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SOFT POWER STRATEGIES IN FACING CULTURE'S BOUNDLESS

INFLUENCE IN CREATING FOREIGN POLICY

Name: Fahad Hamad E Alotaibi

INTRODUCTION

In the twenty-first century, nations have more opportunities than ever to influence regional and global dynamics. Economic prosperity, ideological persuasion, and cultural allure are now more essential than military strength and nuclear weapons in many situations. Recently, physical power has emerged as one of the most important instruments of foreign policy. It's common knowledge that "hard power" refers to a policy of coercion based on the use and/or threat of armed force against a specific nation. However, in today's increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, old-fashioned political tools like nuclear weapons are no longer effective because they could cause the complete economic collapse of the country that launched the attack (with the exception of so-called "rogue states"). Since there are more unintended consequences associated with threatening or using hard power (such as warships sailing along the coast or planes patrolling the airspace above a nation), it is unlikely that the aggressor will benefit from it (Roselle, L., et al., 2014).

Hard power is the use of force to accomplish political goals, while soft power is the ability to influence and persuade others through nonviolent means. In the early 1990s, American political scientist Joseph Nye coined the term "Soft power.". However, this concept frequently encounters pushback due to deeply ingrained social, political, and cultural attitudes that are challenging to shift or even impact. It will take some time before these features begin to exhibit noticeable results because they have usually existed for quite some time and are firmly embedded in people's minds (Nye, 2004).

These days, the world is increasingly broken up into macro-regional systems, each of which consists of a group of nations united under the leadership of a formidable regional power. Such regional systems may stake a claim to the position of global power centers in the future if they

possess the requisite economic, political, and military parameters. If the world is set up like this, an aggressor knows it won't just have to face one nation, but an entire regional system with economic, political, and military might that can match or exceed its own (Vuving, A., 2009).

A new hierarchical system (poles, power centers, and regional powers) and new geopolitical axes arise as a result of globalization processes. Such circumstances necessitate the formulation of a foreign policy suited to the new realities, the exploration of new instruments and methods for achieving the strategic goals of the state and the fulfilment of national interests. Countries without extensive traditional impact resources (such as those not on the UN Security Council, without nuclear weapons, or on the geographical periphery) can still exert subtle influence over international processes by employing soft power. With effective use of soft power tools, any country in a multipolar, polycentric world, regardless of its place in the global hierarchy, can subtly influence international processes occurring within a given macro-region or even globally (Gallarotti, G.M., 2011).
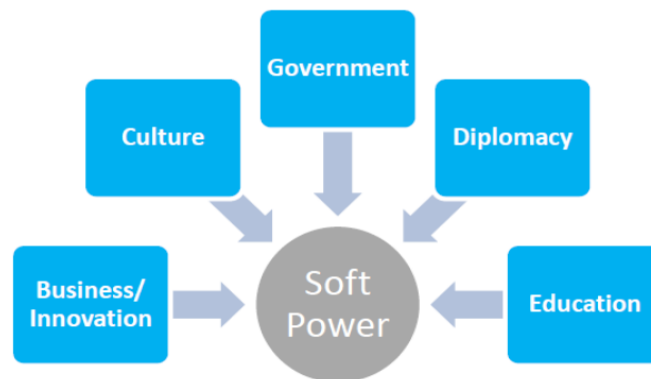
Scheme 1. Component parts of soft power
Source: The Institute for Government. The New Prsuaders: An international ranking of soft power.
London: Monocle; 2010

TOOLS OF SOFT POWER

Attraction creation is an important strategic goal of soft power, achieved through measures such as nation branding and policy change. According to the above description, the strategic objective

of soft power is to influence the object of governance into taking some sort of action and making some sort of political choice. Information flows, political public relations aimed at a foreign audience, global marketing, a country's position in the global hierarchy, its language and its rating in the world, people's (public) diplomacy, tourism, sport and cultural exchanges, the educational system and student (youth) exchanges, the ability to wage media wars, immigration policy, the national expatriate community, and cultural dialogue are among the most important tools of soft power. By effectively employing soft power instruments, a state may be able to impact political and humanitarian processes around the world and in specific countries by creating the illusion of mutual interest, trust, respect, and understanding (Blanchard, J.M.F. and Lu, F., 2012).

A deeper understanding of the essence of a category can be gained through investigation of its subsets, and the differences between soft power and hard power are substantial in both idea and application. In particular, the use of soft power involves convincing another country to voluntarily participate in the fundamental foreign policy arrangements and geopolitical projects of the influenced state, accepting common goals and the illusion of reaching the common outcome, and maintaining frequent and open lines of communication. Methods of hard power include the use of force (armed action), economic pressure, intimidation (military, political, energy, raw materials, food, etc.), and bribery of national political elites (Brannagan, P.M. and Giulianotti, R., 2018).

In today's society, it's important to strike a balance between using soft power and hard power strategies. The methods used to attain authority by both soft power and hard power can vary from one nation to another. Methods from the soft power toolkit, such as declaring shared interests and goals and promising to achieve the common result through a "fair" distribution of preferences, are typically used to influence partners and allies rather than rogue states, which typically rely on the threat of force (Brannagan, P.M. and Giulianotti, R., 2018).

INFLUENCE LIMITS OF SOFT POWERS

There is a limit to what can be achieved through soft power. The cultural and historical legacy of the sphere of influence is a natural constraint on the efficacy of soft power. In the rest of the world, the liberal notion of soft power is not as effective as it is here at home. Some elements of soft power (as formulated by Nye) are ineffective in the nations of the Eastern Hemisphere. Political values associated with liberal democracy, such as the concept of liberal democracy, human rights, and freedom (as treated in the West), are not favored in Eastern nations due to their unique political culture. Charity and social support of vulnerable social strata, however, are concepts that are well known there, and form the essence of the social state concept (Lee, G., 2010).

The so-called tectonic fault of civilizational plates serves as the limiting line of soft power. Civilizational filters and obstacles are inherent constraints on the use of soft power. Economic, political, and sociocultural phenomena that are most at odds with the civilization matrix of a particular nation are filtered out by cultural barriers. At the level of archetypes in a nation's awareness, civilizational barriers actively reject (or fail to accept) certain phenomena invading economic, political, or cultural life from elsewhere. Russia is an example of a country where the imposed cult of the strong personality, the Lone Ranger, and the sexual revolution (in Islamic countries), as well as the imposed benchmark of "career, money, and success," are not accepted by the general populace. (as shown by social survey data, young people give more preference to family values). Free market and monetarism methods are generally disapproved of, as are efforts to classify industries like education and healthcare as service providers (Lee, G., 2010).

Inauthentic for a given civilization matrix, exported economic, political, and sociocultural phenomena may have components getting in sync with civilization algorithms and be adopted thereto, which is where civilization filters come in. The unique Russian interpretation of the

principles and procedures of Western parliamentary government, democracy, the presidency institution, electoral system, party system, banking system, etc. is an example of the filtering effect of different cultures on one another. Political tools are used to fill the void left by soft power. However, it is common practice to employ both soft power and political technology strategies concurrently. Soft power, in a wide sense, can be thought of as a type of international political technology. Conflicts over the use of soft power and the use of political tools go hand in hand (Lee, G., 2010).

SOFT POWER STRATEGIES AND CULTURE BOUNDLESS INFLUENCE

A nation's soft power stems from its cultural influence, moral authority, and public policies. (Nye, 2008). Cultural diplomacy has been around for a long time, and it is widely considered to be the most successful form of soft power diplomacy. According to Banks (2011), there has always been a topic of conversation between people of various cultural backgrounds. Culture facilitates communication between individuals, allowing them to gain insight from one another and improve

their quality of life. Cultural exchange is much more effective than cultural diplomacy at bringing people of different cultures together. Sharing one's culture with another opens the door to mutual understanding, appreciation, and cooperation. For peaceful international ties, this is a prerequisite. Because of the common ground provided by cultural exchanges, people are more apt to band together and work towards common cultural goals.

Schneider (2009) makes a similar case, arguing that cultural diplomacy has not yet achieved its maximum potential despite the Internet's growing importance as a means of communication and fostering better international relations. Understanding and familiarity with other cultures have become increasingly important in modern foreign policy as the world has become a global village through which ideas spread quickly. Technology advancements and increased cultural exchanges, particularly among young people via social media, have influenced a shift in people's worldviews. The global image of the United States has shifted in recent years due in part to the influence of popular culture, particularly in the forms of music and film.

For example, Banks (2011) emphasizes the challenge posed by culture's infinite influence in formulating foreign policy around the globe. The government should step back from foreign policymaking and let cultural exchanges assume the reins. Taking a different tack, one other research investigates the validity of Hofstede's proposed cultural dimensions. (Minkov et al., 2017).

To account for cultural shifts and the chance that some nations use distinct vocabularies when discussing cultural differences, this research surveyed 56 countries (both developed and developing). People from various countries, whether they believe in individualism or collectivism, can learn from one another and change their worldviews through conversation and collaboration. The only variation between the work of Minkov et al. (2017) and that of Schneider (2009) is the

former group's focus on individualism and collectivism. The road to success is fraught with challenges for both established and developing nations. Despite these challenges, individuals from different countries who share their views on individualism and collectivism help build a robust global culture that enhances the bonds between nations. Countries become more interconnected over time as individuals from different backgrounds meet and form friendships.

Academics generally agree that a country's diplomatic achievement is a major contributor to its rise to power. Nair et al. (2020) includes a chapter analyzing Kazakhstan's attempts to manage its international reputation and soft power in order to be among the world's top 30 nations by 2050. The authors of the research examined a number of case studies from different countries to highlight the issues that Kazakhstan must address before it can achieve its goal of becoming internationally recognized.

According to Uberoi (2018), a multicultural viewpoint emphasizes the significance of a nation's character. The concept of national identity promotion, which has been advocated in Britain since the 1970s and is the main focus of his research, has drawn his attention. Most people didn't know there were lots of ways to help people feel more patriotic. In spite of this, Uberoi (2018) concludes that the formation of national identity takes place within the larger context of multiculturalism, which plays a crucial role in enabling the exchange of common views across religious and cultural divides. When people of a country can look at themselves and others and see that they all share fundamental similarities, that is the beginning of a solid national identity.

The use of ethnic diversity as a means to national ends has been shown to be effective. The goal is to help people everywhere appreciate the complexity of modern life. Teaching young people to value and appreciate the differences between people should be a top concern for governments everywhere. Developing a feeling of national identity is crucial for a country's people in order for

them to successfully interact with and make friends with people from other countries. (Dinnie, 2010). When moving from Britain to the United States, someone who has been taught the importance of variety is more likely to appreciate the advantages of this concept. Educating children about diversity and incorporating that understanding into the formation of a national identity are two sides of the same coin.

Liu and Turner (2018) advocate and describe the same strategy as Uberoi (2018) to create national identity, albeit from a slightly different angle. They contend that national identity is central to the present societal shifts caused by a confluence of cultural factors. China's modernization and strengthening of its national identity have been aided by the growing number of Chinese students studying overseas in recent years.

According to Liu and Turner (2018), sending Chinese teenagers to the United States and Europe represents a turning point and the beginning of a new era in China's cultural development. A large percentage of returning students have contributed to societal development by introducing new identities. It's more possible that students who study abroad will make friends in their host country and invite them to China. Through their participation in study abroad programs, Chinese students have both spread their culture abroad and introduced new customs to their home country. The gap between people of different cultures around the globe has been narrowed greatly thanks to this practice. Liu and Turner (2018) argue that a number of government efforts, such as the promotion of "Chinese Wisdom," "Chinese Rules," "Chinese Theories," "the Chinese System," and "the Chinese Road," are assisting China in establishing a culture of soft power. China's cultural soft power has helped it build better relationships with other countries.

China has entered the ideological conflict arena later than both Russia and the United States. China's political leaders had to get innovative in their use of soft power because the country didn't

have access to the international community until the 1970s. The Chinese strategy is even more effective than the Russian and American approaches. (Cai et al., 2009; Liu and Turner, 2018).

Peaceful cooperation between countries is essential, but the inherent differences among them pose a challenge that inevitably affects the character of those partnerships. As the United States becomes more involved in the ongoing crises, it becomes more challenging to execute and supply soft power in international affairs. New insights into the dynamic character of Indian diplomacy are provided by Hall (2012).

India's strategy for using soft power has changed since 2010. To further its soft-power strategy and ensure the development of high-quality alliances with countries all over the world, the country has prioritized the use of technology version 2.0. The MEA's use of soft power has been greatly aided by the Indian Public Diplomacy site. Now is the time to learn how to better interact with other countries and to improve foreign policy. The positive effects of India's foreign policy extend beyond the area of Asia. India's foreign policy emphasizes cultural exchange as part of its "soft power" approach. It has made great strides to enhance its reputation all over the globe, including in Africa. India can improve its international political and economic status by exercising soft power through the adoption of cutting-edge technology and the promotion of cultural exchange. These examples show that India uses a soft-power approach in its diplomatic dealings with other countries.

Iran is cut off from the rest of the Middle East due to political tensions with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, unlike in East Asia. Beydoun and Zahawi (2016) discovered that U.S. allies were reluctant to engage in Iran because of sanctions because of sectarian tensions. There were still tensions, but the United States' sway led to a change in how other countries, such as the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, dealt with Iran. Sanctions were ultimately lifted as a result

of this. The United States' presence in Iran is a striking example of the soft-power impact. The role Iran has played in helping to end the conflict with other countries has been crucial to the country's economic growth and the realization of its objectives. There is renewed optimism for peace in the region after the other GCC nations lifted their sanctions against Iran. Peace was progressively restored as a result of soft-power strategy interventions in tense relationships, such as those between Iran and other nations.

Among the numerous approaches employed in the study of soft power is the promotion of one's country's national identity in order to sway certain demographics. Academics concur that governments should make the export of cultural practices a high priority as a means of exerting political influence. Discussion of current U.S. cultural policy overseas led to the conclusion that the government should facilitate cross-cultural dialogue by utilizing a variety of existing strategies and providing tools to local activists. (Schneider, 2009).

In a nutshell, the cultural elites of a state with an overseas influence should act as cultural diplomats by teaching the locals the guiding principles of their society. When talking American culture in Russia, values like equality, openness, honesty, and fairness are essential (Schneider, 2009). The community obviously preferred the American cultural attitude to the Russian one. When used as a form of soft power, cultural policies aim to demonstrate that the target country's cultural practices are significantly inferior to adopting those utilized by the culture of the target country (Schneider, 2009).

People in the target nation are more receptive to the state's policies because they see the advanced culture as a source of guidance and support. For cultural soft power instruments to have the greatest impact, the applying nation should seek to become the de facto cultural leader in the target country. (Schneider, 2009). A country's influence in international affairs rises in proportion to its reputation

as a cultural leader abroad. There is some truth to the U.S. government's efforts to portray itself as a worldwide defender of democracy. If a state adopts such an attitude, it is essentially saying that it is the single custodian of all democratic cultural norms and that any other state that wants to become more democratic must consult with and receive approval from it. A central strategic idea is that the United States can accomplish its foreign policy goals through assumed advisory roles without exerting direct pressure on adversaries overseas.

Brand management and the successful execution of cultural strategies are inextricably linked, with the former depending on the latter. Companies develop brand names for the same reason countries develop cultural strategies: to attract and retain patronage from target audiences. This strategy of business identity building is based on the mythology of the brands themselves. (Cayla and Arnould, 2008).

Every country needs an inspiring story that reflects its values and can be shared with others. The challenge, then, will be in adapting solutions to the various cultural norms and needs of various international locations. When a state employs soft power, its cultural policies are defined by their emphasis on the target country's population as the main agent of change.

It is crucial to introduce the concept of national identity so that people can understand the role of cultural policy as a predictor of population effect. Uberoi (2018) defines national identity as a collection of traits that can be used to characterize the personality or cultural code of the modern citizen and how they react to the world around them. A person's perception of national identity is shaped by the traditions and history of his or her home country, as stated by Uberoi (2018). As they grow up, people take on the customs of their families and communities.

Therefore, improving educational programs that might affect the development of a person's identity is one of the most effective solutions within the framework of a state's cultural strategy

and soft-power model. The main objective of such a strategy would be to assist people in improving their own sense of self-worth, which in turn would influence their appreciation for and identification with the national culture of the state in question. The society of a state that successfully employs soft power will therefore be more alluring than that of the state itself. When a country uses soft power, the country being targeted is less likely to have its citizens advocate for its own goals and more likely to follow the advice of the nation using soft power. All countries must take drastic action to protect their educational institutions from this danger to national sovereignty.

The significance of appealing to people's feelings in the context of cultural policy-informed soft-power strategies cannot be overstated. A cynical strategy based on emotional influence on the preferences of the local population, cultural policies are implemented by states to improve the brand image of their national culture abroad. Cultural techniques aim to encourage favourable connections between the target audience and the customs of a foreign culture (Serazio, 2017). Government organizations are tasked with enacting policies that foster positive public attitudes towards the state and its traditions. The government should welcome scientists, artists, actors, and other members of the cultural elite in order to encourage the general public to value its cultural past. Thus, cultural diplomacy can be compared to a company's marketing strategy, in which misleading information is disseminated about a product or service in order to attract more customers (Serazio, 2017).
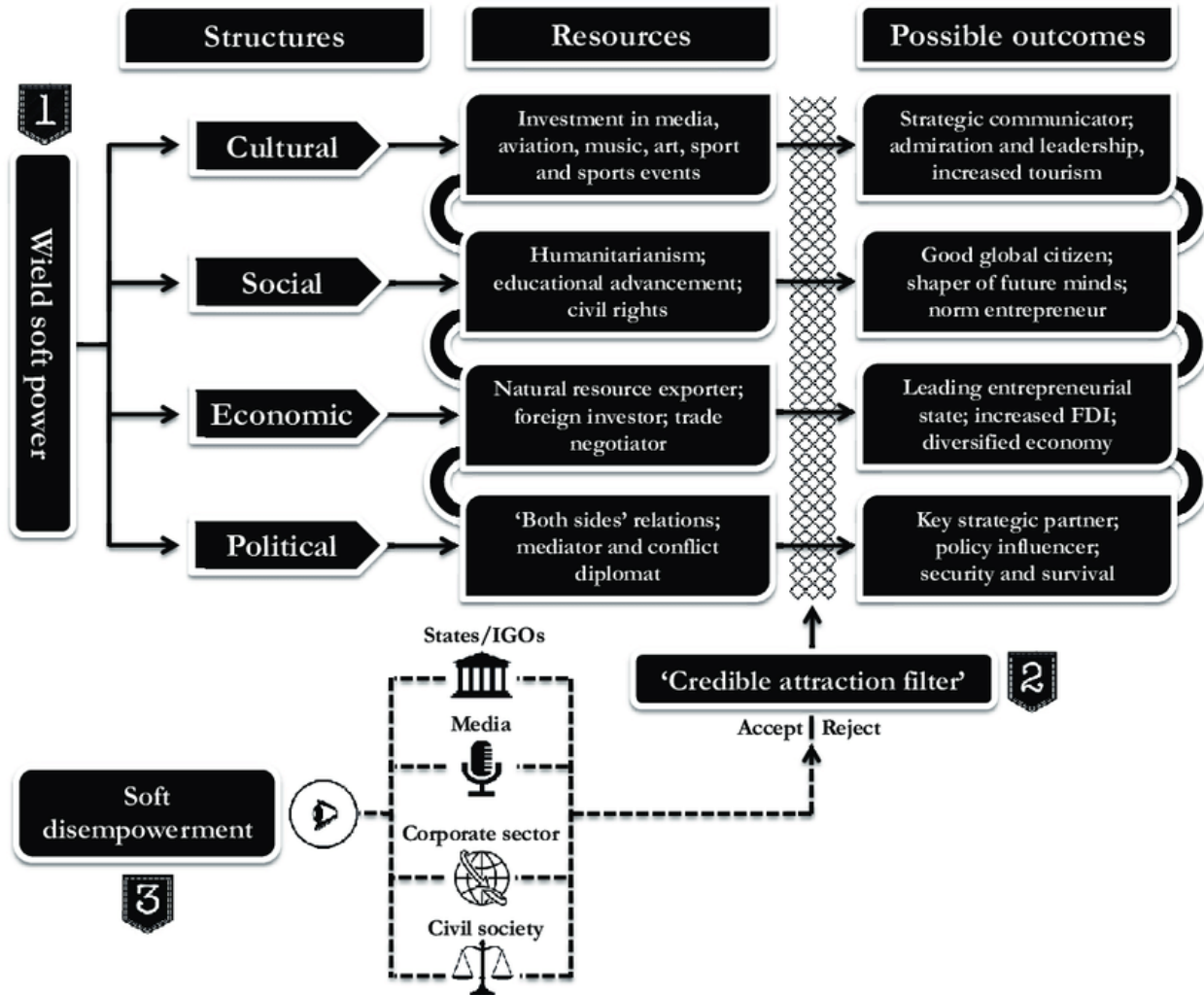
Scheme (3): Linking soft power with disempowerment and the strategies of "soft power"

CONCLUSION

The use of soft power to bring about political change in the nation is the final consideration when assessing the long-term success of a cultural policy. Cultural policy execution is a complex and time-consuming endeavor that will not produce visible results overnight. Cultural bonds between nations usually take decades to establish through dialogue and cooperation. The "frequent change of political elites in induced by a democratic voting system can entail considerable dangers for the longevity of viable cultural policies," as one author puts it.

Academics' analyses of foreign affairs at the state level have been profoundly influenced by the concept of soft power. We've shown that the idea has been subjected to scrutiny, which calls attention to the fact that it needs to be refined analytically and substantively. In conclusion, changes in the political, economic, and cultural climates within a nation can have an impact on the country's soft power. The media has played a crucial role in informing people around the world of numerous governmental shifts in recent years.

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