, not to mention neighborly etiquette, i.e., floods, droughts, heightened water levels and the unique ecosystem.²³ China's neighbors may be suspecting a cockroach theory²⁴ when it comes to their geography and natural resources after patterns have formed in other continents and are now surfacing closer to home.

Africa

For over a half century, China and Africa have had a close friendship, including China's soft power in the form of generous foreign aid, cultural influence, and infrastructure, having common ground against imperialism, colonialism, hegemonic might and racism. Since the 1970's, most of the 53 African countries in the UN stand by China in their voting, including the Tiananmen human rights tragedy. Since the 1990's, with votes from Africa, China has won over 11 UN human rights violations. The FOCAC, Forum for China-Africa Cooperation, formed in 2000, kicked it up a notch in 2006, by pledging

²⁰ Ibid. Nye, Joseph. The Future of Power.

²¹ Mekong River Commission. <http://www.mrcmekong.org/>

²² Ibid. Parello-Plesner, Jonas, and Parag Khanna.

²³ Ibid. Nye, Joseph. The Future of Power.

²⁴ When one unattractive issue surfaces, there is a high probability, that other unattractive issues will surface. The term comes from the common belief that seeing one cockroach is usually evidence that there are many more that remain hidden.

a new type of partnership based on political equality, mutual trust, humanitarian assistance, and debt forgiveness in the billions.²⁵

Chinese soft power has won the hearts of African governments, but not the African people, African civil society and African Non-Government Organizations. Since the 1960's, China has a major trade surplus with Africa and negative impacts include manufacturing decline especially textiles (41 anti-dumping measures against Chinese textiles), enterprise bankruptcy and unemployment. Lack of social responsibility is now being addressed including production safety, depletion of resources (timber, dams), protecting the African environment and benefits to the local communities. Is Chinese soft power melting?

China's practice of building roads, hospitals and bridges in countries where it has made substantial energy investments – like Sudan, Angola, and Equatorial Guinea – has drawn both approval from local governments and criticism from human rights groups, which accuse China of propping up dictators and selling arms to authoritarian governments.²⁶

A less publicized facet of China's foreign policy strategy in Africa is known as "health diplomacy." Using teams of medical professionals, as a 'soft power' strategy is a new term for something China has been doing for decades. "It is very important for China to build relationships with Africa", says a Professor of International Service at American University, and "their soft power strategy is working pretty well", states Brautigam. "Soft power builds up positive aspects of their image." There are 53 African countries and each has a vote in the United Nations and most have a vote in the World Trade Organization (WTO). In its first public white paper on foreign aid published in April 2011, China reported that 51 of African countries received aid from China. Nearly 46% of its funds were distributed to Africa. By the end of 2010, China has sent 17,000 medical workers, 1,000 doctors, treating 200M patients in 130 institutions in Africa, according to China's Ministry of Health. Chinese companies have begun to sponsor "Brightness" medical missions for cataracts²⁷. While focus has been on prevention of malaria, tuberculosis, and AIDS, China has announced plans to expand into maternal and pediatric health. Taiwan has also been sending medical teams but instead of competition, China and Taiwan have called a truce in this scenario.²⁸ Keohane and Nye claim that soft power is convincing others to follow and having the capability to set the agenda by agreeing to norms and standards.²⁹

²⁵ Jianbo, Luo and Zhang Xiaomin. China's African Policy and its Soft Power. AntePodium, Online Journal of World Affairs, www.victoria.ac.nz/atp 2009

²⁶ Pan, Esther. China's Soft Power Initiative. Council on Foreign Relations. May 18, 2006.

²⁷ Past Chinese Leader Deng Xiaoping's dictum was "Hide brightness, cherish obscurity." Note: This Chinese company sponsored medical mission is called "Brightness" mission, although for cataracts, may have a double meaning. This is one of many strategies marking China's "go out" strategy to remake global norms and its image.

²⁸ Arabic Knowledge at Wharton. Health Diplomacy: In Africa, China's Soft Power Provides a Healing Touch. Nov 22, 2011.

²⁹ Ibid. Nye, Joseph. The Future of Power.

Latin America

Since 2001, and former President Jiang Zemin's historic visit to the Region, China's interactions in Latin America have expanded far beyond initial Taiwan-related diplomatic engagement. China's political and trade-based ties with Latin America have flourished over the past decade, producing substantial economic benefits for China and its principal trade partners in Latin America. Over the past few years, China has moved beyond initial trade-based contact toward more complex diplomatic, cultural, and investment-related interactions. Yet, depending on whose perspective, China's "protectionist" role over Latin America is becoming murky.³⁰

Thirty years after implementing its policy of engaging, lending and investing in Latin America, China sees its role among developing nations to continue in a similar approach. Authors Strauss and Armony indicate that Latin American states and societies are beginning to move from passive victims of a Chinese strategy aimed at imposing a particular model of development on a continent to a somewhat reactionary role. Although China's global relationships are predicated on "mutual benefit," the responsibility for constructing "mutually beneficial, complementary and genuinely 'horizontal' cooperation" will increasingly fall to Latin American governments, policy-makers, and private sectors. Strauss and Armony predict new interactions between China and Latin America to include: transnational flows of capital and people, adaptation in industrial production and mining, the fluidity of perceptions between China and Latin America, stereotypes and 'othering' of Latin America within China, and changing rhetorical assumptions of the leadership for the China-Latin America relationship.³¹ This asymmetrical resource-rich relationship between Latin America and China, where the balance appears to be in China's favor, is evolving. Keohane and Nye argue that power in asymmetrical interdependence in trade goes to those who can afford to hold back. Nye says soft power can be used for both zero-sum and positive-sum interactions. It is a mistake to think of power "over" rather than power "with."³²

China scholar Cheng Li describes present-day China as dialectic of hope and fear – a paradox of promises and pitfalls." While China appears ready to continue its model of resource-based engagement with Latin America, there is very little certainty with respect to China's future development. China's relationship with Latin America, though evolving, is far from balanced.³³ China is perceived as having the upper hand.

China and individual Latin American states such as Venezuela are partnering at breakneck speed. Just last month, various banks and state owned companies agreed on a total of US\$ 40 billion in financing for a range of petroleum, mineral, housing, and other "strategic" projects in Venezuela. All together the two countries signed 14 agreements, as well as other contracts, for a total of \$40B in Chinese financing of Venezuelan projects,

³⁰ Inter-American Dialogue, China/Latin America <http://www.thedialogue.org/chinaandlatinamerica>

³¹ From the Great Wall to the New World, Edited by Julia Strauss and A. Armony. The Chinese Quarterly Special Issue Volume 11 Abstract. May 2012. The Cambridge Press.

³² Ibid. Nye, Joseph. The Future of Power.

³³ Myers, Margaret. China's Engagement with Latin America – more of the same? Apr 10, 2012. Inter-Amer Dialogue. <http://www.thedialogue.org/page.cfm?pageID=32&pubID=2934&s=burma>

in exchange for Venezuela's petroleum. Venezuela hopes to export 1M barrels of petroleum per day to China by 2015 One of the key agreements reached with China was its financing of the "Cristinas" project in Venezuela, involving bauxite mining, for a sum of US\$ 10 billion, originally slated for a Canadian firm.³⁴

Jean-Pierre Cabestan, a leading French scholar of China based in Hong Kong, sees China playing a king of "soft-balancing" game vis-à-vis the U.S. by building up its ties with the other BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia and India).

Capitalizing on its soft power expertise, China has been a permanent observer on the **OAS**, Organization of American States, since 2004. Recently, China met with OAS to increase its collaboration. OAS four pillars are: democracy, human rights, security, and development, and is the oldest regional organization, with 35 member states, dating back to 1889.³⁵

Southeast Asia and Asia Pacific

Seems like China's top leaders attend a different forum daily in Asia. In 2012, China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) signed a framework agreement on economic cooperation that aims to create a free trade area. Some of the least developed countries in the region – Burma, Cambodia, and Laos have benefitted from China's billions in loans and investments. A similar forum, ASEAN Plus Three (APT) – China, Japan, South Korea and the ASEAN States, began in 1997, and cooperation has broadened and deepened. It includes cooperation in the areas of food and energy security, financial cooperation, trade facilitation, disaster management, people-to-people contacts, narrowing the development gap, rural development and poverty alleviation, human trafficking, labor movement, communicable diseases, environment and sustainable development, and transnational crime, including counter-terrorism.³⁶

At a July 2010 meeting in Hanoi of the **ASEAN**, a non-governmental group which the U.S. had just joined, Clinton bluntly pushed back against China's newly expansionist rhetoric about the oil and gas-rich South China Sea, over objections from senior U.S. aides like the late Richard Holbrooke. The result, say China experts, has been a newly energized coalition against Chinese territorial aims in the Region. When interviewed Head of State Clinton said of the future of China's power, "If you think of soft power as being diplomatic power and economic power, China has been very effective... making investments, building things that countries wanted, working to create relationships.... and, they have every right to do so. But I do not believe the U.S. should cede that to

³⁴ Venezuelan Analysis.com. China Agrees on US\$ 40 Billion in Project Financing in Exchange for Venezuelan Oil. Feb 29, 2012

³⁵ Caribbean Journal Staff. China and OAS to increase collaboration in Latin America and the Caribbean. <http://www.caribjournal.com/2012/03/10/china-and-oas-to-increase-collaboration-in-latin-america-and-the-caribbean/> March 10, 2012. OAS website. http://www.oas.org/en/about/who_we_are.asp

³⁶ ASEAN official website. <http://www.aseansec.org/16580.htm>

ASEAN Countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Brunei Darussalam

them, that we need to be also competing for soft power influence. We have our story to tell....”³⁷

The **EAS or East Asia Summit**, launched in 2005 by Malaysia, has 16 members, including China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand and the ASEAN States. In 2011, it expanded to include U.S. and Russia. At the East Asia Summit (EAS) held on November 19 in Bali, Indonesia, President Obama (the first U.S. President to attend) and other Asia-Pacific leaders discussed the importance of cooperation on the region’s most pressing political and security challenges, including maritime security, non-proliferation, and disaster response.³⁸

In addition, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) includes 21 Pacific Rim countries. Even though China is not a Pacific Rim country, they were allowed membership. The 21 leaders of APEC launched a new “APEC Travel Facilitation Initiative” to make travel across the Asia-Pacific region easier, faster, and more secure at their recent high level November 2011 meeting.³⁹ The media reported that tensions were high at both summits, attended by both U.S. and Chinese Presidents, to ensure top-level presence as competition over the South China Sea heightens.

Nye argues that sometimes attraction and the resulting soft power it engenders requires little effort to be sustained. The effects of an actor’s values can be like “*the light shining from a city on top of the hill*,” an example of the passive approach to soft power.⁴⁰ This was exemplified on November 12, 2011, when the Leaders of the nine **Trans-Pacific Partnership** countries – Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam, and the United States – announced the achievement of the broad outlines of an ambitious, 21st-century Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement that will enhance trade and investment among the TPP partner countries, promote innovation, economic growth and development, and support the creation and retention of jobs. Orchestrated by the U.S., perceived as the *light shining from the top of the hill*, it is doubtful that China will join, although President Hu did attend its first December 2011 meeting. President Obama did give a landmark speech endorsing China’s rise, as long as they play by global rules.⁴¹

³⁷ Calabresi, Massimo. Hillary Clinton and the Rise of Smart Power. Head of State Hillary Clinton is an expert at deriving maximum benefit from limited power.... a new set of tools. Time. Nov 7, 2011. Pp. 26 – 33.

³⁸ The White House Fact Sheet: East Asia Summit Nov 19, 2011.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/fact-sheet-east-asia-summit>

³⁹ The White House Fact Sheet: Asia Pacific Summit Nov 12, 2011.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/12/fact-sheet-apec-travel-facilitation>

China Daily.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-11/07/content_14049340.htm

⁴⁰ Ibid. Nye, Joseph. The Future of Power.

⁴¹ Armstrong, Shiro. China’s Participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership. East Asian Forum. Dec 11, 2011. <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2011/12/11/china-participation-in-the-trans-pacific-partnership/>

Australia

China and Australia have lucrative trade relations, allowing soft power avenues to flow. Having been kept out of U.S. space activities for years, China has been developing their space program at rocket speed, with plans (and China sticks to their plans) for their manned space station, namely, Heavenly Palace, and a manned lunar base moving full speed ahead. China has used 4 stations in the past, i.e., Pakistan, Namibia, Kenya and Chile. Roughly at the level in Space where U.S. was in 1966, China is using Australia as a tracking station via a Swedish space corporation.⁴³ Soft power does work two ways. This type of soft power geographic advantage for “space” does give host countries ‘reciprocal soft power preference’ with China. Just today, Australians asked China for permission to visit Tibet due to the amount of self-immolations.⁴⁴

Foreign Policy

China has attempted to *shape* the international system through strengthening ties with major powers, becoming more involved in *multilateral* efforts and promoting a multi-polar distribution of global power. Examples are UN, World Bank, IMF, Shanghai Cooperation Organizations (SCO), G-20 Summits, and the Six-Party Talks on North Korea’s nuclear program.⁴⁵ On the other hand, critics say that the reason China created the SCO is to extend their domestic ethnic policies into Central Eurasia region as a way to better control the movements of transnational ethnic groups.⁴⁶ Thus, soft power permeates China’s multilateral efforts and is closely linked to their foreign policies.

In September 2005, President Hu introduced his foreign policy of “harmonious world – seeking lasting peace and common prosperity” as a new concept of world order at UN in NY. Although the exact scope of this policy is still ambiguous, this announcement was an extension into the foreign relations arena of his domestic policy of “harmonious society,” seeking to use state power to “close wealth divide and ease growing social tensions.” Who could argue with harmony, peace and prosperity? What could be more laudable? This rubric of a harmonious world is used to explain anything and everything that China does. This announcement marked a shift in China’s understanding of itself and of the world. Chinese officials and editorialists began using the harmonious world term in 2006 followed by President Hu himself using in his Report to the 17th Party Conference in 2007.

⁴² Cabestan, Jean-Pierre. *China’s Relations with the Major Powers, the U.S., EU, and Russian Federation. Charting China’s Future Domestic and International Challenges.* Edited by David Shambaugh. Routledge NY and London. 2011

⁴³ China’s Long-Range View. AIAA Aerospace America Feb 2012, pp. 8 - 10

⁴⁴ The Washington Post with Foreign Policy. Associated Press. Australia requests Chinese permission for delegates to investigate self-immolations in Tibet. March 19, 2012

⁴⁵ Lam, Willy Wo-Lap. *Chinese Politics in the Hu Jintao Era: New Leaders, New Challenges.* An East Gate Book. M.E. Sharpe, NY 2006

⁴⁶ Callahan. *Ibid.*

Timing and symbolism are extremely important in the Chinese culture. The UN summit where President Hu framed his foreign policy in terms of the harmonious goal of peace and prosperity was the 60th anniversary summit of the UN. In traditional Chinese culture, 60 years mark both the end of one era and the birth of a new era. In 2009, China celebrated the endings and beginnings of eras with the 60th anniversary of the founding of the PRC. Indeed, for Confucius, this is the best time to reflect on the past and plan for the future, “At sixty, my ear was an obedient organ for the reception of truth.”⁴⁷ The Olympics were held earlier in China, beginning at 8:00 a.m. on 8/8/08, corresponding to the lucky number 8 in Chinese culture. A powerful leader understands the values and cultures of its people and uses symbols and messages to convey attention and action.

In the wake of global economic crises of 2009, China has a more robust foreign policy. Since 2005, they have made staggering progress in transitioning from a passive to an active role in the global economy. Now, Chinese leadership is trying to convert this new economic power into an enduring political and cultural influence.⁴⁸

Since the early 2000's, China's charm strategy began. China borders with 14 nations, and it promises to safeguard peace, promote development and enhance cooperation. Peaceful rise or *heping jueqi* evolved after China tried hard power unsuccessfully in the South China Sea in 1990.⁴⁹

A major foreign policy for China is cultivating relationships in the *developing* world through “win-win” diplomacy and economic assistance. Access to energy and natural resources as well as political support, i.e., isolating Taiwan, are reciprocal benefits, although not expected. Growing partnerships regardless of their political persuasion, are consistent with China's policy. China reaches out by very high level official visits strategically timed to give support and confidence to the host country's very high-level officials. Another closely related foreign policy is China's cultivating relations with resource-rich nations such as Sudan and Angola, despite very serious human rights violations in these countries. Countries that are corrupt or not following global protocols and thus are in disfavor are prime targets for China's soft power. China's ties to Iran, a major source of oil to China, has frustrated UN Security Council sanctions against Iran for its suspected nuclear weapons program. It seems the harder countries push for stiff penalties on Iran, the more China opposes and seeks the diplomatic solution.⁵⁰

It is important to note that China is not indifferent to issues of good governance when it comes to doling out aid. China does not want its aid siphoned off into corruption and private bank accounts. It has already begun redesigning projects to minimize opportunities for venality.⁵¹

⁴⁷ China Orders the World Normative Soft Power and Foreign Policy Edited by William A. Callahan and Elena Barabantseva. Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Johns Hopkins University Press Baltimore MD 2011

⁴⁸ Callahan. Ibid

⁴⁹ Kurlantzick, Joshua. How China's Soft Power is Transforming the World. 2007

⁵⁰ Lam, Willy Wo-Lap. Ibid.

⁵¹ Ferdinand, Peter. China and the Developing World. Charting China's Future. Edited by David Shambaugh. Routledge 2011.

China's soft power is working with international organizations regarding humanitarian aid, e.g., Haiti, and currently, Syria. Organizations include the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the World Food Program (WFP) and non-governmental organizations (NGO's).⁵²

Another dimension of China's global presence is its UN peacekeeping operations (UNPKO) that are other than military, namely, logistical, engineering, transport and medical personnel. China is the 14th largest contributor of personnel and first among permanent members of the UN Security Council to support UNPKO. Deployments are primarily in Africa, and have included the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Central and Latin America, comprising over 2,000 peacekeepers. China has received very high marks and positive evaluations for the quality and integrity of its personnel and contributions as well as contributions to other countries to enable them to take part in peacekeeping, for example, anti-piracy operations off Somalia in the Gulf of Aden. Peacekeeping is perhaps the most tangible indication of China's contribution to global governance.⁵³

Trade, aid and foreign investment are intertwined when partnering with China. The developing world accounts for a higher proportion of Chinese foreign direct investment than of Chinese trade. The Chinese have a strategy of lending to governments for production or infrastructural development that will be repaid with guaranteed supplies of minerals or oil, e.g., Nigeria, Angola, Zambia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Sudan. The government retains ownership of their natural resources while projects are financed through the Chinese Export-Import Bank. Thus, varying degrees of soft power are evident, even, smart power, as Joseph Nye coined a strategic use of hard power and soft power. Some of China's activities fall more appropriately into the category of development aid but it is difficult to establish precise figures on this for two reasons. First, China does not report its aid contributions in the same format as other States. Second, there is no single national agency responsible for coordinating aid efforts but it has been estimated to be around \$5B in addition to debt relief. Two factors are emerging as to China's soft power approach with the developing world. One is a growing partnership between China and the World Bank to develop infrastructure in Africa, together with the World Health Organization and The Gates Foundation. The second has been dubbed "China's Marshall Plan for Africa," i.e., setting up Special Economic Zones in Africa, similar to those that helped integrate China into the world economy (such as low cost factories). Some of the loans from China would be in *renminbi* (RMB), so they may gradually contribute to the internationalization of China's currency instead of the U.S. dollar.⁵⁴

⁵² U.S. Department of State. Humanitarian Relief for Syrians. Fact Sheet. March 15, 2012.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/03/185866.htm>

⁵³ Shambaugh, David. China's Roles in Global Security. Charting China's Future Domestic and International Challenges. Edited by David Shambaugh. 2011.

⁵⁴ Ferdinand, Peter. China and the Developing World. Charting China's Future edited by David Shambaugh. 2011. Note: Trends: From 1990 to 2008, China's total world trade grew 22 times, but trade with the developing world grew 43.6 times. Trade with developing Asia grew about 40 times while trade with Africa grew over 65 times; with the Western Hemisphere 72.6 times, and with the Middle East 74.9 times.

China appears to be looking through the contextual intelligence lens of the world in Nye's 3 dimensional *chess game*. China wisely plays all 3 levels of the chess game simultaneously. The diffused power of the third level, over transnational issues such as climate change, crime, terror, and pandemics, is played as adeptly as the other 2 levels, economic power and military power. China uses smart power (Nye's fourth step toward a smart strategy), adjusting tactics so that their actions reinforce each other's, rather than undercut each other, e.g., a win-win both in economics and in transnational issues.⁵⁵ Although China's philosophy is a "no strings attached" foreign policy, the overall trade imports and exports in percents and U.S. dollar outcomes, in the two Tables below, are evidence that their soft power is working very well.⁵⁶

TABLE Regional Distribution of China's Trade with the Developing World (as per cent of total trade)

	Exports			Imports		
	1990	2000	2008	1990	2000	2008
Developing Africa	1.89	1.67	3.02	0.65	2.40	4.67
Developing Asia	5.80	6.48	9.01	5.00	8.58	10.57
Central Asia	N/A	0.31	1.50	N/A	0.47	0.73
Developing Middle East	2.28	2.52	4.30	0.89	4.34	7.17
Developing western hemisphere	1.02	2.77	4.88	2.41	2.36	6.21
Developing countries total	15.49	16.28	28.60	15.15	21.55	32.33

Source: Based on data in IMF *Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook* (various years).

TABLE Regional Distribution of China's Trade with Developing World (US\$ million)

	Exports			Imports		
	1990	2000	2008	1990	2000	2008
Developing Africa	1,187.25	4,151.51	43,293.50	349.63	5,413.03	52,884.40
Developing Asia	3,644.76	16,149.60	129,795.00	2,666.11	19,318.20	119,622.00
Central Asia	N/A	767.24	22,593.50	N/A	1,052.07	8,226.50
Developing Middle East	1,430.38	6,305.22	61,627.70	477.43	9,767.27	81,167.10
Developing western hemisphere	640.18	6,908.33	69,740.80	1,287.33	5,321.51	70,276.20
Developing countries total	9,719.89	40,566.10	410,206.00	8,083.60	48,514.30	365,984.00

Source: Based on data in IMF *Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook* (various years).

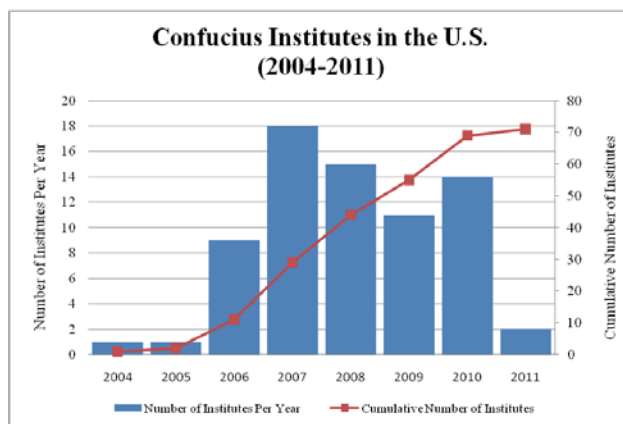
⁵⁵ Ibid. Nye, Joseph. *The Future of Power*.

⁵⁶ IMF *Direction of Trade Statistics*. <http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/business/a/-/world/13497069/honda-gives-hybrid-info-to-china/>

Culture, Norms, and Values

In a recent visit to the U.S., soon to be President of China Xi Jinping toured Hollywood and met with what is really closest to the hearts of common Chinese people: movie executives and NBA basketball stars. Teams of Chinese film-production specialists have been here for months to announce that DreamWorks Animation will jointly build and operate a studio in Shanghai with 2 state-owned companies. China is interested in films that do very well globally – and that means big special effects and 3-D movies like Avatar. Clayton Dube, Associate Director of the U.S.-China Institute, USC, says China wants to “mimic U.S. soft power – its ability to influence world culture. Dube mentions in his interview, “soft power refers to the ability to have people attracted to you.”⁵⁷

Traditional Chinese Culture is a strong power tool. Just for the purpose of spreading traditional Chinese culture and language, Confucius Institutes under Hanban, the Chinese Ministry of Education, have grown at a rapid rate. The U.S. growth is depicted in the chart below.



Chinese philosopher Zhao Tingyang, an analytical philosopher who mixes ancient thought and public policy, argues that Chinese culture must also go global and excel in “knowledge production.” China needs to do more than develop the institutional soft power of the Confucian Institutes that teach Chinese language and culture around the world – it also needs to develop normative soft power in order to create and export its understandings of the world – such as harmonious world - that conceptualize globalization in new and different ways. Chinese scholarly contributions are signs of the quality of the Chinese nation. One of soft power’s most important aspects is the ability of a State to set the agenda of international politics and use its values to define not only world problems but also the range of possible solutions.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Wood, Daniel B. Xi Jinping in California: a Glimpse of What China Really Wants. The Christian Science Monitor. Csmonitor.com Feb 16, 2012.

⁵⁸ Tingyang, Zhao. Rethinking Empire from the Chinese Concept ‘All Under Heaven’. China Orders the World. Edited by W. Callahan. 2011.

Consistent with Zhao's logic, knowledge and skills have become the global currency of 21st-century economies, but there is no central bank that prints this currency. Everyone has to decide on their own how much they will 'print'. Sure, it's great to have oil, gas and diamonds. They can buy jobs. But they'll weaken your society in the long run unless they're used to build schools and a culture of lifelong learning. A team from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, or OECD, has just come out with a study mapping the correlation between performance on the Program for International Student Assessment, or PISA, exam — which every two years tests math, science and reading comprehension skills of 15-year-olds in 65 countries — and the total earnings on natural resources as a percentage of GDP for each participating country. In short, the results indicated that there was a “a significant negative relationship between the money countries extract from national resources and the knowledge and skills of their high school population,” said Andreas Schleicher, who oversees the PISA exams for the OECD. Oil and PISA don't mix. The foreign countries with the most companies listed on the Nasdaq, i.e., Israel, China/Hong Kong, Taiwan, India, South Korea and Singapore — none can live off of natural resources. When you do not have resources, you become resourceful!⁵⁹

Zhao also proposes that Chinese intellectuals are moving from a cultural nationalism to a patriotic cosmopolitanism where Chinese culture is necessary for governing the globe. Widely quoted in China, along with political scientist Qin, they are building a Chinese International Relations theory, whereby the Confucius concept of Tianxia (All Under Heaven) encompasses three norms: traditional Chinese culture, revolution in the modern period and the past 30 years of reform and opening.⁶⁰ Tianxia resembles a new kind of imperialism whereby China owns a utopian world, heading a peaceful hierarchical structure, morally and ethically superior to all others who is 'voluntarily' submissive.⁶¹

Author Callahan takes a critical view of Zhao's promotion of Tianxia as a model of world order, and argues that this is against the peaceful rise foreign policy. Callahan interprets “otherness concept” in Tianxia as far from peaceful, more like, encouraging a conquest. Rather than guide the globe toward a post-hegemonic world order, it presents the imperial China's hierarchical governance as a new hegemony for the 21st century. The vagueness of the official “harmonious world” policy creates space for new debates about China's foreign policy. The definition of harmony to the Chinese is sameness. Beijing criticized the Dalai Lama for not being a “harmony promoter,” while it dispatched over 7,000 ‘harmony workers’ to deal with a series of riots in Urumqi.⁶²

Nye reminds us that the first step in a smart power strategy is to clarify objectives by evaluating values. Values, he says, are an intrinsic part of foreign policy. In China, Confucius values are imperative. In a democracy, the national interest is simply what

⁵⁹ Friedman, Thomas L. Pass the Books, Hold the Oil. NY Times March 10, 2012.

⁶⁰ Yaqing, Qin. The Possibility and Inevitability of a Chinese School of International Relations Theory. China Orders the World. Edited by W. Callahan. 2011

⁶¹ Yaqing and Tingyang. Ibid.

⁶² Callahan, William. Tianxia, Empire and the World: Chinese Visions of World Order for the 21st Century. China Orders the World. Edited by W. Callahan. 2011

citizens say it is. Thus, values are an intangible national interest.⁶³ Would you agree that American values are currently used to solve global problems and govern the globe? If you were Chinese, wouldn't you want the same?

Religious relations can have soft power consequences, such as social integration or pressures on both sides for changed policies and practices, e.g., cross-Strait relations for Taiwan and Mainland China. For the latter, religious relationships are one of the 5 key links on which President Hu Jintao's government has focused attention in an effort to build a harmonious society and a non-threatening means to draw Taiwan closer to unification, achieving their "One China" hope. For Taiwan, friendly relations help alleviate détente and perhaps induce political liberalization with China. A second observation is that each side uses religion as "soft power" to obtain its political objectives. Ninety three percent of Taiwan's religious population is Buddhist and Taoist and only 4.5% are Christian. The call of the motherland's 4 centuries old Buddhist Mountains and 2 World Buddhist forum sponsorships pales in comparison with democratic Taiwan's humanitarian-type, global Buddhism. Taiwan is given the comparative advantage in soft power with its international religious leadership in natural disaster relief, international broadcasts, charity, education, medical care, culture, bone marrow donation, environmental protection and the green movement, suicide prevention, community service and tolerance for all religions.⁶⁴ Keohane and Nye built on Al Hirschman's asymmetrical interdependence theory – when one side needs the other side more, the less needy has more power.

Surveys are revealing about how a country is perceived by external publics and is a powerful source of soft power. In a 2011 PEW Global Attitudes Project Survey, across the nations surveyed, China received a median percentage rating of 52%, from 2010 to 2011, only eight points lower than the U.S. The number of people expressing positive views of China has grown in a number of countries, including the 4 Western European countries surveyed (Britain, France, Germany, Spain). China's image has also improved in Indonesia, Japan, Egypt and Poland. Opinion of China has worsened in only 2 countries, Kenya and Jordan. The most downward shift has occurred in China, where the number expressing a positive view of the U.S. has fallen 14 points – from 58% to 44% today. When surveying nations about China's economy, positive assessments are most widespread in the Middle East, as well as Israel, and agree how China's growth has benefited their country. When China's emerging power is framed in military terms, publics in most surveyed nations react less favorably. Exceptions are Pakistan, Palestine, and Kenya.⁶⁵ A 2012 PEW Research poll showed about the same as 2011, with Americans seeing China posing the most danger, along with Iran.⁶⁶

⁶³ Ibid. Nye, Joseph. *The Future of Power*.

⁶⁴ Brown, Deborah A. and Tun-jen Cheng. *Religious Relations across the Taiwan Strait: Patterns, Alignments, and Political Effects*. Elsevier Limited on behalf of Foreign Policy Research Institute. Winter 2012

⁶⁵ PEW Research Center Global Attitudes Project Survey Report. *China Seen Overtaking U.S. as Global Superpower*. July 13, 2011.

⁶⁶ Wike, Richard. PEW Research Center Publications. *Ask the Expert: Public Opinion About the U.S. and China*. February 13, 2012.

Media and Information

Some experts have said that soft power takes shape as a nation romanticizes a national culture into universally desirable values. China excels at romanticizing with no mention of communism. China does, however, know how to use media and information as resources for soft power. From 1998 to 2008, the usage of the term “soft power” in Chinese newspapers increased from zero mention to nearly 8,000 occurrences in one year.⁶⁷

China’s cultural attractiveness has witnessed some successes. Hosting the 2008 Beijing Olympics was a double-edged sword. It did showcase to the world their organizational capability, economic strength and rich culture. Who cannot forget the powerful image of thousands of Chinese entertainers moving in perfect symmetry? Conversely, it also showcased the government’s incredible ability to control the media, its own population and even the weather. While 86% of the Chinese polled said they were happy with China’s direction, externally, it was perceived otherwise. The Olympics did teach Chinese leaders lessons in their soft power campaign. Today, their focus in the media is on the domestic political unrest and defending economic growth.⁶⁸

China is increasing in its “journalistic space” in print and broadcast media domestically as well as globally. This new space and broadening journalistic license allows citizens and stakeholders to vent frustrations as well as to expose malfeasance, up to a point. “Compassionate journalism” had developed, about the downtrodden and dispossessed, as well as some social inequalities. Programs such as Focus (*Jiaodian fangtan*) and Legal Report (*Jinri Shuofa*) expose dark sides of society and politics. However, in doing so, they may strengthen the centralized society, by focusing on a few bad apples at the local level.⁶⁹ Like it does domestically, China is using the media to cultivate a global public consensus about what is a good way to live. It uses the tightly controlled media as a soft power instrument to educate a particular vision of a prosperous, harmonious and civilized society, both domestically and internationally.

Philip Cerny states that the true nation-state as a social and cultural unit has really existed for only 100 to 150 years and that better organized and more influential transnational cultural groups, religious and ethnic groups identify and pre-date the nation state. Is China a case in point? Taking it one step further, China’s soft power information baseline has been in place for some time. The Overseas Chinese (ethnic Chinese living in other countries but maintaining their transborder networks) are a salient case in point according to Cerny. This closely interconnected network of groups active at the cutting edge of international (especially Asian) business, with close links to areas of China (mainly South Coast port cities) but accustomed to operating internationally over several centuries, well-adapted to communicating and undertaking transactions through cutting edge technology such as the Internet, but at the same time the bearers of continually

⁶⁷ China 2020. Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid. Tuke.

⁶⁹ Murphy, Rachel. *Civil Society and Media in China. Charting China’s Future* edited by David Shambaugh. Routledge Press. 2011.

reinvented traditional values of collective solidarity. Cerny relates them to a “global tribe,” a term coined by Kotkin in 1992, with widespread diaspora-rooted networks.⁷⁰ Technology, globalization and cultural pride will continue to change both the state and its soft power tools.

Although China looks like a powerhouse from the outside, to its leaders it looks fragile, poor and overwhelmed by internal problems, said Shark, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and Relations with China, 5 years ago. If problems multiply, says Shirk, there is a possibility that China’s leaders could be tempted to “wag the dog”, i.e., mobilize domestic support by creating an international crises. The leaders do not want to appear weak. Her suggestions include decontrolling the media. This advice is going unheeded. China’s commercialized newspapers, magazines, television and Internet news sites are still orchestrated by the CCP, are becoming more sensational and more gripping than the stale prose of the Mao-era Party press. The contents of the media are heavily skewed toward nationalist mythmaking, without exposing people to countervailing arguments. Shirk suggests for China to cease sponsoring campus and media commemorations of historical humiliations as a victim and focus on the successes of its statesmen, reformers, entrepreneurs, and scientists.⁷¹

China’s use of media as soft power globally has been accelerating (and the domestic use increases); in contrast to Shirk’s recommendations. While the Voice of America was cutting its Chinese broadcasts, China Radio International was increasing its broadcasts in English to 24 hours a day. Despite spending billions on soft power, a recent BBC poll shows that opinions of China are negative in the U.S., Europe, India, Japan and South Korea, as compared to positive in Africa and Latin America.⁷²

In the aftermath of Middle East revolutions, China is clamping down on the Internet and jailing human rights lawyers, once again torpedoing its soft power campaign. As Han Han, a novelist and popular blogger, argues, “the restriction on cultural activities makes it impossible for China to influence literature and cinema on a global basis or for us culturati to raise our heads up proud.” Is using culture and narrative to create soft power effective globally, if inconsistent with domestic realities?⁷³

Cyberpower

Cyberpower is mentioned by Nye as a form of soft power, particularly by non-state actors. Chinese hackers have been behind a significant number of high-profile cyber attacks on a number of countries, probably more than 2/3’rds of all hackers. There is no doubt that Chinese authorities exercise some influence over the non-state hackers, i.e., when the Chinese governments “asks” the hackers not to deface U.S. government websites, they listen. China now has 50M bloggers and 30K public censors that remove

⁷⁰ Cerny, Philip G. *Rethinking World Politics A Theory of Transnational Neopluralism*. Oxford University Press. 2010.

⁷¹ Shirk, Susan L. *China, The Fragile Superpower. How China’s Internal Politics Could Derail its Peaceful Rise*. Oxford University Press. 2007.

⁷² Nye, Joseph Jr. *Why China is Weak on Soft Power*. NYTimes. January 17, 2012.

⁷³ Nye. NYTimes. Ibid.

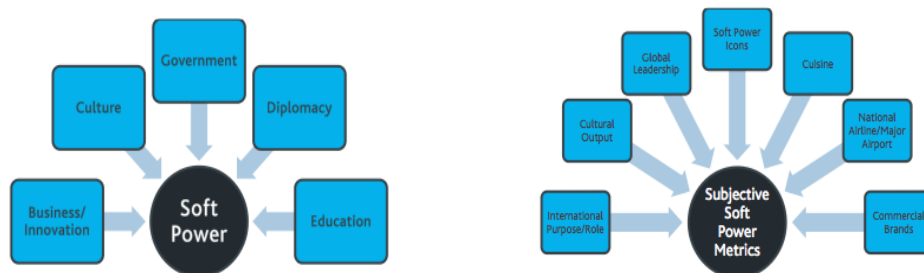
blogs that go against Chinese foreign and domestic policies. The central government of China finances up to 30K agents for ‘public opinion-crises.’ In addition, the PLA co-opts young able-bodied men as a part of their militia to be on the cyber-warfare units, particularly enrolled at technical universities. These units are able to wage information operations against its adversaries and number over 25M students. Many attacks are probably actively encouraged to distract hackers from turning their talents to more anti-state activities.⁷⁴ Youtube and Twitter are blocked in mainland China.

In the struggle to win support around Asia, India’s openness gives it a big advantage compared with China. The story of India’s re-emergence as a regional power is more attractive to many states since India has no history of invasion or domination in East and Southeast Asia and does not have competing claims in the South China Sea with other Asian States. As the world’s largest democracy, with a vibrant press and thriving entertainment industry, India has huge soft power advantages over China and its state-controlled media. Conversely, India suffers from a perception gap that India is not modern and prosperous enough, and since its media is not restricted, its social ills are openly displayed.⁷⁵

How do leaders and country’s measure soft power and whether they are wisely spending their resources to achieve desired outcomes? For the most part, opinion polls, e.g., the Pew Global Attitudes Project to BBC/Globespan polls. The 2008 Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index measures a country’s appeal in 6 dimensions using public opinion data: exports, governance, culture, people, tourism, imagination, and investment. Ranked 28th, China scores low on governance and consumer safety.⁷⁶

Soft Power Theories Expanding on Nye’s Nye Plus: A Western Metric Model of Soft Power

Measures of soft power have been based exclusively on subjective surveys of public opinion, up until a recent, reasonable model of metrics to measure soft power of a country was offered by McClory. Expanding on Nye’s 3 pillars of foreign policy, culture and values, this model measures soft power objectively by categories, as indicated here.



⁷⁴ Klimburg, Alexander, Austrian Institute for International Affairs. Mobilizing Cyber Power. Survival. Vol 53, No. 1, Feb-March 2011, p. 41-60.

⁷⁵ Lee, John. India’s Edge over China: Soft Power. Ebsco. Business Week.com June 18, 2010.

⁷⁶ Heng, Yee-Kuang. Ibid.

McClory’s metric definitions differ a bit from Nye’s, but appear logical and modern. (1) **Business and Innovation** captures the attractiveness of a country’s economic model in terms of openness and capacity for innovation and regulation, as well as softer economic factors such as innovation, corruption and competitiveness. (2) **Culture** is measured by the number of tourists per year, number of museum visits per year, the reach of a country’s native language, and the number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. (3) **Government** is measured by the effectiveness of political institutions, values, liberty, freedom, democracy, and the effectiveness of domestic government (admittedly biased toward the West) (4) **Education** is measured by the output of academic publishing, educational exchanges, the number of foreign students and the quality of university institutions. (5) **Diplomacy** is the last category measured, evidenced by not only global perceptions but foreign policies and diplomatic resources that allow a State to reach international audiences, including transnational networks, digital engagement, overseas development aid, Ministry twitter followers, membership in multi-lateral organizations and cultural missions globally. These metrics are complemented by 7 subjective measures of soft power, which brings this model to the real world, real-time, with dimensions such as global leadership, commercial brands, international role or purpose, cultural output, cuisine, soft power icons, and airline capabilities. A country’s “soft power score” is determined by 70% of the former 5 measures and 30% of the latter 7 subjective measures. The 2011 results are outlined in this chart, with China ranking #20:⁷⁷

Table 1: Soft Power Index Results

Rank	Country	Score
1	USA	7.41
2	UK	6.78
3	France	6.21
4	Germany	6.15
5	Australia	5.64
6	Sweden	5.35
7	Japan	5.08
8	Switzerland	5.07
9	Canada	4.91
10	Netherlands	4.90
11	Norway	4.82
12	Denmark	4.78
13	Spain	4.68
14	Korea	4.52
15	Finland	4.45
16	Italy	4.28
17	New Zealand	4.17
18	Austria	4.10
19	Belgium	3.80
20	China	3.74
21	Brazil	3.55
22	Singapore	3.49
23	Turkey	3.33
24	Chile	2.94
25	Portugal	2.81
26	Israel	2.67
27	India	2.64
28	Russia	2.43
29	Czech. Rep.	2.36
30	Greece	2.35

⁷⁷ McClory, Jonathan. 2011 Global Ranking of Soft Power. The New Persuaders II Report. Institute for Government. 2011.

After analyzing soft power compared with Nye’s three pillars, these metrics are an excellent start to measuring soft power more objectively. Yes, the metrics have Western bias, but it is acknowledged. One observation is that China is peerless in its investments into diplomatic soft power, but the question is asked: Can money alone buy soft power? These metrics say no. Where are China’s strengths? The chart below gives some clues, namely, Culture and Education.⁷⁸

Table 2: Top ten countries by sub-index scores

Rank	Government	Culture	Diplomacy	Education	Business/Innovation
1	Sweden	USA	France	USA	Singapore
2	Norway	UK	UK	UK	Sweden
3	Denmark	France	Germany	Germany	Finland
4	Switzerland	Australia	USA	France	Switzerland
5	Finland	Spain	Sweden	Canada	Denmark
6	New Zealand	Germany	Norway	Australia	Netherlands
7	Netherlands	China	Netherlands	China	Germany
8	Australia	Italy	Canada	Japan	Belgium
9	Canada	Canada	Italy	Netherlands	Korea
10	Austria	Russia	Switzerland	Korea	Japan

China’s soft power score was undermined, according to this metric, when it came to individual freedom, heavy-handed management of the press and an aversion to political criticism. When China’s national narrative and values are consistent with international appeal, their soft power is predicted to rise.

Nye Plus: A Chinese Model of Soft Power

In contrast to Joseph Nye’s Soft Power Model, Li and Worm argue for a six-pillar soft power model, indicative of China’s genuine desire for a peaceful rise. This model is also indicative of Chinese intellectuals recent aggressiveness in creating Chinese International Theories. Like Nye, they agree that cultural attractiveness and international institutions are indicative of soft power. Li and Worm change “values” to “political values,” they add the economic development model and economic temptation. By economic temptation, they mean that China will continue to be a magnet for the world’s business people. According to Goldman Sachs, the four emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) together could be larger than the G6 (U.S., Japan, U.K., Germany, France and Italy) in less than 40 years.⁷⁹ Lastly, international image is the sixth pillar. The Authors argue that China is being discriminated against because it has an authoritarian government. China realizes that Western media has played a huge role

⁷⁸ McClory, J. Ibid.

⁷⁹ Li, Xin and Verner Worm. Building China’s Soft Power for a Peaceful Rise. Journal of Chinese Political Science 2011, Vol 16, pages 69 – 89.

in prejudices against China and plans to create its own media blitz, TV stations and world news station, complete with attractive news commentators.⁸⁰

Leadership and Soft Power

Soft power of China has really been brilliantly orchestrated through its leader, President Hu Jiaotian, for the last decade. By studying this leader's traits, one can easily transfer traditional Chinese soft power leadership styles to the global arena. While in college, President Hu lived through a major famine where 10M people starved, teaching him frugality. Throughout his career, luck and timing were on his side, he secured the right mentors, and had years of experience with the common man in the poorest parts of China. His nickname was "walking map of Guizhou" as he personally visited all 86 counties of his Province. His tight lips earned him the moniker, "*dishui bulou*", or an air-tight container that not even a drop of water can leak through, e.g., not criticizing his ousted boss, even though his peers did. President Hu is known for his original thinking and willingness to consider somewhat liberal measures, although firmly planted in Marxist beliefs

Conversely, President Hu's strategic non-decision making in Tibet with the Dali Lama uprising assured that the local police chief had to make the decisions to shoot and kill 60 rioters. (He unplugged his telephone when he realized riots were getting out of hand.) His typical demeanor is kind-hearted and very approachable, Confucius-like, however, do not be fooled by his humility. He is extremely articulate, conservative and ruthlessly decisive.

China's change in leadership and how it might impact their power strategies is a huge unknown. In the Fall of 2012, Vice-President Xi Jinping is expected to take the helm from President Hu and will serve for the next decade. Xi Jinping is married to a popular folk singer in China and their daughter, Xi Mingze, is attending Harvard. His recent soft power visit to the United States included CA, as he is a known fan of Hollywood films and no surprise, is creating a similar studio scenario in China. Was his visit symbolic on Valentine's Day?⁸¹ Last year at this time, news of China's rise to the world's second biggest economy was the news. Like President Hu, according to the Washington Post, he is pragmatic, hard working, low-key, down to earth. He is known for problem solving, toughness, and is also a proponent of private enterprise. His father, a Communist Leader, was put into solitary confinement during the Cultural Revolution. He is a true diplomat – winning respect from both liberals and conservatives in the Party. His use of soft power is exceptional and he ranks among Time's 50 of the world's most influential people. He used the recent visit to acknowledge "the converging interests of the U.S. and China in the Pacific Ocean", but hopeful that they would focus on the "larger interests of their business co-operation".⁸² As Nye points out, leaders who are competent, charismatic and benign are the most effective soft power champions.

⁸⁰ Xin and Worm. Ibid.

⁸¹ Osnos, Evan. China's Valentines Day in Washington (DC). The New Yorker. Feb 14, 2012.

⁸² BBC News. President Obama hosts China Vice-President Xi Jinping. Feb 14, 2012

Nye also points out that Chinese leaders may be making miscalculations about America. China has subtly been changing its behavior and diplomacy with the U.S. First, at the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, sending junior officials to negotiate with President Obama in December 2009. China also did not use its soft power wisely when 5 permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany met to discuss sanctions against Iran. Again, China sent a low ranking official. Nye suggests 2 reasons – one, a political transition in leadership is expected and no Chinese leader want to look too soft. This helps to explain the recent crackdowns in Tibet and Xingjian. As U.S. savings begin to rise, China may have to respond to entreaties to revalue the Yuan. Again, it may need to look tough on other issues. A second cause of China's recent behavior could be overconfidence in foreign policy. Chinese scholars are writing about the decline of the U.S. and blaming U.S. for producing a recession.⁸³ Or, China leaders may be not using their expertise in global soft power to secure their own domestic soft power or attraction?

A feasible explanation of China's rising strategy is provided by Callahan and Barabantseva, using Xunzi's, an ancient Chinese philosopher, focuses on a slight difference in the contemporary concept of soft power. His Yi concept regards a ruler or leader's ideas as political power or operational and most imperative to their success. Political power is strengthening strategic trust and honesty and will dramatically increase international status. Military, economic and cultural power is secondary. The authors use the example of the total amount of aid from China to Africa does not surpass that of the U.S. and EU, however, with no political preconditions attached, the China's aid program is having much more political impact.⁸⁴

Balancing Soft Power

Soft power does cost time, money and resources. The Western economies are tightening the belt and soft power line items are the easiest to cut with smaller budgets. Theory and measurements of soft power have brought our attention to just how important subjective perceptions are for global power. Eastern states are developing their own International Relations theories that might bring a different definition on Western theories and measurements. Is it time for China to balance with developed countries?

Does economic engagement with a country seek to moderate China's foreign policy behavior, graciously using soft power in deference to its hard power? Yes, this, ironically, does strengthen both China's economic and military capabilities, cites Mansfield and Pollins. As Hirschman and so many others have noted, this trade-off between capabilities and behavior is a necessary complication of any economic-engagement strategy. A plausible alternative, economic containment, would be almost impossible as long as China remains attractive globally and refrains from military action.⁸⁵

⁸³ Nye, Joseph S. Jr. *The Future of Power*. Public Affairs Press, NY. 2011

⁸⁴ Ibid. Callahan, William A. and Elena Barabantseva. *China Orders the World*, pp. 79-83.

⁸⁵ Mansfield, Edward D. and Brian M. Pollins, *Economic Interdependence and International Conflict*. The University of Michigan Press 2003. Page 185.

Hirschman viewed economic engagement, the path China seems to be moving along, as a long-term, transformative strategy. As one state gradually expands economic interaction with its target, the resulting asymmetrical interdependence creates vested interests within the target society and government. The beneficiaries become addicted to it and protect the source of interdependence leading to foreign policy accommodation. This addiction is a means to get other states to *want* what you want, rather than to *do* what you want.⁸⁶

As China is becoming more globalized and interdependent, it is hoped that they cooperate more, not just with developing nations, with the world's other major powers, e.g., U.S., E.U, and Russia. From the U.S., China may try to get recognition, status, a better accepted say and influence on a growing number of global and regional security issues as well as an easier access to the U.S. domestic market and technologies. From the E.U., China may continue to expect to get Foreign Direct Investment, cheap or free high technologies, fashion designs, industrial standards and luxury goods. Keeping in mind that protectionist trends may hinder China's access, although this may be trumped by China's recent bailout to the E.U. From Russia, China may expect to receive increasing and predictable supplies of energy products and raw materials. These evolutions will probably convince China that balancing its close partnership with the E.U. or Russia against the U.S. is likely to generate diminishing returns.

The scope of the PLA modernization and the pace and stability of any Chinese political system reform are two variables, *ceteris paribus*, that may affect future ties and China's future soft power.⁸⁷

In Conclusion

Soft power, as Nye says, is still power. Soft power takes longer to meet its target than hard power. As this paper indicates, soft power is more pliable and more challenging to measure effectiveness. Balancing soft power is a complex topic that in time will be further defined in the hopes that hard power will remain secondary and smart power will be a priority. Additional research would aid our understanding and measuring of soft power casual relationships and outcomes so that leaders may be able to make informed decisions as to how to best capitalize on their resources to achieve their desired outcomes.

China is optimizing its soft power both domestically and in every corner of the world. China is maximizing its options in soft power, i.e., bilateral and multilateral initiatives, institutions, policies, culture, norms, values, media and cyber power. Regarding using soft power globally, minimizing hard power and balancing smart power, China has *ji yu tiao zhan*, both an opportunity and a challenge.

⁸⁶ Ibid. Mansfield page 180.

⁸⁷ Cabestan, Jean-Pierre. *China's Relations with the Major Powers: The U.S., E.U. and Russian Federation. Charting China's Future Domestic and International Challenges.* Edited by David Shambaugh. Routledge 2011.