# The Routledge Handbook of Soft Power

Naren ChittyLi JiGary D. RawnsleyCraig Hayden*

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# THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF SOFT POWER

*The Routledge Handbook of Soft Power* is the first volume to offer a comprehensive and detailed picture of soft power and associated forms of public diplomacy. The terms soft power and public diplomacy have enormous currency in media and policy discourse, yet despite all the attention the terms remain conceptually ambiguous for analysts of international influence. The consequence is that the terms have survived as powerful, yet criticized, frames for influence.

Divided into two main parts, Part I outlines theoretical problems, methodological questions, the cultural imperative and the technological turn within the study of soft power and Part II focuses on bringing the theory into practice through detailed discussion of key case studies from across the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

This innovative handbook provides a definitive resource for students and scholars seeking to familiarize themselves with cutting-edge debates and future research on soft power and will be of interest to those studying and researching in areas such as international relations, public diplomacy and international communication.

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# THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF SOFT POWER

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# INTRODUCTION

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If soft power represents a political theory of attractiveness, the term itself appeals to some and not others. Soft power, as a term, is a cultural artefact that represents a body of thought that is associated with resources invested in attraction-power as well as with strategies for using such resources to further actors' interests. Like many cultural artefacts, soft power has had a mixed reception, especially in academia. It has become popular currency for many foreign ministries, universities and think tanks across the world, though the nature of government, corporate, civil society and media interest may vary with country and context. Governments are naturally interested in drawing this area into their foreign policy frameworks and express interest, understandably, in the measurement of effects to justify expenditure. Effects in the hard sense of so many bucks producing so much soft bang are tantalizingly difficult to prove.

One sometimes hears the view expressed in academia that soft power is already included in other concepts – such as charisma (Weber 2004), cultural imperialism (Said 1993), influence (Lasswell and Kaplan 1950), hegemony (Gramsci 1982), political propaganda (Lasswell 1938) and sociological propaganda (Ellul 1973), to name a few contenders – and therefore is superfluous if not annoyingly farraginous. Another criticism is that, like public diplomacy, it is theoretically under-developed – an LDC or less-developed concept. One might say this differently; that the compressed but broad account that one finds in the soft power narrative of Nye (2011) has not been sufficiently unraveled and analyzed by the scholarly community in terms of deeper theoretical veins, particularly from the perspectives of corpuses of knowledge that address constituent concepts that might support, reject or offer modification to it. One might also remark that theory building has been outstripped by eager adoption of the concept by policy and media communities – but as pointed out by Brown (Ch. 2) such policy interest may very well provide oxygen to research.

We are still trying to perform an operation of separation between two conjoined twins, public diplomacy and soft power, at a time when there remains much to do in understanding more than the physiognomy of the twins by describing their physiology. While salutary work has already been accomplished, much more is needed. Obfuscating the process has been an intense wave of genre-construction, the proliferation of terms that describe particular types of public diplomacy (physiognomic description) without

their being situated in theory and a theory-based typology (physiological description). Consequently, within both academia and government there have been "struggles over the numerous labels and definitions within the field of influence – propaganda, soft power, cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy"(Fisher and Lucas 2011 pp. 3–11).

The primogeniture of public diplomacy has also sapped the attention of researchers from the analysis of soft power, as the former affords opportunities to research and analyze national projects that are described as public diplomacy ones. It has been noted, however, that the field of public diplomacy itself is lacking in theoretical depth (Entman 2008, Gilboa 2008). At the same time soft power has been identified as the nearest thing to a theory of public diplomacy (Hayden 2012). Soft power, therefore, merits a consorted analytical assault and the present volume is part of this project. The collective project of inquiry into the nature of soft power that examines the notion's antecedents and meaning in a contemporary world political context has now reached a plateau from which different aspects of public diplomacy may be better differentiated from and related to soft power and each other. It is appropriate to begin an inquiry into soft power in world politics by relating it to public diplomacy, and this volume does this. But this volume commences the inquiry after delving more deeply into the heart of soft power itself, further developing it theoretically and looking at key categories of public diplomacy as they relate to soft power. It does so with theoretical discussions as well as examinations of case studies of countries' use of soft power through forms of public diplomacy.

Nye identifies soft power resources as including "culture, values, legitimate policies, a positive domestic model, a successful economy, and a competent military" (Nye 2011 p. 99). One might say that, broadly speaking, soft power varietals include the standard categories – cultural, economic, ethical, legal, military and political. All six soft power varietals figure in the comprehensive discussion in Ch. 1 and in case studies.

Chapters have been selected with an eye on diversity, both cultural and disciplinary. The desire for cultural diversity, particularly in Part II, is easily understood. One would like to see perspectives from around the world. Disciplinary diversity, a consequence of soft power having kindled interest in areas other than political science and international relations, is also to be seen throughout the volume. Theoretical perspectives developed in Section I are employed in the conclusion to this volume in a discussion of the varied perspectives in this book in order to find some common ground around the central notion of soft power.

Following this introduction, Part I deals with Theoretical perspectives and Part II with Case studies. Part I has four sections: Theoretical considerations, Methodological problems, The cultural imperative and Technological turn. Part II has four sections too, in the interests of symmetry – each representing broad geographical swaths starting from the west (Americas) and ending in the east (Australia): Europe and the Americas; Africa and the Middle East; central and south Asia; north and south-east Asia. The Americas and Europe section includes chapters about Germany, Catalonia (Spain), Brazil and the USA. However, the principle discussion on US soft power is to be found in Ch. 14 in the section on The technological turn. The section on Africa and the Middle East includes chapters about Algeria, Nigeria, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The central and south Asia section includes chapters on Russia, Bhutan and India. The north-east and south-east Asia section includes chapters on Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia and Australia and also addresses China, following on from the previous section. However, these are not the only countries dealt with in the book as other

countries and groupings appear in other sections in Part I, including the European Union, the United Kingdom, France, Iran, the Gulf States, Kenya, Hong Kong (China) and Singapore.

The two parts are followed by a conclusion. Each section in Part I has a full chapter length overview, the overview chapter in the theory section (Ch. 1) being the longest because it seeks to provide a deep physiology for soft power and in a sense represents an overview for the part as well as a theoretical framework to be referred to when visiting the contributions to the volume. Symmetry takes an equitable rather than equal turn when it comes to the length of overviews. The view was taken that the theory overview chapters would need a larger canvas for development while the area chapters would seek to provide an aerial view of each geographical swath. It should be said that while chapters are located under the sectional rubrics because of their primary concerns, they often have relevance to other sections – as in the case of country distribution referred to above. So rather than merely following the listing in the contents page, this introduction refers to chapters under more than one rubric where appropriate.

## Part I

Part I deals with Theoretical perspectives and its first section is entitled Theoretical considerations. The opening chapter of Section I (Part I), 'Soft power, civic virtue and world politics', is Chitty's attempt to remove some of the untidiness in the perceived relationships between soft power, public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy. It relates soft power to the positivist and post-positivist moments of international relations (IR) and discusses cooperation, civil society and civic virtue in what is characterized as a weak global republican confederacy. Chitty discusses activation of passive soft power, examines soft power's normative features and breaks down its passive and active forms analytically into heritage and contemporary categories and three multiplier mechanisms – mobility, media and cultural industrial. Qualitative values for soft power are proposed, particularly as civic virtues. In 'Alternatives to soft power', Brown notes that "[s]oft power offers a way of talking about non-coercive modes of influence in international politics", thus filling a gap. He notes further that "[t]he consequence of this position is that 'soft power' is likely to retain its grip on policy discourse unless researchers can offer alternative ways of conceptualizing and practicing influence". He describes cultural diplomacy in Germany and France employing the language of influence. In 'A critical discourse analysis of soft power', Fei Jiang discusses cultural soft power, drawing on aspects of the experience of Germany in the late nineteenth century and seeing relevance here for a rising China. Sevin seeks to understand soft power by comparing public diplomacy with western (US) and non-western (Russia and Iran) polities. This offers a lead into Part II, that examines case studies of public diplomacy, including the kinds described in Ch.1, such as civil, cultural and hard power-related public diplomacy.

Section II (Part I) deals with Methodological problems and leads with an overview of the area, 'Measuring soft power', by Ji. The measurement of soft power is set within a framework of soft power theory through a discussion of factor analysis in public relations, textual, analytical and frame theoretic approaches and with an elaboration of outcome evaluation based on framing analysis. As she points out, Section II (Part I) alone includes a nation-branding approach (Kahraman), a big data approach (Davis and Ji) and a web ecological content analysis of social media (Ying Jiang). The volume locates elsewhere cultural (Gushiken, Brito and Ueta), discourse analytical (Fei Jiang), historical

(Watanabe) and legal (Ginesta, Canals and de San Eugenio; He) approaches, among others, several not being outcome-oriented.

Section III (Part I) deals with The cultural imperative and begins with an overview entitled 'Cultural approaches to soft power' by Jacob. The overview explores culture and soft power through a cultural studies approach influenced by Gramsci (1982), focusing on hegemony and identity. In 'Soft power and cultural industries: Cultural policy and inter-Asian regional flows in Hong Kong and Singapore', Chung compares policy cultures around an important area of soft power generation in two global cities. (Korean, Indian and Nigerian cultural industries are addressed elsewhere in Ch. 34, Ch. 29 and Ch. 25 respectively.) He's 'Legal diplomacy and the possible approach of China' discusses soft power and the culture of rule of law, examining Chinese efforts at shaping governance discourses. John Simons, in 'The soft power of elephants', looks historically at the use of animals and animal lore for soft power projections through exchange and latter-day totemization. Bebawi, in 'The cultural imperative: News production and soft power', explores how cultural influences, such as the cultures of media institutions, journalism practice and audiences and society, act as a form of soft power in shaping news production.

Section IV (Part I) deals with The technological turn and opens with an overview by Hayden entitled 'Technologies of influence: The materiality of soft power in public diplomacy'. This chapter offers a discussion of the implications of information and communication technology platforms for the soft power concept, looking particularly at US public diplomacy practice and strategy. In 'Digital networks and transformations in the international news ecology' Gillespie and McAvoy offer a critique of agent-centered approaches to soft power that investigates how British receivers of soft power messages are taken into account in British foreign policy discourse and practices. In 'Social media and soft power politics in Africa', Adeiza and Howard examine soft power demonstrated by civil society social media users in the case of a citizen-driven campaign in Nigeria and a case of convergent interest between government and citizens in Kenya.

## Part II

Overviews in Part II provide birds-eye views of huge geographic swaths of the globe rather than develop theory or describe case studies. The country order begins with Brazil in the Americas, progresses eastwards to European polities, South and North African countries, Russia, South Asian countries, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and finally Australia. The overview for Section V (Part II), by Pisarska, entitled 'Americas and Europe', covers North and South America as well as Europe. 'Popular culture, banal cosmopolitanisms and hospitality: Notes for a Brazilian soft power', by Gushiken, Brito and Ueta, configures soft power in the Brazilian cultural landscape, noting the potential for it to flourish in informal conversational settings through hospitality and access to the enjoyment of popular culture, offered by Brazilians to visitors. A case study from Catalonia in Spain, 'International challenges of Catalonia', by Ginesta, Canals and de San Eugenio, looks at parliamentary discourse around public diplomacy that coincides with a diminishing of Spanish soft power in the experience of Catalans. This is one of two chapters about special regions of sovereign states, the other being about Hong Kong SAR, both placing a heavy emphasis on culture and cultural industry (Chung). Strong opposition from within Spain is seen as weakening the devolutionary impulse. Hartig, in 'German public diplomacy' shows that Germany's Foreign Cultural and Educational Policy contains public diplomacy

purposes that are not just normative and idealistic – even if these, rather than functional goals, are foregrounded. In 'Good health is above wealth' Bielenia-Grajewska examines the eurocrisis discourse through a discussion of the role of figurative language in EU dialogue, to show opportunities and challenges associated with using nonliteral language in the exercise of soft power. In 'Of extended hands and velvet gloves' Esfandiary examines US–Iran metaphorical public diplomacy exchanges, looking at the US and Iranian leaders' deployment of metaphor in seeking to persuade the other side of their own country's virtuosity and the others' lack thereof. Additionally, dealt with in the summary of Section I, in 'Understanding soft power through public diplomacy in contrasting polities' Sevin contrasts the US and Russia in the iconic 'Nixon–Kruschev kitchen debate' and uses this as a backdrop for viewing US public diplomacy vis-à-vis Russia and Iran.

Section VI (Part II) deals with case studies about Africa and the Middle East, beginning with an overview of 'Soft power mobilization in the Middle East and Africa' by Douai. In 'When soft power success and "attractiveness" cannot be sustained', Louw discusses the transmogrification of soft power in Mugabe's Zimbabwe and in post-Mandela South Africa. Ojo, in 'Nigeria, public diplomacy and soft power', examines the soft power of Nollywood, Nigeria's film industry. Nigeria is dealt with outside this section (in Section IV, Part I) in 'Social media and soft power politics in Africa' (Adeiza and Howard) as well. 'The cultural imperative: News production and soft power' (Bebawi) also focuses on the Middle East, looking at Arab newspapers. In 'Public diplomacy and soft power in Algeria's foreign policy', Zaghlami examines Algeria's peace-brokering and other soft power initiatives in a country that has had a bloody war of liberation and a post-colonial military government.

Section VII (Part II) deals with case studies about Central and South Asia beginning with an overview by Ahlawat. Osipova, in 'Indigenizing soft power in Russia', examines Russia's efforts to build its international image and understanding abroad of its politics and culture, as it seeks to be more assertive on the world stage. 'Bollywood enabling India as a soft power' is a critique by Murthy of the selection of Bollywood as the contemporary industrial fount of Indian soft power and an argument that Tollywood (Telugu film and television industry) is better suited to represent attractive but deeper Indian traditions to the Indian diaspora and the world. In 'Seduced by Bhutan's philosophy of happiness', Avieson and Tshering throw light on the normative approach of Bhutan to the pursuit of happiness, a governance culture that aims at facilitating the discovery of happiness by citizens within themselves. In 'India and China: Soft power in an Asian context', Rana examines, comparatively, soft power policies and instruments in China and India.

Section VIII (Part II) deals with case studies about north and south-east Asia beginning with an overview by Spry. Watanabe, in 'The pivot shift of Japan's public diplomacy', provides a historical account of Japanese public diplomacy, which now emphasizes cultural exchanges that facilitate the experiencing of Japanese culture by others. In 'The Korean Wave as soft power public diplomacy' Kim discusses Korean public diplomacy's focus on the generation of soft power through cultural industries. In 'Vietnamese cultural diplomacy', Rawnsley and Ngac examine cultural diplomacy strategy and how national and international ambitions of the Vietnamese government interlock. Finally we reach the antipodes with 'Beyond the boats: Constraints on Indonesian and Australian soft power', where Green examines soft power and hard power in the relationship between Indonesia and Australia. Located in Section III (Part I) is 'Legal diplomacy and the possible approach of China' (He).

While this introduction has explained the rationale for and elaborated on the structure of this volume and provided thumbnail summaries of the contents, the conclusion will draw on chapters with the aim of integration, to relate the frameworks arising from the theory section to empirical findings from across the world – searching for common ground and looking towards the further development of soft power theory in the future.

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# PART I

# Theoretical perspectives

## SECTION I

## Theoretical considerations

# 1

# SOFT POWER, CIVIC VIRTUE AND WORLD POLITICS[1] (SECTION OVERVIEW)

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> Machiavelli emphasizes the antagonistic element in man's natural endowment. Men are prone to violence and combat; they are antisocial by nature. However, necessity (chiefly the demands of survival) impels men to associate with each other, to constitute themselves into a series of rival groups. Within these groups, which evolve into complex and interdependent societies, men learn to cooperate, to restrain their demands, to solve by speech and law issues that have formally been solved by brute strength, and the sword. In a word, they become civilized – that is, accustomed to living with their fellow men in a *civitas*. They are taught the meaning of justice and to distinguish between their particular good and the common good.
>
> (Germino 1972, pp. 40–1)

## Introduction

This chapter is an overview for the theory section of this book and also prepares the theoretical ground for the volume. The first of four substantive parts discusses power (soft and hard) in the context of world politics. The second unfolds an academic genealogy for soft power, relating soft power to positivist and post-positivist moments in IR and selected post-positivist interests such as cooperation, civil society and civic virtue.[2] A weak global republican confederacy is posited, to give shape to the contemporary world governance framework in relation to which cooperation and conflict take place. Civic virtues, for governing elites, influentials in civil society and ordinary citizens, provide the interactional framework for the confederacy.[3] The third section examines moral constructions of soft power. Whether soft power and public diplomacy overlap in part or are interchangeable is also addressed[4]. The contingent relevance of high and low politics to soft power is discussed and definitions of public diplomacy and subsets of cultural and civil diplomacy are provided. The role of civic virtue in soft power aspirations is dealt with. Fourth, soft power's passive and active forms are broken analytically into traditional and contemporary categories and three categories of multiplier mechanisms – mobility, media and cultural industrial. Following on from the humanist tradition of a republican political organization, qualitative values for soft power are proposed. This is followed by a conclusion.

## Power in world politics

Power in the collocation 'soft power' suggests use of a political lens. Born in the junction of biosphere and infosphere, the powerful, though somewhat unruly, meme evolves in the latter (Gleick 2011). Nye (2011, p. 14) points out that power can be defined as resources or behavioral outcomes. He further describes each of three faces of power, faces that allow both hard and soft methods (2011, p. 91). The hard methods are the use of coercion or inducement: to change a subject's strategies (first face); to curtail a subject's agenda (second face); to shape a subject's first preferences (third face). The soft methods are the use of attraction or persuasion to change a subject's preferences in the first face (inducing behavioural change); or attraction or institutions to convince a subject of the legitimacy of one's agenda in the second face (framing and agenda-setting); and to shape a subject's first preferences through priming in the third face (Nye 2011, pp. 42, 91).

There are "complex structures of culture, social relations and power that affect and constrain" people that Nye (2011, p. 14) includes in power's second and third faces. Wendt (1996, pp. 57–8) notes that it is rhetorical practice that is employed as third face power to manipulate "shared meanings and significations". For Foucault power, including disciplinary power, "forms a dispersed capillary woven into the entire social order" (Barker 2004, p. 103). Lukes (2005), who added the third face of power to the first (Dahl 1961) and second (Bachrach and Baratz 1963), relates Nye's soft power to his third face but faults both Nye's strategic agent-centrism and Foucault's subject-centered structuralism for failure to address empowerment. If Lukes found these two approaches wanting in this respect, one might discern in the constructivist approach to world politics the inhabiting of structure by agency (Chitty 2005). From within sociolinguistics Fairclough (1989, p. 46) described power in discourse as "powerful participants controlling and constraining the contributions of non-powerful participants" through manipulating content, social relations and subject positions. There is little wiggle room for agency in the Foucauldian capillaries where power is omnipresent in discourse (Foucault 1998, p. 63). Nye's position is that soft power is a kind of power, this omnipresent power. A syllogistic treatment will lead to consideration of soft power as being everywhere in discourses. Where soft power is at play there should be greater potential for agency. Where discourses are inherently attractive due to virtuosity in crafting of content or inherent virtue of content or communication style, I would say such rhetoric of human interaction will exercise soft power.

While power is central to Nye's conceptualization of soft power, soft should not here signify modulated power, or refer to a grade of intensity as in a spectrum ranging from very soft, through soft, medium intensity, to hard and very hard power. Rather it is power that is qualitatively different in that it is on the co-optive (soft) side of a spectrum that has command or coercive (hard) power behavior on the other side (Nye 2011, p. 21). Nye (2011, p. 10) distinguishes between power defined as (1) resources and (2) behavioural outcomes, emphasizing the importance of the latter, dependent as they are not just on the former but also on contexts and strategies. He also makes a distinction between passive and active soft power, direct and indirect use of soft power, "the passive approach to soft power" being described briefly in terms of the attraction of an actor's exemplary values (Nye 2011, p. 94). Soft power can be non-instrumental or passive but may be used instrumentally (Chitty 2015a). A second feature is its elasticity; it is not reduced as a resource by use.[5] Soft power can also be generated by cultural industries, but consumption of cultural products thus generated does not deplete soft power either. Dissemination of political propaganda does erode it. Finally, soft power can be bidirectional.[6]

## *Context for soft power in world politics*

Human interaction brings into play differentials in economically, cognitively or militarily generated value balances that give the participant or participants, in the context under consideration, an ascendancy over the others. In human interaction action or non-action leads to reactions in succession, so where power is action or non-action leading to a complex actor's interests being served, power is the sustainability of the complex actor's interests being served in continuous longitudinal and horizontal action-reaction chain networks through a complex social system over a defined period. If "[f]or Machiavelli the cosmos is not an ordered whole, but rather a field of unpredictable forces into which a masterful intelligence can inject some degree of order and purpose", post-bellum intelligence in the twentieth century has attempted to create order around the "anthropocentric humanist" notion of human security (Germino 1972, pp. 16, 21). The growth of soft law in the international sphere and normativization of correct uses of violence, force and dark deeds and the influence of public opinion on policy communities has led to, arguably, a containment of the use of force and violence. The quarantining of the use of hard power has made space for soft power, reification and growth of soft law and the normativization of practices of good governance. Indeed, Wolin (1960, pp. 223–4) believes that Machiavelli even in his time believed that his political science "made brutality and cruelty unnecessary" and prescribed an "economy of violence"; Germino (1972, pp. 27, 54) went further in suggesting that Machiavelli's "new way" looked towards a politics that was in the "framework of anthropocentric humanism". While there can be no violence in soft power, violence, as in theatres of war, can beget world orders invested with power relations based on war outcomes but that are hospitable to soft power. That said, before its defraction to hard and soft power, power was a compound of these two elements – and continues to be so in many ways.

The focus here will be on soft power in a contemporary construction of world order that includes "a condition of rule" or "no anarchy"[7] (Onuf 2014), global civil society (Onuf 2004, Kaldor 2003) with its moral economy (Calabrese 2005) – that I have characterized as a weak global confederacy, republican in nature.[8] Confederacies are more autonomous than federations. World confederacy does not here refer to the United Nations (UN) as an institution standing apart; it refers to evolving institutions of world governance, actors and cultures that include both rule-making and ruling elites as well as the ruled and recusants. The global polity, tighter here and looser there, is based on internationally accepted rules and states and non-state actors adhering to the consensual rule-making and rule framework – as well as outlaws and recusants and polities that have not been accredited by the system. Outlaw behavior (crime) is seen as offensive but normal, in domestic society, by Durkheim (1895 [1950]). May not such behavior be seen as offensive but normal in international society as well? As soft law grows and hardens over time and international society becomes more rule-oriented and shows some homonomy in at least discrete theaters of international activity, the anarchy problematique perchance will become less consequential. Conversely, international institutions may weaken at times and be engulfed by a wider heteronomy.[9] There is also the possibility that Machiavelli was right in believing "that man can acquire a second nature through civil society" (Germino 1972, p. 53).

The global confederacy, extant around a plethora of states and international institutions, is weak because sovereignty is not shared between an organizational centre and members. "At global and regional levels, institutions that have states as members – commonly

known as international regimes – link public offices in administering the global system of needs" (Onuf 2004). The polity is republican in values for two reasons. First, its members have espoused humanist republican values, to varying degrees, through the European historical tradition – on republican, liberal or socialist models. Second, the institutions themselves incorporate humanist norms and mixed government (Pettit 1997). Democracy in general assemblies and republicanism in managing councils is facilitated by multilateralism and major interest norms of international regimes (Finlayson and Zacher 1983 pp. 296–304). Mixed government forms are vertical within the UN and horizontal when incorporating its members and family of agencies. Policy vectors are directed, at least professedly, at the public good rather than the interest of rulers – increasingly seeking cooperation with the private interests of the corporate world. The preferment of civic virtue is evident in the evangelism of good governance and the "deference value" of rectitude, the latter comprised of "the moral values – virtue, goodness, righteousness, and so on" (Lasswell and Kaplan 1950, p. 56). Onuf (2013, p. 509) makes a distinction between Pocock's (1975) Aristotelian Atlantic republicanism that "directs attention to human agency, action and the effects of time" and his own Grotian–Pufendorfian "Continental republicanism [that] offers general conclusions about spatial relations, the satisfaction of needs and the conditions favoring order and stability". He sees a distinct theoretical divide between republicanism and liberalism. In practice republics such as that of the United States (US) are crucibles of competition between liberal and conservative thought; the confederacy is a republic that is a crucible of competition between republics and republic-like monarchies with the monarchic, aristocratic, democratic mix favored by Machiavelli (Germino 1972, p. 37), hosting variously conservative, liberal, socialist, communist and even theocratic thought. Drawing on socialist republican thought rather than theory, republics of a socialist color can be seen to favor a working class republicanism that "is distinguished from middle class or 'pure republicanism' in that it pursues democratic political aims as the means to social and economic transformation. This could be called the 'republican road to socialism', a kind of popular socialism 'from below' which historically came from the people themselves with its roots in workers' struggles for democracy and social justice. It is the political complement to militant trade unionism" (Freeman 2011). We find everywhere a smoldering tussle of powers, rather than a stasis of balance, or the occasional explosive revolution. For civic republicans "the constitution provides the framework for an organic community composed of socially constructed individuals, who join together in government to identify and pursue civic virtue" and civic virtue is "the leitmotif of all civic republican theory" (Gey 1993, p. 806). However, its advocacy of individual freedom is viewed as compromised by its privileging of collective determination (Gey 1993, p. 825). I take the view that a broadened republican thought today, whatever its republican theoretic origins, is a theatre of contestation between liberal and republican thought; republics too host such contestation.

The weak international republican confederacy (referred to hereafter as the world confederacy or simply the confederacy) has goals aligned with enhancing human security. Apart from multilateral institutions the confederacy is invigorated by a plexus of bilateral relations. Periodically, like-minded states characterize some others as rogue states and their leaders as tyrants who terrorize their citizens or resort to unsanctioned military excursions abroad. There are systemic processes for incorporation, proscription, containment or destruction of out-groups. Militarized non-state actors are also viewed as outlaws or renegades. Rebel groups may be viewed variously by factions in the confederacy as terrorists or freedom fighters. The confederacy itself may be viewed as a political

fiction employed to give shape to this public thing (L. res publica) that shies from the notion of world government.

## Constructing world politics

### *Communication skills and ordering*

Description, strategization and imagination are important to the discussion on soft power. The historian Harari (2011, pp. 22–44) points to a triad of new communicative abilities that arose in the cognitive revolution 70,000 years ago; we might say today they cast a long linguistic shadow on soft power (power of attraction) and hard power (power of coercion or economic inducement) – the phrases in parentheses being Nye's shorthand definitions (2008a, p. 107). It was the cognitive revolution from which the symbolic environment ballooned – ever-growing in volume and complexity through symbolic interaction (Blumer 1969). The new communicative abilities were the skills to describe the environment, social relationships and concepts not found in the environment. These may have been descriptive but they also became rhetorical skills. The latter imagined realities could persuade individuals to join large groups (Harari 2011, pp. 3, 41). The first skill allows cooperation in resource securement, production and distribution. The second facilitates political organization and the third type allows frame creation that organizes society over time. Fearful images of malevolent spirits, tribes or predators or attractive ones of benevolent spirits fit into type three. The first and second could be communicated in coercive or co-optive ways drawing on the third, initially at least, and on the threat of violence. Harari's threefold social constructions were environmental (here referring to narratives based on symbolic interaction about material objects), social ontography and imagination. Frames are used in political organization and strategic communication, elaborated as ideology, and for generating prescribed action. The kind of frame creation noted by Harari (2011, pp. 3, 41) allows influentials to describe world politics as having benevolent or malevolent features – malevolent features that necessitated dark responses, hence the inhospitality of realism towards morality. Morgenthau (1948) warned about virtuous aspirations, prosecuted intemperately, ending even in violence: "Robespierre was one of the most virtuous men … [y]et it was the utopian radicalism of that very virtue that made him kill those less virtuous than himself."

Machiavelli recognized that dark deeds are sometimes necessary, especially in establishing a regime (Germino 1972, p. 32). While narratives of war and glory have dominated the discourse of ruling elites in the past, some empires, Indian emperor Ashoka's for one, having been established, disavowed hard power narratives in favor of soft power, replacing territorial capture with captivation of hearts and minds (Chitty 1994). The doctrinal message had been crafted by Prince Gautama who had eschewed power to become a contemplative. Discourses around rule of doctrine, such as Kautilya's (1915) discussion of *dharmachakra* (wheel of doctrine), anticipate good governance and rule of law. Confucianism privileges the compound virtues of benignity and rectitude (*ren-yi*) respectively (Chitty 2011). The notion of rule of law is inexorably linked to fairness and equity but their meanings have varied under different elite-generated myths of social organization (Harari 2011). The hierarchical Indian caste system and the Mandate of Heaven in China would have been viewed as fair and equitable in earlier times and perpetuated through an expectation of top-down violence. The Indian elites or influentials are echoed in the Lasswellian triad of symbolic, military and mercantile elites (Chitty 1992, p. 29).[10]

These groups later discovered a new theatre wherein their interests could be furthered through struggle in the polity of the Republic of India. Machiavelli believed that "the struggle between the few and the many could lead to results that could further the interests of both groups", a dynamic seen in contradictions of power that continue to inhabit the capillaries of world politics today and jostle humanity towards new constructions of humanist polity (Germino 1972, p. 50). The republic becomes the institution that maintains equitability[11] (a mutually accepted balance that may not be equal) while facilitating change and progress. Onuf (2013, p. 515) notes that Aristotle had no familiarity with rule of law; that the term "broadly if metaphorically describes those forms of rule that Aristotle considered good because those who rule are constrained by law to rule for the common good". For Machiavelli the common good "was virtually identical with the good of the common people" and he favored the cause of the common people as being more just because they sought to avoid domination by others rather than to dominate (Germino 1972, pp. 28, 50–1).

Machiavelli (Germino 1972) further advised that law may be used to control but can be toothless if compliance cannot be enforced – a condition we see in world politics. For theorists who advise a prince, compliance is a condition willed on subjects. Compliance may be initiated through force and sustained by ideology and associated socialization over time. Hard power is institutionalized in, or as, hard law and compliant behavior. When law-compliant behavior is prompted by attractiveness of law (and even love for the law), the original coercion has transubstantiated to soft power. Following principles, truth and virtue associated with a popularized ideology generates moral authority for leaders. Verisimilitude might work for a time but pretense at good governance will soon out. When socially-approved behavior is generated by myths or moral values, costs of social control are lessened.

### *The coming of cooperation to IR*

By the mid-twentieth century realism and idealism were the two main approaches to international relations. The latter was also called utopianism and included the Grotian or legalist approach. Realism has a long history, from Thucydides through Machiavelli and Hobbes to Morgenthau and beyond in the western tradition (Thucydides 1910; Machiavelli 1982; Hobbes 2012; Morgenthau 1948). The orderly Grotian world is generally contrasted with Hobbesian anarchy that requires force to compel order. Realists saw peace as a respite between wars. Potential force (fear-generated) needed to be displayed by an actor prompting (force-generated) fear in the enemy. The characteristics of realism, with its positivist[12] association, are primacy of security, human egotism, anarchic world politics and irrelevance of morality in international relations (Korab-Karpowicz 2013). Idealists, on the other hand, saw the possibility of peace through cooperation, communication, diplomacy, law and trade. And, as seen earlier, realists have not completely disavowed moral considerations (Machiavelli 1982; Morgenthau 1948).

The terms idealism and utopianism were replaced by liberalism, which argues that cooperation and the development of governance regimes and structures are possible in the international system through sharing of societal values. Today, one speaks of three major paradigms in international relations: neo-realism is a realism that is less exclusionary about economics; neo-liberalism is a liberalism that is less exclusionary about politics; constructivism sees mind (through intersubjective structures) as the shaper of

international politics – rather than factors such as material conditions, the nature of man or domestic politics (Wendt 1999, p. 48). Carr (1961) described realism and utopianism in international relations as being in a dialectic embrace and believed that a synthesis would become necessary in constructing a new world order (Laqueur 1987, p. 115). The synthesis seems to have been approached first through neoliberalism and neorealism finding a degree of convergence in international regime theory. Keohane and Nye's (1989, 2001) work on complex interdependence, a key element of Nye's neoliberalism, discusses conditions under which cooperation would be a better option than conflict. Cooperation is a strand continuing from idealism/utopianism, through Deutsch (1966) and Burton (1965), to the neoliberals, who, like Burton, associate it with a reclaimed realism. The attraction deficit for cooperation between potential cooperating parties around non-exclusionary public goods is addressed in the discussion on public choice and collective action (Olson 2002) and the "tragedy of the commons" (Hardin 1968). International regime theory shows how, through equitable (rather than equal) distribution of rewards between hegemonic and lesser powers, an international regime can be attractive variously to both groups (Krasner 1983). The old realism and liberalism were within the umbra of a positivist beam, but a beam of post-positivism revealed theorists of the constructivist paradigm in its theoretical umbra and scholars of soft law, feminist IR and environmental IR, and other areas of 'low politics', in its penumbra. I would see myself as persuaded by a constructivism that allows for alternative constructions such as realist and idealist to compete in and shape world politics and which sees the importance of positivist and post-positivist concerns as contingent on the context in which an actor finds itself.

A reading of Burton (1965) reveals that his spectrum has force and influence at the two ends and political and economic power in the middle. Like Nye later on with soft power, Burton challenged orthodoxy from within its battlements, through a long hard examination of it in light of a new reality. He believed that peace can be a goal, whether within a power theory or a peace theory. Burton posited "a system beyond power politics resting on a calculated avoidance of the employment of power as an instrument of foreign policy" – seeing, with Deutsch, the problem to be less of a problem of power and more one of steering in a cybernetic sense (Burton 1965). Deutsch's "fabric of coordinated expectations" is contrasted with threats and described by Mowlana as what "keep[s] things moving and bestow[s] political power" (Deutsch 1966, p. 122; Mowlana 1996, p. 72). This fabric is part of the sphere of intangible power resources that Mowlana contrasts with tangible power resources.

The cybernetic approach and interest in cooperation of Deutsch (1966) were of interest to what could be described as an idealist sub- or co-field of IR – international communication (IC) as a harbinger of soft power. Working within IC, Mowlana made a distinction between tangible and intangible power, the latter being constituted of belief and value systems, ideology, knowledge and religion; Mowlana's tangible resources include cultural and educational products as well as economics, technology, politics and military (Mowlana 1996, p. 78). The initial step towards the delineation of soft power by Nye (2011, p. 21) was also through the concept of intangible power resources from which he identified "institutions, ideas, values, culture and the perceived legitimacy of policies culture, ideology and institutions" but noted that "patriotism, morale, and legitimacy strongly affect the military's capacity to fight and win". He characterizes legitimacy as a power reality (Nye 2011, p. 82). Legitimacy of rule is seen to arise from legal, traditional or charismatic authority or combinations thereof (Weber 1958). Rulers selected through

rules and procedures are invested in legal authority but, like traditional and charismatic rulers, they may still benefit from being seen to be benign rulers.

Mowlana's (1996, p. 179) argument is that there needs to be an examination of "the notion of power as less a problem of governing and more a problem of cooperation, learning and growth" in line with Deutsch's (1966, p. 22) "coordinated expectations" between states. Burton's (1965) notion of mutual understanding between powers and the notions of conflict and cooperation addressed by him in his work on conflict resolution and by Sherif *et al*. (1961) in their work within the realistic conflict theory framework are compatible positions.[13] Moreover, by showing that cooperation contributes to positive mutual images between hitherto conflicting parties, Sherif *et al*. provided a basis for relating cooperation to soft power. Burton (1965), at the time, saw power terminology to be of diminishing value in a world politics where physical force and threats of force were being replaced by influence. In the theatre of world politics the self-confessed idealist without illusions, Kennedy, was already calling for focus "on a more practical, more attainable peace, based not on a sudden revolution in human nature but on a gradual evolution in human institutions – on a series of concrete actions and effective agreements which are in the interest of all concerned … Genuine peace must be the product of many nations, the sum of many acts" (Kennedy 1963). Burton's (1965) emphasis on mutual understanding when coupled with cooperation is suggestive of dialogic rather than strategic cooperation.

The structural limits to wider cooperation posed under realism make defense cooperation attractive in balancing power. Even neo-realists such as Jervis (1992) looked at the notion of cooperation, albeit in security regimes. Wider cooperation is advocated under liberalism to contain the problem of anarchy and create conditions for peace and prosperity. It was Onuf[14] (1989) who introduced constructivism into international relations; constructivism formed the synthesis which allowed societies to construct world politics in realist, liberal or other images through words and deeds. Wendt (1999) also helped develop this area in IR.

Nye (2011, p. 82) points out unequivocally that "soft power is not a form of idealism or liberalism. It is simply a form of power, one way of getting desired outcomes". He argued that realist and liberal strains needed to be hybridized into a new strain of liberal realism. One might ask why there is a need to design a hybrid liberal realist habitat for soft power? Constructivism, after all, focuses on norms, identity and culture and is a natural habitat for soft power even if the latter concept was launched from within neoliberalism (Chitty and Dong 2015, pp. 31–4). The English School too has a hospitable multiperspectival platform. Nye (2011, p. 82) had emphasized co-optive power in contrast with command power, but, further embracing realism into neoliberalism, he noted that "only a truncated and impoverished version of realism ignores soft power". Introducing the concept of smart power or the ability to blend hard and soft power usefully into the lexicon of international relations, Nye (2008a, p. 107) argued that liberal realist foreign policy should recognize the limits of American power, seek an integrated grand strategy based on smart power and evangelize core values of the US polity (Nye 2008b). Nye has not only been successful in making more respectable the concerns of low politics[15], areas of politics considered in the past to be of lesser import than the concerns of high politics and realism – security and sovereignty – but also in mixing soft and hard political strategies into a more palatable option for national security managers on the Democratic side of US politics. Indeed, low and high politics are viewed as a false dichotomy in recent constructions of world politics (Ripsman 2006).

The changing political topography is to be witnessed in the ascendancy of cybernetics and of telecommunication networks as security concerns. Nye (2011, pp. 17–18) recognizes networks as "important elements of structural power" and involvement in more communication networks than others gives the US "greater opportunity to shape preferences". He further notes the greater facility that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can have in operating networks under a broader, less state-controlled "new public diplomacy" (2011, p.108). In his work on communication power, network theorist Castells (2009) argues that meaning construction in minds offers a more stable and decisive basis for power than coercion. He identifies four network powers listed here with pithy descriptors: networking power (gatekeeping power), network power (network protocol power), networked power (hierarchical node power) and network-making power (connecting nodes). Castells sees public diplomacy as potentially constructing "a global public sphere around the global networks of communication, from which the public debate could inform the emergence of a new form of consensual world governance" (Castells 2008, p. 91). There has been a convergence of technologies of symbolic, mercantile and military influentials today around telematics and informatics (Chitty 1992). This has coincided with the nascence of noöpolitik based on ideational power (Ronfeldt and Arquilla 2007) and the burgeoning of late modern civil society which Onuf sees seeping out of local and regional spaces onto the wider stage (Onuf 2004).

## *Soft and hard power, high and low politics*

Security and sovereignty matters were regarded, in positivist international relations, as high politics; all else being low. While national security remains a core political issue, today issue areas that are linked to national security have proliferated and include cybersecurity, environmental security and food security. In the post-positivist moment, apart from cooperation, civil society and civic virtue, which have been foregrounded here, issues such as ethnicity, gender, human rights, migration and poverty draw attention. Military security, particularly military operations and espionage, continues to be very high politics in a practical sense and one sees a degree of consensus about security emerging in countries during war time. The continuation of high and low political calculus into practical diplomacy is seen in the way "politicians and diplomats, have, in the main, regarded cultural diplomacy as a lesser tool of diplomacy which in its turn is regarded by some as a lesser tool of foreign policy" and how "[m]any diplomats may support cultural diplomacy in principle, but in practice tend to place it at the lower end of their work priorities" (Mark 2009, pp. 2–3). The realist paradigm has been well and truly entrenched in diplomatic perspectives as "a by-product of a long history of viewing international relations in terms of economic and military power" (Melisen 2005, p. 5). One might also remark that, in the diplomatic realm, soft power should not be seen as quarantined to cultural diplomacy within public diplomacy. Even in-camera diplomatic negotiations can be influenced by hard and soft power. Without discounting the insights of post-positivism, one might say that there is realpolitik in differentiating into high, medium and low politics matters that can be defined as being of more or less importance on the basis of contingency. The further away the purpose of public diplomacy is from high politics and the state – as in people-to-people exchanges – the easier it is to associate public diplomacy practice with cultural diplomacy. The closer the association with high politics, the more likely that information would be viewed as sensitive, and open discussion in the public sphere curtailed by states on the grounds of security.[16] Medium politics, in Table 1.1.1.1 below,

*Table 1.1.1.1* Types of public diplomacy (PD) context and soft power generation potential

| *Arena* | *Character of openness* | *Examples of issue areas* | *PD type* | *Potential for generation of soft power in publics* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| High politics | Closed | Military intelligence, operations | – | n.a. |
| | Strategically open | Military intelligence (strategic releases)<br>Battle briefings | Hard | Low among policy sceptics<br>High among policy supporters |
| Medium politics | Open (information is selectively made available to the public)<br>Open to debate by political parties and in civil society | Energy, environment, human rights, immigration, telecommunications, trade | Medium | Medium |
| Low politics | Open (information is made available to the public)<br>Open to debate by political parties and in civil society | Culture, education, health, sports | Soft | High (potential for winning the hearts, minds and appetites of policy opponents – without necessarily converting them, in terms of high political and medium political policy) |

*Source*: Professor Naren Chitty, 'Public diplomacy: partnering publics' in A. Fisher and S. Lucas (eds.), *Trials of Engagement: The Future of US Public Diplomacy*, 2011.

refers to issues that are seen increasingly as being of a crucial nature but are not always linked with security and sovereignty (Chitty 2015a). That said, there are many who will argue that environmental, energy, immigration and telecommunications are issues that already impinge on national security.

The potential for public generation of soft power in the high category is lower among policy sceptics and higher among policy supporters. The potential for public generation of soft power in the low category is for winning the hearts, minds and appetites of policy opponents – without necessarily converting them in terms of high political and medium political policy. The low politics domain of soft public diplomacy is the comfort zone of cultural relations or cultural diplomacy. The following broad definitions are offered for public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy in order to differentiate between them:

> Public diplomacy is engagement variously between governments and publics (noting their diasporic nature), whether between countries or within one country,

> through use of media (including social media), mobility or cultural production (including by prosumers), for purposes of building sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships and generating mutual goodwill. Public diplomacy content and communication style can be based on attraction (soft power), coercion (hard power) or on strategic mixtures of hard and soft power – smart power.
>
> Cultural diplomacy, a subset of public diplomacy, is a set of practices through which state or non-state actors draw on their heritage[17] or contemporary culture, using media (including social media), mobility or cultural production (including prosumption), for purposes of building sustainable mutually beneficial relationships and generating mutual goodwill in groups with which they wish to partner.

So, categories of soft power may be employed in public diplomacy that has high potential for public participation. As much as states would militate against public discussion of high security information, there is the countervailing appetite for information and loquacity in the public sphere. Arising from outside IR, there is the notion of public diplomacy as civil society influencing government; Castells (2008) sees public diplomacy as the diplomacy of the public and a way for civil society to influence government continuously. Such democratic processes can be attractive to publics at home and abroad (Chitty 2014). Publics are able to influence publics abroad using attractive messages projected internationally by social media through clicktivism. Riordan (2005, p. 191) has noted that "[e]ngaging with foreign civil societies is often best done by the nongovernmental agents of our own civil societies".

Where public diplomacy, or for that matter, diplomacy, develops trust, liking and alliances for a country, soft power is generated. While distinguishing cultural diplomacy from public diplomacy as a subset works, the term political diplomacy is not helpful; diplomacy is viewed as political in nature. The soft power associated with civic virtue and its messaging – both in style and content – are examples of political types of public diplomacy, as is the messaging of political leaders and diplomats. To make a distinction between civil and state public diplomacy would be useful.

Civil diplomacy is engagement variously between civil society in a country and the government to further the interests of civil society or promote the interests of the country, or between groups in civil society and civil society groups and/or governments abroad to engage in cooperation in furthering mutual interests or to develop sustainable and cooperative relationships.

## Constructing soft power

### *Normative soft power*

This section discusses the moral features of soft power that are invariably derived from ethical traditions and their continuing dialogue with political thought. The cumulative learning process in Europe (including through the influences of Greece; Rome; Judaism; Christianity; Islamic civilization; the Renaissance; the Reformation; philosophical, European and American political and industrial revolutions; imperialism and European integration), has resulted in the distillation of European heritage values as western normative soft power. The UN, in its creation, was a 'normative consequence' of Euro-American speech acts (and their interaction with countervailing speech acts from the Soviet bloc) of the three kinds identified by Onuf (1989) and applied here to a world

order context – assertives (that describe world order or propose a new description of the present order without calling for transformation), directives (that lead to changes in world order or ordering) and commissives (that commit an actor to a desired world order that it projects). Subsequent to the formation of the UN, actors such as the Non-Aligned Movement have contributed commissives about international relationships and others such as China have contributed directives leading to new financial institutions outside the UN and Bretton Woods system. The UN family of institutions, the Bretton Woods institutions and organizations such as the new international economic institutions proposed by China, are the diplomatic forums wherein legitimate actors of the world confederacy exchange assertives, directives and commissives and seek to retain the shape of or reshape the confederacy in various ways. Chinese scholars have pointed to the importance of being able to influence international discourse and institutional frameworks, provide leadership and project its culture, a metapower (Li 2009, p. 27).

They seek also to promote preferred national self-images and influence policy discourses; being seen as able to influence policy discourses is, in itself, an expression of soft power.

Nye takes a strategic view of soft power. Because of his instrumental focus, he consistently uses the term 'targets' for the recipients of soft power messages and 'agents' for those who deploy soft power. But he explains that targets' thinking about agents is important to consider, as "[a]ttraction and persuasion are socially constructed" (Nye 2011). This suggests that Nye's targets are more than targets – they are more akin to the active receivers of reception theory (Hall 1980). Note the reception and moral tone in qualifications (in parentheses) in Nye's description of a country's "three basic [soft power] resources, its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when others see them as being legitimate and having moral authority)". There is the aforementioned complementary side to assertives, directives and commissives – the listening[18] – both by influentials at the top of the Lasswellian pyramid[19] and those in the lower reaches.[20] Attractiveness helps: it is more in the vein of soft power to be captivated by compelling messages than to be captured and compelled. When rulers listen to citizens, citizens find that attractive.

Today, more than at any time in history, individuals and communities have access to groups and technologies that can amplify their voices, and if influentials attend they will hear these voices. Without audition the voice of minorities will be obscured in republics by enumeration of vote, of majorities or coalitions of minorities (Chitty 1992, p. 37). This is particularly pertinent to a public diplomacy related to foreign policy where a state seeks to partner variegated publics at home and abroad. Onuf (2014) calls for the *demos* to be listened; listening should be viewed as a civic virtue for rulers and the ruled – as should responsible participation in the public sphere. "[B]eing involved in political processes is an important civic virtue" (Lee 2006) The governance relationship needs to be dialogic with mutual listening and characterized by benignity and rectitude. Benignity and rectitude expressed through humanist, cooperative and dialogic orientation are at the heart of governance in a civil republic. However, in the context of electronic media and social media both rulers and the ruled have developed new forms of rhetoric to attract and influence large numbers of followers, and these may be based less on virtue than on entertainment value.

Political values need to be attractive to others and adhered to by agents; foreign policy needs to be legitimate and have moral authority in the minds of targets. So, even if, as Nye claims, "soft power is a descriptive, rather than a normative concept" (Nye 2011,

p. 84), in order to be effective it needs to be seen by targets to be legitimate and have moral authority in its foreign policy manifestation. This would be soft power for good. Nye also refers to the soft power of what we would call rogue states and other unlawful actors – soft power for bad? Non-democratic, dictatorial and even criminal leaders, organizations or messages are able to exert "a great deal of soft power in the eyes of their acolytes but that did not make it good" (Nye 2011, p. 81). Habermas' (1987; 1984) strategic communication is characterized by the intent to strategically change the thinking of the other interlocutor, but the content need not be propagandist or untruthful. Nye takes the view that if a message is seen as propaganda by a target, "it loses its persuasive power" (Nye 2011, p. 4). Soft power may be intrinsically amoral but, even so, it needs to be morally deployed in the light of the broadly humanist consensus of the world confederacy around human security.[21]

Nye's model assumes humanistic international values that guide the community of nations. Indeed, the UN system is constructed around language to which there is broad agreement even if interpretations differ; political modernization is viewed as a prerequisite for economic development in the west and vice versa in China. If China has to overcome western public opinion related to human rights, the US has to struggle with its foreign policy being unpopular in segments of populaces at home and abroad.

## *Virtues*

Onuf (2013, p. 519) notes "four cardinal virtues (wisdom, justice, courage and seemliness), that individuals naturally possess in varying degrees and exercise in ways reflecting their statuses in society". He also describes virtues as variegated and sees the practice of virtue as being a contribution to the common good (2013, p. 516). Aristotle identified nine core virtues: courage, gentleness, justice, liberality, magnanimity, magnificence, prudence, temperance, wisdom (Aristotle ed. Ross 1959). Machiavelli reduced these to justice (rectitude) and charity (benignity) but warned that a ruler who practices these "where many are not good" will be badly served (Germino 1972, p. 31). For Montesquieu, republican virtue was essentially the love of the republic and the practice of moderation and frugality. Republican, monarchic and despotic governments were based on virtue, honor and fear respectively (Montesquieu 1899).

A congruent triad of composite virtues – civic virtue, corporate virtue (Schudt 2000) and military virtue – resonate with soft, economic and military power, Nye's (2004, pp. 45–9) three power types which he draws from Carr (1987). Civic, corporate and military virtue may be populated within these, with variations in nuance in different locations. In the contemporary peacetime context Aristotle's virtues contribute to governance which I see as a two-way process that today hosts the perennial tussle between social blocs in society. Justice, temperance, prudence and liberality contribute to equitability – or proportional rather than equal outcomes – which is characteristic of republican government and can be expressed as aspects of rectitude. Equitability is akin to Aristotle's "proportional equality" that takes into account "natural differences between kinds of people" (Onuf 2009, p. 3). Gentleness, magnanimity and prudence contribute to humaneness, favor listening and dialogic communication and can be expressed as aspects of benignity. The benignity and rectitude of governing elites, influentials in civil society and ordinary members of civil society are of different orders.

Nye (2011, p. 92) refers to Vuving's "three clusters of agent and action that are central to attraction: benignity, competence and beauty (charisma)". Vuving (2009, pp. 8–12)

uses the terms benignity, brilliance and beauty, qualities that generate soft power through gratitude and sympathy; admiration; and inspiration respectively. Consideration is given to these below in connection with the polysemous nature of the term 'make-up' – construction, competence, conciliation, composition (cosmetics and concoction)[22] – and these are employed to propose a qualitative soft power typology with composition (normatively rich in terms of heritage), conciliation and composition (having normativizing propensity) being most desirable, composition having ethically acceptable (cosmetic accentuation) and ethically unacceptable (concoction) variations. Lasswell and Kaplan's (1950, pp. 55–6) welfare (enlightenment, wealth, skill) and deference values (power,

*Table 1.1.1.2* Relating categories of virtue to welfare and deference values

| *Aristotle's virtues* | *Cardinal virtues* | *Lasswell's Welfare (W) and Deference (D) values* | *Behavior* | *Effect* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| _ | _ | (D) power | be coercive | feel fear |
| courage | courage | _ | _ | feel admiration |
| gentleness, liberality, magnanimity | _ | (D) affection (includes love and friendship) | be benign, cooperate, dialogue, listen | feel friendship, love |
| justice | justice | (D) rectitude (moral values: virtue, goodness, righteousness etc.) | uphold equality under rules; uphold political equitability | feel admiration |
| prudence, temperance, wisdom | wisdom | (W) enlightenment (knowledge, insight in social relations) | exercise wisdom | feel admiration |
| _ | seemliness (rectitude/ beauty) | _ | exercise veracity | feel admiration inspiration |
| magnificence (beauty or greatness) | _ | (D) respect: status, honor, recognition, prestige, glory, reputation | be an example | feel admiration |
| _ | _ | (W) wealth (income: services or goods) | _ | _ |
| _ | _ | (W) skill – proficiency in any practice | virtuosity | feel admiration |

*Source*: Aristotle, *Ars Rhetorica* (1959 edition); H. Lasswell and A. Kaplan, *Power and Society: A Framework for Political Enquiry* (1950); N. Onuf, 'Organizing for Good: Republican Theory in a Changing World', in M. Bassiouni, J. Gomula, P. Mengozzi *et al.*, *The Global Community Yearbook of International Law and Jurisprudence* (2013); and A. Vuving, 'How Soft Power Works', paper presented at the American Political Science Association annual meeting, 2009.

affection, rectitude, respect) are related where possible to notions of virtue, behavior and effects in Table 1.1.1.2.[23]

If we relate soft power to Aristotelian virtues then an actor's courage, justice, prudence etc., seemliness and magnificence can excite admiration. An actor's gentleness etc. can build positive relationships, partnerships, friendship and love. However, we need to step out of Aristotle's virtues to Lasswell's welfare and deference values to find a locus for cultural production that leads to soft power – through admiration for virtuosity of skills in crafting preferred cultural artefacts – tangible or intangible. And the motivator of all republican virtue is Montesquieuan love of country, a love that could work in tandem with political, economic or military interests.

### *Heritage and contemporary culture, civic virtue and soft power*

The exercise by a social object of an inherent attraction, prior to this being activated by symbolic, mercantile or military influentials (Lasswell 1963 [1935]), is soft power in a passive mode (Nye 2011, p. 94). There are sites, artefacts, practices and ideas, objects of symbolic interaction (Blumer 1969; Mead 1982) and political narrative that exert such attraction. Locational narratives associated with national pride – for instance, the Grand Canyon or "symbolic political accretions such as the Pyramids, the Great Wall of China or the Palace at Versailles" – (Chitty 2015b) convey the soft power of sites. Pictorial, textual and sound images of a nation (such as national flags, anthem lyrics and anthem scores respectively) are invested in soft power to patriots. Often, though not invariably, vast soft power accruals are residue from imperial hard power projects. These are examples of the transubstantiation of traction (hard power) to attraction (soft power) – of the hard power of *anciens régimes* to heritage soft power. Vast deposits of attractive art, architecture, language, literature and music – that had political contexts in the past – have been left behind from ages past. Successor civilizations benefit from the allure of antiquity. Heritage soft power, such as that of the Pyramids, can be post-political, in that the politics that generated them as (once feared and now admired) symbols of pharaonic hard power have long been buried. Their soft power may have remained largely passive prior to the rise of modern international tourism, yet it attracted Napoleon during his military excursion in Egypt (DeSalvo n.d.). Power can be a factor here in two ways; first, as in palaces and tombs containing narratives of power that have ceased to be fearsome over time and are now winsome; second, in the perlocutionary intent associated with the use of these artefacts today. Such soft power can be activated today through tourism promotion strategies and messages. Regardless of what kind of government is in power in Egypt, a military dictatorship or a liberal democratic government, the Pyramids and other Egyptian antiquities will continue to exert attraction. However, the calculus of security, based on hard power of states and terrorists, can lead to tourists, for instance, abandoning an iconic destination.

The soft power of archeological or historical objects may be re-politicized, and activated by influentials. Long-forgotten narratives may be 'discovered' by and politicized by cultural entrepreneurs and political brokers respectively. Young (1976, p. 46) argues that "a distinction is worth making between the cultural entrepreneur, who devotes himself to enlarging the solidarity resources of a community; and a political broker, who mobilizes the social and political realm". The political entrepreneur of Rabushka and Shepsle (1972, p. 60) "manipulates 'politically salient' natural social cleavages", cleavages widened through successful messaging (Chitty 1992, p. 9). Political entrepreneurs latch

themselves onto social reform issues and interest groups (Meydani 2009, p. 29). Cultural and political entrepreneurship is a form of civic participation by these influentials; civil society groups participate by converging around the influentials' messages and cooperating to further shared goals.

The twin founts of soft power are interrelated heritage and contemporaneous passive soft power. It is often Montesquieuan love of country, republican virtue, that motivates participants in civil diplomacy from among influentials and civil society to emphasize heritage or contemporary culture in their country's messaging to the outside world. Republican virtue prompts engagement with one's own government or with civil society or governments abroad to form mutually beneficial relationships that will make prosperity and security sustainable without the use of violence, coercion or inducement. Republican virtue motivates citizens to emphasize heritage or contemporary culture in their cultural diplomacy. And it can be republican virtue that prompts citizens (industrialists or prosumers) to engage in cultural production, not only for profit but also to benefit their country. The same is true about media entrepreneurship for soft power (promoting one's country abroad) or military entrepreneurship in soft power (peace-keeping and military friendship). The corporate entity that invests in schemes to attract students or visitors to its homeland, to popularize aspects of its country overseas through media or cultural production, reveals republican virtue in seeking to benefit while benefiting the country. The NGO that invites youth from other countries to intercultural workshops in its own country is again acting with the public interest at heart in a form of externally oriented civil diplomacy. Table 1.1.1.3 depicts the key virtue-based behavior that should characterize a soft power relationship (see below) in civil diplomacy between citizen and ruler (vertical axis) and between citizens of two countries (horizontal axis).

Such virtues, while shown here in relation to civil diplomacy, may also characterize cultural industrial, governmental, media, military or other entrepreneurship in soft power exchanges that are likely to be mutually beneficial, all else being equal.

*Table 1.1.1.3* Contemporary virtue-based behavior associated with soft power relationships in civil diplomacy

| | *Citizen* | |
|---|---|---|
| Citizen of country A | Listen<br>Engage in dialogue<br>Exchange values for mutual benefit<br>Develop mutually beneficial relationships<br>Cooperate in humanist projects<br>Eschew violence, coercion or inducement | Citizen of country B |
| — | *Ruler* | — |

*Source*: Professor Naren Chitty, 'Development is Communication', article in *Telematics and Informatics* (1992); N. Fairclough, *Language and Power* (1989); J. Nye, *The Future of Power* (2011); N. Onuf, 'Rules and Rule in International Relations' (online article 2014, viewed 13 January 2016 at www.helsinki.fi).

## Refracting soft power

A country's policies may be detested in a second country while its cultural exports may be found to be delectable. Soft power capital generated by various kinds of exports collect in different equity accounts; deficits in one sector will not necessarily affect the soft power equity in another. One is attracted to physically and cognitively similar others or those belonging to the same group as oneself (Nye 2011, p. 92). So however well a message is packaged in the first country, policy opponents in the second could find the policy unattractive. At the same time, they could continue to find the first country's cultural exports to be attractive. Australia offers an example of this. There is a great affection for all things American in Australia and the US brand has huge equity. Nevertheless, half of the population is critical of aspects of US foreign policy.[24]

Without elaborating on the ontological relationship between culture, political values and foreign policies, Nye (2011, p. 84) describes culture as "the pattern of social behaviors by which groups transmit knowledge and values, and it exists at multiple levels" of human organization. He identifies "the basic resources that can be converted into soft power by skillful conversion strategies" to "include culture, values, legitimate policies, a positive domestic model, a successful economy, and a competent military" (Nye 2011, p. 99). He includes "public diplomacy, broadcasting, exchange programs, development assistance, disaster relief, [and] military-to-military contacts" as official instruments of soft power (Nye 2011, p. 228). In Mowlana's (1996) model of intangible power, domains such as economic, educational, military and technological arise from a cultural base. The three Lasswellian domains of symbolic, mercantile and military elites all may yield soft power for Nye and intangible power for Mowlana. Zaharna's (2009, pp. 93–7) three tiers of public diplomacy initiatives are useful to consider as states employ these to generate soft power. Zaharna identifies: first, cultural and educational exchange programs and leadership visits; second, cultural and language institutes, aid projects, city and non-political twinning and networking respectively and campaigns; third, policy networking and strategy- and coalition-building. To these may be added salient issue areas such as environment, health, sport and tourism.

Within the symbolic, mercantile and military domains the two broad types of cultural soft power resources – intangible and tangible – can be subdivided into heritage and contemporary categories. Here they will be treated in their passive form in the model at Table 1.1.1.4. Active soft power is to be found in the form of multipliers and channels such as mobility, media and cultural industries.[25] The notion of prosumption is incorporated (Toffler 1980). Prosumption and social media allow ordinary citizens to produce and share media content such that their voices may be heard and virtuosity recognized.

The active soft power resources identified above are areas of public diplomacy around which states, corporations and civil society variously develop policies and programs in order to achieve soft power dividends. Cultural industry is selected for further horizontal defraction below. Additionally, valorization of soft power is attempted through vertical refraction.

### *Refracting soft power industries horizontally and vertically*

We have noted that cultural soft power enhancement (e.g. cultural product popularization) of one country in another does not necessarily result in a sweetening of the former's foreign policy in addition to keeping aspects of relationships and national brand equity

*Table 1.1.1.4* Passive and active soft power sources and multipliers

| *Sources (passive soft power)* | | | *Channel and multiplier resources (active soft power)* |
|---|---|---|---|
| — | Heritage | Contemporary | Mobility:<br>Academic Business<br>Cultural<br>Military<br>Migration<br>Political<br>Scientific<br>Voluntary<br>Tourism etc. |
| Intangible | Knowledge, behaviour (living culture) and culture including art forms, education, folklore, history, language, law, literature, philosophy, religion, rituals, science, social media, sports, soft technology, etc. | Knowledge, behaviour (living culture) and culture including art forms, education, folklore, history, language, law, literature, news, philosophy, policy, religion, rituals, science, social media, sports, soft technology, etc. | Electronic networked media (including social media) |
| Tangible | Archaeological and historical sites and artefacts | Books<br>Cultural products<br>Museums<br>Music<br>Movies<br>People | Cultural industries (including prosumers) |

*Source*: H. Mowlana, *Global Communication in Transition: The End of Diversity* (1986); J. Nye, *The Future of Power* (2011); R. Zaharna, 'Mapping Out a Spectrum of Public Diplomacy', in N. Snow and P. Taylor (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (2009).

sweet. However, the lack of theoretical support for fungibility of soft power between cultural and foreign policy domains has not discouraged governments from spending on soft public diplomacy or cultural diplomacy in the apparent hope of reaping positive outcomes in the foreign policy realm. Cultural industrial, media and mobility channels (depicted in Tables 1.1.1.4 and 1.1.1.5) are the soft power multipliers, tools of cultural diplomacy[26], that have the capacity to reach large numbers in a foreign country, and here is where investments are made. In China, for instance, there is a belief that "the capability and effectiveness in mass communications are also an important part of a state's soft power" (Li 2009, p. 27). It should be pointed out, however, that the development of international media has other soft power benefits in relationship and brand equity sweetening that are not directly linked to attitudes to foreign policy in the short term.

Note in Table 1.1.1.5 that mobility, media and cultural industries can be vehicles and multipliers for policy products in development, economic, environmental, health and other areas as well. Here is where market meets policy in the confederacy and helps to disseminate products (value and values). Assertives, directives and commissives populate

*Table 1.1.1.5* Horizontal refractions of soft power products

| *Cultural subcategory* | *Cultural industries* | *Media* | *Mobility* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Actors | Civil society, corporations, prosumers, state agencies | Civil society, corporations, prosumers, stage agencies | Corporations, educational institutions, foreign ministries, immigration ministries, NGOs, tourism actors |
| Exports | Books, games, movies, music, sports, etc. | Blogs, books, games, movies, music, news, sports, etc. | Academics, aid workers, emergency workers, experts, migrants, officials, scientists, students, tourists, volunteers |

*Source:* Table 1.1.1.4 and *A. Toffler, The Third Wave: The Classic Study of Tomorrow (1980)*.

the electronic pathways and screens, incrementally reshaping the confederacy through its members.

Soft power, in the context of civil society within the confederacy, can infuse a communication process or be used in one. Indeed, for soft power to be activated it needs to be cast as a message, be articulated attractively, as assertives, directives or commissives that are intrinsically attractive. Communication processes that seek to be dialogic are likely to be attractive to less powerful participants in the process. The same would be true about compelling arguments rather than directives that compel. If these propositions are correct, a dialogic approach, even when strategically used, could have the desired perlocutionary results. There is, after all, a pragmatic dimension to the use of soft power.

Make-up 1 is construction and resonates with Vuving's (2009, pp. 8–12) beauty. It refers here to core heritage and contemporary values. Regarding core values, these include aesthetic, civic, ethical, philosophical, political and scientific values. The most enduring soft power capital has by definition survived the longest time – treasures from the past, whether architecture, art, literature, language or some other aspect of culture, which may be in passive or active states – heritage soft power. Among these are civic virtues that are informed by philosophical and ethical traditions such as benignity and rectitude. Benignity and rectitude may be viewed as core civic virtues, attractive behavior associated with promoting the public good rather than one's personal interests and doing so at some sacrifice to oneself. Rectitude in a public service setting can translate into good governance.[27] Absence of corruption is one indicator of the quality of rule of law and therefore good governance. Rule of law can be an attractive soft power source and used instrumentally in public diplomacy programs. The proposition is that decreasing corruption in a country should yield both domestic and international soft power dividends, all else being equal.

> Soft power has two vectors. One is internally focused in a nation-state and represents the nature of governance, the relationship between the state and the people. We may call this internal soft power or I-soft power. I-soft power is exemplified positively when the relationship between a governing institution and the people

> being governed takes on a dialogic approach. Good governance represents high quality I-soft power. The second soft power dividend from instituting a rule of law culture is that it will generate soft power vis-à-vis the external world as well. This is external soft power or E-soft power.
>
> (Chitty 2014)

Additionally, contemporary cultural artefacts, tangible and intangible, can exert soft power, some in a flash-in-the-pan manner as in popular culture that does not endure. Cultural production results in artefacts which if they demonstrate virtuosity will exert attraction on others. Popular culture may show brilliance in its crafting and beauty in the product, eliciting admiration and inspiration respectively and thus be attractive and a soft power resource. The notion of power comes into play here because attractive cultural artefacts carry cultural values from one society to another changing behavior.

Make-up 2 is competence and includes Vuving's beauty and brilliance. "If you have done your job successfully and I am doing a similar work, I will tend to learn from you and I will copy from you something that I think is at the roots of your success or your capability" (Vuving 2009, pp. 8–12). Maintaining healthy rule of law and governance cultures will generate soft power vis-à-vis citizens as these would be viewed as expressions of rectitude and instill appreciation and even gratitude in rule-dominated societies. The greater the perceived equitability, the more attractive would be the system of governance and vice versa. Conversely, taking traction and attraction as antonymic forms of handling power, we can note that the greater the perception of in-equitability within a society, the greater the danger of the use of coercion by non-democratic rulers, unless there is an ideology (with a trumping soft power) that justifies the in-equitability – such as that associated with the Hindu caste system (Chitty 1992). Good governance can have an E-soft power spin-off as well; there could be admiration for competence in this area. I-soft power is measurable in democracies through polling and various social scientific research methods including the use of big data. While E-soft power can also be measured externally by polling and research, migration, refugee and tourist numbers are indicative. Australia was first populated by Europeans through British hard power policies and laws that called for sentencing of transportation for life for minor offences. Later a prospering Australia relied on combinations of soft power (attractive lifestyles arising from good governance and industriousness) and hard power (assisted passages) to draw migrants. Today it relies on the pull of soft power but this has the consequence of the push of hard power in countries affected by war or dictatorship resulting in streams of refugees. The same effect is witnessed in Europe with its conscious deployment of normative soft power (Michalski 2005).

Make-up 3 is reconciliation, a process of harmonizing opposing beliefs, ideas, or contexts, resolution of disputes, rekindling of friendship, encouraging of harmony, compatibility, consistency. These are all positive processes if conducted dialogically without "powerful participants controlling and constraining the contributions of non-powerful participants" (Fairclough 1989, p. 46). Such constraining could lead the less powerful participant to reconcile himself to the situation without feeling gratitude, gratitude being a soft power response. However, a friendly dialogue could lead to the generation of soft power at home (I-soft power) and, through admiration, abroad as well (E-soft power). Recall the case of Mandela in South Africa and the world. I would stretch the meaning of reconciliation here to include processes that engender cooperation through benignity. The term as used here will also capture cooperation and the restoration of

cooperation where it has been abandoned. An example of engendering cooperation at the international level through reconciliation is the construction and operation of international regimes, for the administration of issue areas (such as health or trade) through a process of attraction of actors to a set of mutually acceptable norms and rules (Finlayson and Zacher 1986). International regimes' exercise of soft power on participating actors, to retain members and manage conflict *sans* use of hard power, may be an indication of the health of the political culture associated with world politics. But it needs to be said that the web of international regimes that emanate from and nurture the world confederacy is also shaped institutionally by recognition of hard power balances as discernible in the great powers' impact on the shape and rules of international institutions such as the UN Security Council. This is also the location of cooperation and friendship. Friendship can beget cooperation and vice versa. The "primary form of friendship is grounded in excellence or virtue" even though there are Aristotelian forms of friendship "based on excellence, utility, and pleasure" that are generally found in mixed forms (Onuf 2009 pp. 3, 5). Indeed, friendship between nations can be the basis of a soft power relationship that eschews violence, coercion or inducement and where partners have a mutual regard for each other's excellence, the utility of the partnership and their pleasure of association.

Make-up 4 is composition (message and communication styles) that includes positive cosmetic accentuation or the accentuation of beauty, the presentation of content, stories or assets in attractive ways; and negative concoction, invention or fabrication. Positive narratives might come out of centrally-sponsored (or not) mobility programs (migration, tourism, exchanges) or media. It should be noted that with both mediated and mobility-based cosmetics, soft power is a two-way street. While genuinely adhering to codes of benignity and rectitude generates soft power, verisimilitude through advertising and fabricated narratives do not (Chitty 2011, pp. 266–7). Nye's (2011, p. 83) view is that "[s]oft power depends upon credibility, and when governments are perceived as manipulative and information is seen as propaganda, credibility is destroyed … The best propaganda is not propaganda". While he does not draw on Habermas here, he mentions that a critic has argued that such non-manipulative communication is "but mere dialogue" (Nye 2011, p. 83). Presentation of messages in attractive ways also refers to communication styles. I have argued normatively for "a public diplomacy that sits more comfortably with Habermasian Communicative Action" – a broadly ethical (dialogic) use of soft power in soft public diplomacy (Chitty 2009, p. 316). It is more attractive for citizens when their own government listens to the public sphere and communicates with citizens in a dialogic manner in developing policies. In communications by a state with actors from a second country too, dialogue is more attractive to ordinary people than strategic communication. Strategic communication may, however, be attractive to allies during a crisis situation where leadership is sought. Interpersonal communication between peoples of different countries is more attractive than communication between the people of one country and state actors from another. "Clarity, timing, cultural sensitivity and trust" are important diplomatic values applicable here (Eliasson 2016). These types of communications generate soft power variously across national borders. It is posited here that the greater the dialogic intent and practice, the higher the grade of behavioral soft power, whether at dyadic, organizational, national or international levels. Content and delivery may be at odds and, as Nye (2011, p. 232) advises, "[d]emocracy promotion is better accomplished by soft attraction than hard coercion, and it takes time and patience".

## Conclusion

A weak international republican confederacy is flexing its soft power in the turbulence of world politics. Technologically supported social networks link the centers of power and contribute to a measure of homonomy, in flux, in the confederacy, while enhancing effects of countervailing normative impulses that are part and parcel of heteronomy. Normativization occurs through the participation by elites in globalizing civil, educational, trade, media and inter-governmental cultures and systems. The idea of "one who takes an affective interest in the well-being of all human beings" as a friend of the human race (or a *menschenfreund*) harks back to Kant (1996, p. 217). Kantian cosmopolitanism and Montesquieuan love of country embrace and quarrel in the confederacy. The humanist goals of the UN are espoused to various degrees by elites and ordinary citizens and propagated by the connectivity between international organizational, educational, media and civil society nodes. Indeed, the UN actively seeks to foster global citizenship in schools. "Education gives us a profound understanding that we are tied together as citizens of the global community, and that our challenges are interconnected" (UNESCO Global Citizenship Education n.d.). In bettering their own lives (self-interest), citizens often seek to better their country (patriotism) and the world – in one direction or the other.

These goals of betterment are the impelling force for taking action in line with the compound virtues of benignity and rectitude expressed by the UN system as good governance with differential weightage on the two components. The seeking of virtuosity in any sector (e.g. legal, mercantile, scientific), including the cultural industrial sector, for purposes of increasing one's country's soft power, is also fueled by this compound virtue.

The values of the confederacy were influenced at its inception by the European experience of modernization. The venues of governance and the avenues of electronic communication themselves exercise soft power to great and small, rich and poor, eastern and western powers and peoples; they offer opportunities for cooperation in achieving goals of human security and contributing to the co-evolution of values – as well as for dramaturgical action on the world stage. States and peoples operate in an international environment where virtue associated with nurturing the public good and actively engaging in the public sphere is valued, even if adherence to these values is variegated. As much as there are outlaws within states, there are all manner of recusants who contest or refuse to conform to rules of the international community. There are some who use technologies, such as social media, developed by legitimate institutions within the confederacy, to spread countervailing ideologies outside the confederacy's forums for ruling and rule-making. Some of these are clastic, insurgent, intractable, rebellious, recalcitrant; others are gradually assimilated into the peaceful communities and formal councils of the confederacy.

There are two types of theaters we might consider for the operation of soft power in the confederacy. These are the world political and intrastate theaters. Within these we find actors such as intergovernmental organizations, states, corporations, non-government organizations, media, communities, groups and individuals. Humanistic virtues associated with republicanism are formulated into goals, commissives, addressing human security concurrently with a culture of good governance while abiding within the rule-based framework of twenty-first century international relations. Gey takes the view that "[i]n the abstract it is hard to argue against the values of virtue, dialogue, and consensus in government, regardless of one's theoretical approach to political culture. But these terms are very broad, and are susceptible to very different meanings in application" (Gey 1993). Consensus on achieving human security is forever being sought in the confederacy,

through dialogue and civic virtue, to build peace and prosperity. Homonomy and heteronomy are constantly at odds here in tussles between entropic and disentropic normative forces. Whether the confederacy becomes stronger, weaker or remains the same – or becomes more or less republican or democratic in the long term – remains to be seen, as does the future role of soft power.

This chapter focused on soft power associated with civic virtue of influentials and citizens within countries and on the international stage. It discussed traditional and contemporary categories of passive soft power and the triad of important soft power multipliers – mobility, media and cultural industries. Noting the rich and confusing variety of definitions it has, based on the analysis conducted in the chapter, provided definitions of public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy and civil diplomacy in order to link these with soft power. It has further analyzed soft power and has posited categories such as I- and E-soft power and elaborated on passive (traditional and contemporary) and active (mobility, media and cultural industries) soft power. The following propositions offer opportunities for progressive testing: international civic virtue (including cooperativeness, correctness, fairness, equitability, humaneness, willingness to listen) practiced by international actors is attractive to global publics; civic virtue practiced by international actors is attractive to both citizens and overseas publics; civic and corporate virtues shape the governance values of influentials and are attractive to ordinary people; robust and responsible engagement in civil society, including through e-participation, is a virtue of citizens; e-participation in policy processes by governments or citizens involves agenda-setting, policy preparation, decision-making, policy execution and evaluation (van Dijk 2012, p. 113). Hocking (2005) notes that "[c]hallenged by evermore complex, multifaceted agendas, there is a necessity to establish policy networks of varying scope and composition, which may, for example, bring together governmental actors, civil society organizations (CSOs) and business". Cooperation in the development of policy aimed at sustainable peace and prosperity is a civic virtue for international actors. Hopefully the practice of these and other relevant civic virtues will continue to generate soft power in the confederacy and provide a bulwark against those groups that militate against it.

## Notes

1 I would like to express my gratitude to Nicholas Onuf for reading two drafts of this chapter and providing valuable feedback at a time when he was preparing for a long overseas assignment.

2 The UN Sustainable Development Goals (for the common good) deal with post-positivist issues: poverty; hunger; health and well-being; quality education; gender equality; clean water and sanitation; affordable and clean energy; decent work and economic growth; industry, innovation and infrastructure; reduced inequalities; sustainable cities and communities; responsible consumption and production; climate action; life below water; life on land; peace, justice and strong institutions; partnerships for the goals (United Nations 2015). Positivist issues are the realm of the Security Council. Civil society, NGOs and TNCs contribute to the international dialogue that shapes consensus on governance. It is through communication that partnerships and networks of cooperation are established and values exchanged within and without the UN in pursuing human security goals.

3 Aristotle sees the virtues of rulers and citizens, both being citizens, as temperance and justice. However, the ruler's moderation is moderation in rule whereas the citizen's moderation is personal self-restraint (Aristotle, trans. Jowett 1885).

4 "The Princeton Report simply wrapped-up public diplomacy within soft power" (Fisher and Lucas 2011, p. 10). The terms public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy have been variously defined as having different actors, objectives and interrelationships. See Fisher and Lucas (2011, pp. 1–15), Melissen (2005, pp. 3–27) and Snow (2009, pp. 3–11) for a cross-section of

models of public diplomacy that range from non-governmental to governmental; two-way symmetric to one-way non-symmetric and overseas audience focus and/or inclusion of domestic audience. The government–public debate continues into cultural diplomacy, with Mark (2008) taking the position that "[c]ultural diplomacy is a diplomatic practice of governments."

5 A state may need to replenish its supply of bombs during war, having dropped its inventory over hard power targets, but the more people that are won over by a soft power initiative, the more does soft power expand.

6 Mobility programs such as Fulbright, an instrument of US soft power, allow a visiting scholar from the US to a second country to be exposed to the soft power of that country and become an informal ambassador for it on her return home. Whether mobility programs have a positive effect in either direction will very much depend on the likeability of sojourners and the nature of their reception in the host community and sojourn in the host country. What is soft power for one country or group can be repulsion to others.

7 Onuf introduced constructivism to International Relations and is a Rule Oriented Constructivist.

8 Onuf (1998, pp. 62–3) discerns rules, norms and institutions within the seeming condition of international anarchy (thick anarchy) that "forms a social arrangement with stable patterns of relations" (Devetak, Burke and George 2011, p. 106). Wendt (1996, p. 48) writes about "an 'International State' that is neither anarchy nor hierarchy". If conceived of as a civic republican community it falls short of Gey's (1993, pp. 820–1) requirement that it needs to be "the most powerful collective agency in its designated territory". Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, noted that the UN was a reflection of the world as it is and not as it should be (World Apart_RT 10 January 2016). The UN has been referred to as a confederacy in "A confederacy for confederations" (Box 1999).

9 Onuf's (2004) three rules of functional grounds for world politics are hegemony, hierarchy and heteronomy.

10 Nye (2011, p.82) notes that "Carr described international power in three categories: military power, economic power and power over opinion".

11 Druckman and Wagner (2016, p. 389) make a distinction between equality and equity, proportionality being used as a synonym for the latter.

12 Positivism is seen as having had "androcentric bias in international relations" that is being preoccupied "with the cult of power and destruction" (Sjolander and Cox 1994).

13 Nye (2008c) describes Sun Tzu as believing that engaging in battle signifies political failure.

14 Constructivism in international relations (Onuf 1989) should theoretically allow for alternative world order constructions as well as syntheses such as Nye's (2011) proposed liberal realism to compete in shaping the world.

15 The emphasizing of "'high politics' or military security" is viewed as positivist. The field of international communication has traditionally dealt with what used to be classified as low political areas such as information flows, communication and development and cross-cultural communication and issues such as poverty, human rights and the environment. High and low politics are discussed in the next section.

16 Curtailing may be effected by cryptography as well as secrecy laws.

17 Artefacts of heritage culture may have their genesis in the "via contempliva", broadly interpreted as being associated with contemplative traditions, religious and secular, as well as the "via activa" or active life, in political expressions such as the Pyramids, Forbidden City or Versailles (Germino 1972, p. 10).

18 Cull places an enormous importance on listening in public diplomacy (Cull 2008). Onuf too promotes listening. "Scholars in IR might also profit from listening to the demos. Realists take for granted what I have been calling heteronomy without the slightest sense that this is a global condition of rule, not anarchy, and that its legitimacy is democratic in the largest, most powerful sense possible. Liberals and self-styled constructivists talk about norms, law, institutions and identity without the slightest sense that global governance demands and supports heteronomy as a mighty frame" (Onuf 2014).

19 Lasswell's insight was that societies constantly organize themselves into elites and masses, the former seeking security through gaining ascendancy over the masses by extracting values from them; the masses gain security through the values received in exchange (Lasswell 1963; Chitty 1992, p. 29).

20 Media is attracted by captivating messages and can play a role in making messages captivating.

21 The UN is a structure of political hope.
22 My original three make-ups were construction by fundamental values; cosmetic accentuation of attractiveness, to heighten magnetism; and invention or concoction.
23 In a private communication dated 29 February 2018 Nicholas Onuf observed the following: "I'd label the second column of the matrix 'the cardinal virtues' or perhaps Cicero's virtues (and they are unchanged by St Thomas). You lump prudence and temperance (seemliness) together in that column, but they are separate (and presumptively equal) virtues in the Stoic/medieval scholastic tradition. And you may have noticed that I attach a great deal of importance to seemliness as a virtue in its own right. I think Lasswell does too, even though you list respect (which I take to be an entailment of the duty of seemliness) under magnificence. In my view, some measure of respect attaches to every station in life, not just high station".
24 48 per cent of Australians disapprove of drone strikes while 44 per cent approve. However, 66 per cent of Australians viewed the US largely with favor while 30 per cent did not (Pew 2013).
25 The manner in which heritage soft power resources can be activated by cultural and political entrepreneurs has been addressed in Section II.
26 These may also be used in security-based public diplomacy as in war propaganda films, political broadcasting and high-level political visits.
27 Good governance "is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law" (UNESCO). The World Justice Project identifies the following features to characterize Rule of Law: (1) constraints to government powers; (2) absence of corruption; (3) open government; (4) fundamental rights; (5) order and security; (6) regulatory enforcement; (6) civil justice; (7) criminal justice; and (8) informal justice (World Justice Project).

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# 2

# ALTERNATIVES TO SOFT POWER

## Influence in French and German external cultural action

*Robin Brown*

### Introduction

This chapter starts from a simple observation: despite scepticism from academic theorists and policy commentators about its coherence and utility 'soft power' remains firmly entrenched in policy discourse. The popularity of the concept among policymakers stimulates more research which, in turn, gives further life to the concept (Bially Mattern 2007; Solomon 2014; Fan 2008; Breslin 2011; Hall 2010).

This leads to a puzzle. How is it that a term that appears so lacking in scientific utility can be so attractive in the policy sphere? One explanation is the ambiguity of the concept of soft power. Despite Joseph Nye's efforts to define it, the usage of 'soft power' in policy discourses is slippery. This has the effect that both a successful fashion industry and the diplomatic role of the armed forces can be treated as 'soft power' (Select Committee on Soft Power 2014).

This chapter starts from a particular interpretation of this ambiguity; that 'soft power' fills a gap in the language of international affairs as an academic field and as a practical activity. Soft power offers a way of talking about non-coercive modes of influence in international politics. Given that such influence is absolutely basic to international relations the existence of such a gap is surprising but it reflects the legacy of discussions of 'power' in International Relations (Berenskoetter and Williams 2007; Barnett and Duvall 2005). This gap explains the tension between the theoretical critiques of soft power and the attractiveness of the language to policymakers; the idea is useful because it captures something about international politics that other languages miss. The consequence of this position is that 'soft power' is likely to retain its grip on policy discourse unless researchers can offer alternative ways of conceptualizing and practicing influence.

This chapter begins the process of exploring alternatives by introducing and examining what will be termed here the foreign 'cultural projects' pursued by France and Germany over the past century. In Germany the term *auswärtige kulturpolitik* (AKP) – literally 'foreign cultural policy' – was coined just before the First World War to label the existing practices and the potential of civil society in building German influence in the

world. Even today there are strong continuities with what is now called *auswärtige kultur – und bildungspolitik* (AKBP) – foreign culture and education (Auswärtige Amt 2011). In France ideas of *rayonnement* (projection or radiation), *politique culturelle* (cultural policy) and *action culturelle extérieure* (external cultural action) continue to be all terms found in official or semi-official contexts today, but they have even older roots. In both cases these activities have consistently attracted substantial parts of the resources devoted to foreign affairs, have been seen as an integral part of national statecraft and encompass a broad range of activities; arts, language, literature, science, education and media development among others. These activities have attracted little attention in English language literature and are rarely seen (even in France and Germany) as having anything to do with American concepts of public diplomacy and soft power.

This exploration offers three benefits. First, through these lenses 'soft power' becomes just one of a number of possible ways of thinking about influence in international politics, and its distinctive assumptions become visible. Second, debates over these cultural projects have at times paralleled issues in the discussion on soft power, for instance in the relationship between national attractiveness and diplomatic influence. Third, the durability and continuity of the continental practices offers a rich field for exploring sources of success and failure in the construction of influence.

This chapter uses the term 'influence' more frequently than 'power'. Within the social sciences 'power' carries the connotation of control that comes from the Weberian definition of power as the ability to overcome resistance (Weber 1968). The type of confrontation put forward in Weber's concept is relatively rare and the achievement of clear-cut success is even rarer. Thus, focusing on power as control has the effect of narrowing the field of attention to the extent that most efforts that countries make to shape their environment become invisible. Influence is understood more as the ability to make a difference without implying that it can control outcomes. Even in the absence of control in this sense, countries see some degree of influence as worth pursuing.

The first part of this chapter outlines a history of the French and German cultural projects while the second part addresses similarities and difference with 'soft power'.

## Inventing 'cultural action'

Modern concepts and practices of cultural action emerged from the growing tendency in nineteenth-century Europe to see the world as a set of nations and to identify all the attributes of a 'country' as expressions of the nation (Greenfeld 1992; Greenfeld and Eastwood 2005; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). This process was a product of the development of the modern apparatus of the nation-state – an expanding bureaucracy, compulsory education and conscription – coupled with the nineteenth-century communications revolution; the telegraph, the railway and the steamship (Mann 1993; Silberman 1993; Mattelart 1996 [1994]). The promotion of aspects of the nation – for instance, language, art and science – abroad became the promotion of the nation in the world. This might be valuable in its own right but was also a mode of promoting the prestige and influence of the nation (and its state) in the world. Thus modern practices of cultural action were strongly associated with the nation-state.

Within this general context for the emergence of national cultural projects both the French and German cases had characteristics that reflected their particular histories. The French crown had traditionally supported the work of Catholic Orders in the Levant, but with the early nineteenth-century religious revivals this presence within the Ottoman

Empire was resuscitated by the resurgence of popular religiosity. The French public donated in support of the missionaries, who in turn saw the possibility of operating schools as a way to counter the presence of American protestant missionaries (Burrows 1986; Viaene 2012). These Christian groups provided the model for the Alliance Israélite Universelle (AIU) that from 1862 channelled support from Jewish communities in western Europe to a network of French-speaking European-style schools in the Middle East (Tsur 2012). In 1883 the AIU became the model for the Alliance Française (AF). For the founders of the Alliance there was no doubt about the relationship between the *rayonnement* of the French language and the prestige and influence of France in the world: the revival of France after its defeat by Germany in 1870–1 was a cultural as well as a political or military project. In the next two decades the committees of the Alliance become a major presence in the independent countries of Europe and the Americas (Chaubet 2006). The AF was, and remains, a private organization but it was closely aligned with the concerns of French diplomacy, soon after its founding the foreign minister was writing to his embassies asking them to provide whatever support they could to AF (Chaubet 2006, pp. 69–70). In the years before the First World War the Quai d'Orsay dispensed a small but growing volume of subsidy to schools in the Middle East and then to cultural activities elsewhere around the world (Roche and Pigniau 1995).

Unlike France, the newly united Germany had a sizeable diaspora – spread across a world of nation-states. An early concern of the Reich was that the Germanness of that diaspora was under threat, for instance through insistence on education in the national language, hence the first target of German cultural action was the support of German language schools in Europe and beyond (Düwell 1976, 2009). It was not until the decade before the First World War that German cultural action began to attempt to extend its reach via establishing schools that would attract local children (Düwell 1976, pp. 64–9; Stremmel 2015).

Even before the First World War German and French diplomats and cultural commentators were each intensely aware of what the others were doing to promote their country. Although Britain and the United States did not launch official cultural programmes until the 1930s, the activities of British and American missionaries and commercial actors were seen through a lens of national expansion (Chaubet 2006, pp. 124–31; Düwell 1976). France was well aware of the reputation and attractiveness of German universities; as early as 1892 the Alliance was working to facilitate exchanges with French universities. In 1910 the government created l'Office National des Universités et des Écoles Françaises (ONUEF) to boost the international relationships of French institutions. The ONUEF also created links between French universities and the first wave of cultural institutes that were being created to provide a platform for *rayonnement* (Chaubet 2006, p. 74).

After 1900 Germany gave more attention to reaching beyond its diaspora, and numerous societies sprung up committed to promoting links with foreign countries. Much of this activity was funded by business, which saw cultural links as opening the way for exports and investment as well as a way of promoting Germany – this close relationship between cultural and economic promotion was also seen in France (Kloosterhuis 1994).

Despite the increasing scope, complexity and state support of these cultural activities they were practiced rather than theorized, but in 1912 the German historian Karl Lamprecht wrote to the Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, arguing that the Reich needed an *auswärtige kulturpolitik*. Germany could achieve its proper place as a world power without a military confrontation if it pursued a comprehensive strategy that deployed its diplomatic, cultural, educational and economic resources to build German influence

in the world. Bethmann-Hollweg was sympathetic but doubtful that Germany was mature enough to succeed in the face of French or British cultural power. Nevertheless he instructed the government machinery to boost its efforts to promote German influence (Chickering 1993; Düwell 1976).

If Lamprecht had been unable to convince Bethmann-Hollweg before the First World War, after the conflict Germany had little choice but to make use of the cultural toolkit. Again civil society groups sprang into action, both to support the German diaspora (now expanded by the revised borders of Europe) and to build relations with other countries. Hence organizations to build links with higher education institutions abroad, support schools, and, in direct imitation of the French, to promote the German language; the Goethe Institut, the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) and the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung all trace their roots to this period (Düwell 1976; Trommler 2013; Hiden 1977; Michels 2005). A unique enterprise was the Kriegsschuldreferat (War Guilt Department), an office within the foreign ministry dedicated to undermining Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles that assigned sole responsibility for the war to Germany. The department set up disguised front organizations to aid its work and supported historians, both German and foreign, that were working on the origins of the war and were thought to be critical of the underlying thesis of Article 231 (Evans and Baylen 1995; Wittgens, 1995).

Although one thrust of AKP under the Weimar Republic was to replace a bombastic promotion of the superiority of Germany and its culture with, in theory, a more open, dialogical notion of cultural exchange (Düwell 1976, pp. 210–13), the period also marked a continuity of the competition with the French. As home of a large fraction of the sovereign states of the era, Latin America continued to be an arena of competition, although, as was the case with all these projects, what the Germans offered was appropriated in line with local needs – Spengler's *Decline of the West* was a hit in Latin America less as an expression of German genius and more as a harbinger of an era where the region could liberate itself from European cultural models (Goebel 2009; Matthieu 1991).

France attempted to forge relationships with the new states of central and eastern Europe in order to contain Germany. For Paris it was clear that these bonds would be stronger if they were based on cultural relations as well as political and military alliances; the result was the deployment of a network of Alliance Française committees, schools, and cultural institutes backed up by new central organizations to support the circulation of lecturers, writers, artists and musicians. In both Germany and France the cultural function was further institutionalized in the foreign ministry, and parliamentarians in each country gave earnest attention to the activities of the other. South-east Europe became another arena of competition, and both countries anxiously scrutinized the arrival of Italian efforts at projecting influence (Chaubet 2006; Piniau 1998; Düwell 1976; Santoro 2001; Gross 2012; Michels 2004).

Although the involvement of the state in these activities was growing in terms of the creation of specialized departments, expanding budgets and aspirations there was little capacity to formulate and execute a coherent national strategy. At the end of the 1930s France attempted a better coordination of foreign policy, external information activities and cultural activities but struggled to make a new system work (Guénard-Maget 2014; Young 2004). The situation in Nazi Germany was worse; the fragmentation of the regime and the party created a chaotic situation where different organizations constantly worked at cross purposes and undermined German influence even as they attempted to promote it (Kallis 2008; Lumans 2009; Diamond 1974; Frye 1967).

For both France and Germany 1945 meant renewed efforts to construct their position in the world that made their cultural projects more, not less, important. The importance attached to these efforts was perhaps indicated by the elevation of the cultural department of the Quai d'Orsay to the level of directorate-general – equivalent to the political section of the ministry. As de Gaulle had commented on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Alliance Française, the twin pillars on which France's standing would rest were French arms and French thought (Roche and Pigniau 1995). For Germany the aim was to build relations with the west and, given recent history, the cultural project had to be an important part of this (Düwell 2009; Kathe 2005; Michels 2005).

The impact of decolonization expanded the field of action. For France, culture was a basis for its privileged relationship with its former colonies, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa (Roche and Pigniau 1995; Walsh 1999). Although Germany was relieved of the burden of being a colonial power in an anti-colonial age it was faced with a challenge from the 'other Germany' and until the end of the 1960s waged an intense campaign to prevent other countries recognizing East Germany. Aid and cultural relations (at this point closely related) were important tools and the Goethe Institut rapidly expanded its network of posts (Kathe 2005; Pence 2012; Balbier 2009).

Although France and Germany were the pioneers of the cultural project after 1945, the way that enterprise was understood was modified by their exposure to American models and practices. America's initial foray into official culture was via the State Department's Department of Cultural Relations (established in 1938); its priority had been on collaboration in higher education. The effect of the wartime experience had been to expand the repertoire of cultural relations. Thus culture took in mass media and popular culture as well as vocational education, training and the exchange of experts to address a full range of social challenges (Espinosa 1976; Arndt 2005; Hart 2013; Ninkovich 1981). This expanded vision of culture was an important inspiration in both France and Germany. In France many of the key figures in the new Direction Générale des Relations Culturelles (DGRC) had spent the war in the United States and the name of their new directorate reflected that influence (Jeanpierre 2002: 116; Faucher 2014). In Germany the influence took longer to be felt but was an important aspect of the 'expanded concept of culture' that would emerge during the 1960s (Kathe 2005; Peisert 1978).

From the 1950s the foreign ministry-led 'external cultural projects' were challenged by the emergence of development and culture as policy areas in their own right. Development is tied to culture and education which meant that there were overlaps between what 'cultural' agencies did and what aid agencies did. The creation of a Ministry of Culture in France in 1959 created a competitor for the right to control external cultural policy and, under André Malraux in the 1960s or Jack Lang in the 1990s, the Ministry of Culture has at times operated a parallel foreign policy (Lebovics 1999; Piniau 1998; Martin 2010). The changing names of the organization originally known as the DGRC track the changing scope of French policy. In 1956 the rise of technical assistance saw the name change to Direction-Générale des Affaires Culturelles et Techniques (DGACT); in 1969 science was the new priority and DGACT became the Direction-Générale des Relations Culturelles, Scientifiques et Techniques; in 1999 the Direction-Générale de la Coopération International et du Développment; and in 2009 it became the Direction-Générale de la Mondialisation, du Développement et des Partenariats, composed of the three directorates of business and international economy, development and global public goods and cultural, academic and research cooperation.

Although Germany's AKP activities and network of overseas representation expanded rapidly during the 1950s and 1960s they lacked clear conceptual bases. Instead they responded to the needs of economic recovery, integration into the Western Bloc and countering the expansion of East Germany's international presence. It was not until the 1970s that Germany received a comprehensive policy framework, and the result was an influential package of ideas that continues to guide the German project. First, AKP was the 'third pillar' of German foreign policy along with politics and economics. It shared responsibility for the achievement of Germany's foreign policy goals and had a special responsibility for contributing to the legitimacy of the (West) German state. Second, there was a clearer division of labour between the civil society organizations, such as the Goethe Institut that carried out foreign cultural activities and the foreign ministry. The former were responsible for the conception and conduct of cultural programmes but it was the Auswärtige Amt (AA) which was responsible for policy and strategy. Third, foreign policy was about partnership building, collaboration and dialogue and this needed to be reflected in the approach of cultural programmes. Fourth, AKP would be built on an 'expanded concept of culture': it could no longer only be about Goethe and Beethoven but had to engage with the challenges of modern society (Auswärtige Amt 1970; Deutscher Bundestag 1975, 1975; Kathe 2005). In France the Rapport Rigaud of 1979 echoed some of these ideas but both countries found that it was easier to proclaim the end of one way *rayonnement* than to actually put it into practice – proclamations of the birth of partnership would be a standard feature of official documents down to the present (Rigaud 1979).

After 1945 French and German cultural activities grew rapidly, funded by economic growth and the expanding number of newly independent states. In the post-Cold War era, pressure on public expenditure combined with geopolitical change – the break-up of the Soviet Union and the increasing importance of countries such as China as both targets and competitors – created new demands on the projects. The result has been a long-running series of reports and investigations in both countries that have sought ways to reconcile the demands on the system without any signs of a willingness to rethink the entire enterprise (Kathe 2005; Auswärtige Amt 2000; Cour des Comptes 2013; Chaubet 2010).

One of the consequences of the tension between growing demands on the French cultural project and the limits of resources has been the demand for a more strategic approach that aligns *rayonnement* more closely to foreign policy goals for a *diplomatie d'influence*; for some commentators this would be a 'French soft power', for others it is something different, but the key claim is that France needs an approach to statecraft that focuses all of its resources: culture, language, education, science and expertise on supporting its diplomatic objectives (Gazeau-Secret 2010; Foucher 2013a; Rochebloine 2009).

## Comparing cultural projects and soft power

How do these projects differ from soft power and what lessons can we learn? Reich and Lebow's recent challenge to soft power: "What is the leap of logic that leads from attraction to American culture or its products to support for American foreign policy?" provides a useful way of framing the discussion (Reich and Lebow 2014, p. 34).

From the perspective of the cultural projects the 'logic' is that of the nation. For the founders of the French and German projects there was an obvious connection between language, culture, science, diplomacy, prestige and power. The history of these projects

is a retreat from the 'strong' nationalist claim – exemplified in early twentieth-century German assertions of the superiority of their culture – towards something more like Billig's 'banal nationalism', an everyday assumption of the nationalness of the world (Billig 1995). This national assumption is more muted in German documents but remains quite explicit in some French discussions (Foucher 2013b; Direction Générale de la Coopération Internationale et du Développement 2007). This assumption of nationalness is an assumption of difference, which will imply competition as well as collaboration. Cultural action in its 'expanded' form is seen as simultaneously an expression of the nation, a way of doing good in the world, a way of building relations and a way of benefitting the national community.

From a national perspective Nye's categorical separation of 'power' into soft and hard appears capricious. A national perspective is not the integration of 'hard' and 'soft' into 'smart' power but rather a holistic perspective on national influence (Cohen *et al*. 2007). The cultural and the economic are mutually reinforcing (Cour des Comptes 2013, pp. 135–8; Auswärtige Amt 2011, p. 17). The economic reputation of a country is part of its overall reputation; economic success breeds interest in its culture while cultural knowledge stimulates interest and trust in economic activities. There are more prosaic connections; for instance, knowledge of the French or German language makes it easier to forge connections or to access training and education.

Reich and Lebow (2014) draw an opposition between popular culture and support for foreign policy, but in comparison with the concepts of influence that run through the cultural projects this excludes numerous sources and areas of influence. Influence can occur across all policy areas – not just foreign policy. It can occur in areas that that straddle private and public sectors. For instance, France has recently created an agency for French international technical expertise (Expertise France) as a way of countering the advantages of Anglo-Saxon countries in winning international contracts. When a country decides to carry out a major infrastructure project and brings in consultants to frame the problem and design the tender process, Anglo-Americans are likely to approach the problem in a particular way that advantages Anglo-Saxon legal models and technologies and disadvantages French models and companies. This has economic effects and may also have longer term effects of locking in these models through the infrastructure itself and the training of personnel (Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et Européennes 2011; Tenzer 2011). From a national perspective, promoting attractiveness of a country to investors, importers, tourists, students and academics is also a legitimate activity – one that is directly advantageous in economic terms but where success in these dimensions also plays back into other forms of attention.

In both countries there is an emphasis on what might be termed social infrastructures of influence. Both France and Germany are among the largest spenders on public diplomacy and cultural relations work (Auswärtige Amt 2013; Cour des Comptes 2013). Much of their resources are devoted to the maintenance of networks of schools and cultural centres. Beyond that, both countries have been concerned to ensure the presence of their languages in national school systems and have supported the export of books, teaching materials and teachers. School systems and language teaching open a route to higher education in France or Germany. In the years after 1989 France attempted to ensure the construction of systems of education in central and eastern Europe where French was firmly entrenched – for instance by supporting the university departments where the next generation of French teachers would be trained. Further, France fought for acceptance of the principle that European schoolchildren should study two foreign languages. It was recognized that the first language would be English but that the second language would

be French or German and that here French had better chances of prevailing (Direction Générale de la Coopération Internationale et du Développement 2007). The cultural project is more about the infrastructures of international relations than any tool that can be swiftly repurposed. At the heart of this idea is the creation of networks of relationships constructed over the long term but where influence may be a consequence of these relationships rather than an end in itself. This creates a situation where influence is embedded in the fabric of international relations.

This concern with power raises another point. Nye's discussion is phrased in terms of the US achieving its objectives – that it is about a transactional mode of power – x did this (which it would not have done otherwise) because of our soft power. For the cultural project the influence is less about transactions but about the framework of relationships within which transactions take place. The assumption is that because of, for example, Germany's cultural work a country will treat Germany as a familiar and trusted partner and will pay attention to it – economically, politically, culturally – and take account of its sensibilities and interests. This does not mean that the countries will not have disagreements but that those will take place in a context of trust and familiarity. The impact of this should be compared with a situation where such work has been absent – relations will be conducted on the basis of limited knowledge and will be strictly transactional. The focus is more on structuring the context in which transactions occur. One of the French objections to the concept of soft power is precisely this focus on 'power'; countries smaller than the US clearly have some impact on the world but they are not in a position to exercise power in the strong sense (Foucher 2013a). France's support for the International Organisation of La Francophonie, or La Francophonie, both as an organization and a phenomenon, is an extreme example. Although it may appear to be a fact of life that there are French-speaking countries in the world, this situation is not one that exists outside history. France must work to protect *francophonie* against the advance of other languages.

## Conclusion

The major objective of this chapter has been to outline some of the characteristics of French and German cultural projects in international politics in order to support the argument that discourses of soft power derived from Nye are only one way of thinking about influence. My argument is not that the cultural projects are 'right' but that by making the comparison it is possible to show some of the assumptions of soft power.

The key insight is the impact of the hard/soft bifurcation. 'Hard' has two connotations as coercive and material – that is, military and economic. 'Soft' is non-coercive and ideational, hence the vogue for reworking it in linguistic or representational terms. The problem is that this separation actually misses large parts of statecraft which involve negotiation and/or the non-coercive use of economic resources. French or German leaders would deny that they are in a position to use coercion (although the Greek government in 2015 might disagree with that) but would also point to the importance of mutually beneficial relations – one of the reasons why French influence is distinguished from power. The result is that opportunity, not just attraction, is a major part of influence. The cultural and the economic are mutually reinforcing; this does not mean that the cultural is simply marketing, it is also about familiarity with language, culture, systems, ways of doing business and the relations with people that emerge from this process.

Soft power emerges from a particular, theoretically driven, understanding of world politics rather than from a historical account. The dominant line of cleavage in American

International Relations has been between realists who posit a world of states dominated by material power versus a liberal position that focuses on the transformation of the states system. Realism claims the permanent importance of material power while liberalism looks for evidence of the importance of other factors in order to demonstrate the transformation the implications of the 'cultural project' and its history offers an alternative to both of these positions. World politics is indeed influenced and constituted by non-state actors but these actors still have national identities. The irony is that the cultural position is much closer to everyday understandings of national influence than it is to the theoretical complications of soft power.

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# 3

# A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SOFT POWER[1]

*Fei Jiang*

## Analysis of the historical background to the coining of 'soft power'

To better understand 'soft power' and put it into practice appropriately, we need to view it from the perspectives of international political communication and the changing discourse system (Sparks 2007; Zhao 2014), identifying how the discourses were established and how communication happened. The entangled relations between discourses and communication (Hale 2003; Baum and Groeling 2008; Durmus 2009) are like braided hairstyles, based on which the bowknot-like connection between *The Clash of Civilizations?* (Huntington 1993) and soft power is defined.

Tracing the transformation of international political discourse, we may identify two typical discourse paradigms – 'civilized vs barbarian' and 'culture vs civilization' (Figure 1.1.3.1).

It is shown in the graphic above that the two discourse paradigms are set in a three-dimensional coordinate, illustrating the particular backgrounds and conditions of their rise and developments. Time is shown on the horizontal axis (X), and space on the vertical axis (Y). There is also a cross axis (Z) presenting the change of political communication discourses.

As a result of different motivations and perspectives, there are multiple definitions of 'civilization' and 'culture' (Kirchner 1964; Lowie 1929; Morgan 1964; Stein 1981; Tsuda 1986). Therefore, not only is there no academic consensus on the two elements, but also there is no common framework within which they can be studied. On the time axis, 'civilized' refers to elegance, etiquette and order before the eighteenth century, to which science and knowledge were added in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In terms of the general relationship between 'civilization' and 'culture', the former refers to physical achievements of mankind as it tackles relations between people and nature, people and society, people and others and people and the individual, while the latter, which has taken shape on the basis of the former, is composed of the values and ideologies that should be included in the spiritual sphere (Jiang 2011, p. 92).

In Chinese semantics, the word 'power' consists of two connotations – hard power, which means to control and to command in accordance with one's role, and influence, which dovetails with the meaning of soft power (Jiang and Huang 2012). In fact,

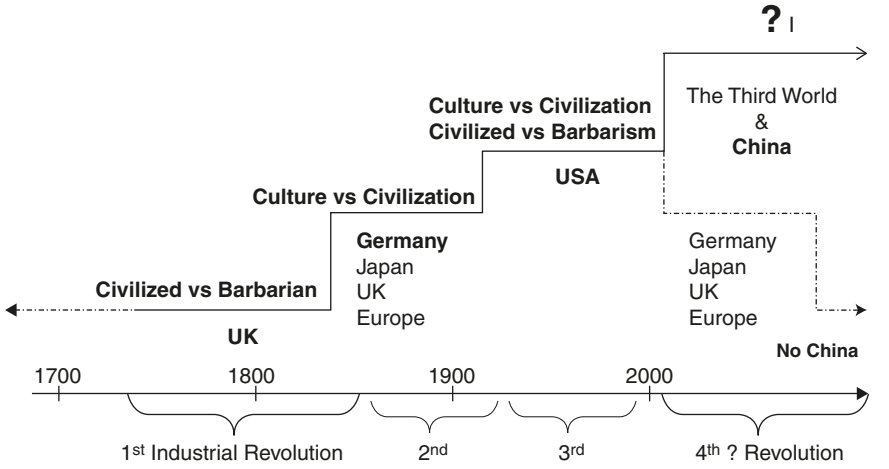



*Figure 1.1.3.1* The shifting logic of world discourse
*Source*: Author's construction.

colonialism and industrial revolutions enhanced the global power of the western hemisphere in much the same way as dams elevate water levels. The dichotomy of 'civilized' and 'barbarian' has been shaped like the difference in water levels on either side of the dam where soft power is generated. Such 'hydropower generation' bears witness to the soft power of the western world, in which the central–peripheral geopolitics continues to work even in the globalized post-colonial era.

Prior to the first industrial revolution, France and Britain had inherited the colonialist tradition of European countries, creating the political discourse paradigm 'civilized' and 'barbarian'. The shaping of the paradigm was in fact a result of the competition among powers. The development pushed forward in the first industrial revolution by western capitalists was actually modeled like terraces; the world was stratified into first, second and third classes according to productivity and industrialization levels. As Karl Marx and Frederich Engels (2010, p. 16) say in the Manifesto of the Communist Party:

> It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

The stratified economic developments shaped like terraces were driven by a cultural logic – that Britain and France (and, later, the western world, including the United States and its allies who follow its political system) are civilized and that everyone else is barbarian. This sums up the polarized philosophy – choose between being civilized or barbarian. What's civilized? To follow the model of France and Britain in terms of their politics, academics and even lifestyle; otherwise, people are barbarians.

This logic was transmitted to the non-Occidental world in terms of the development of that particular discourse. It can be exemplified by China's process of industrialization. Despite China's relentless efforts in enumerating its ancient inventions and their contribution to the world, what are widely remembered are the localized inventions of the western world, with which western civilization embarked on leapfrogging developments

and without which China fell from a great agrarian civilization to a feeble country. China, which lost out in industrialization, especially after being semi-colonized by the developed powers, also lost confidence in its culture. And the western world, treated as a distinguished guest at the dinner table for the celebration of China's accelerated industrialization, is practicing a deep transformation from sovereignty to economy and from economy to culture, under which China's cultural structure is being overhauled.

After colonial wars, globalization dominated by the western world took the stage. As conditions changed, the Occidental world no longer needed to compel the Oriental world to accept the reality of industrialization. Instead, the developing world is striving to be part of the process, indicating the effect of soft power. "After World War II and particularly in recent years, people are increasingly proactive in pursuing industrialism – and during this, agriculture has been marginalized. Not a single country in the world is outside this process. Therefore, industrialism exerts an influence, which results in comparatively greater 'soft power' among the developed industrialized societies and countries. Although 'hard power' has been enhanced by industrialization, the 'soft power' produced by the development is accentuated more often now" (Wang 1993, p. 94).

'Civilized' Occidental culture, including industrialized civilization and capitalist political institutions, has been introduced into the Oriental world with detailed logic that has been scrupulously studied and contemplated and has infiltrated into Oriental academics' very veins. The legitimacy of the modern western political system established after the first industrial revolution has been discussed through the entire twentieth century. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* by Max Weber (2001) was a classic study of the development and problems of western modernity in freedom and democracy and Weber's ideas dominated many twentieth-century academics' perspectives. A staunch German nationalist, Weber believed there are inevitable relations between Protestantism, political freedom and developed states in the world (Roth 2001). As Akulov and Shelepin (2003, p. 230) point out:

> The leverage of the 'inevitable relations' is the legend of the western civilized states for their staggering development achieved by their advanced technologies and rising living standards … Therefore, people have to resort to western documents for modern problems.

Germany knows exactly what the discourse – 'civilized' and 'barbarian' – means. Therefore, it invented the 'culture' concept in the hope of offsetting the dominant logic embedded in the discourse of 'civilized–barbarian'. When the classified world framed by the 'civilized–barbarian' discourse was erased as the logic inside the discourse system was rooted out, a world free of castes was built under the 'culture' discourse. The new discourse has released 'civilization', of which the fundamental physical achievements have been created by 'God' and shared by mankind, from the unique and singular cage built by Britain and France and, to a great extent, comforted the developing countries with new logic. It enables an increasing number of countries to enjoy the shared fruits yielded by civilizations whilst propelling the evolution of indigenous civilizations by using other cultural coefficients, marking the transformation of the other cultures in a certain time and in a number of spaces, such as countries and regions. In doing so, they are able to preserve and present the cultures of their own. Many countries and regions – including those involved in overturning colonialism, national reinvigoration campaigns or socialist construction like the Soviet Union and China – have benefited from the new logic by

psychologically counteracting the curse of colonialism in the initial stage since the end of World War II. The great German thinkers, such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Johann Gottfried Herder and their successors, restructured an exquisite discourse of 'civilization–culture' over 200 years (Jiang 2013).

Today, in the fourth industrial revolution, developing countries and regions, such as China, have seen their economies boom. But to ensure the sustainability of a growing economy they need indigenous cultures for support. They need to learn from Germany in the late nineteenth century, which caught up with the other developed states at the end of the second industrial revolution and broke up the discourse of 'civilized–barbarian' established by Britain and France on the basis of its rising economy. It encouraged the cultural consciousness of the German people in the late nineteenth century and used the 'culture' concept to smash the 'civilized' shackle, implementing cultural restructuring in Germany and later expanding this mission to the world. In spite of the different modernity models of China and Germany (Jiang 2011, pp. 139–140), China should take Germany's strategy by challenging ruling discourses and creating new ones for the sake of its own development[2].

Based on my analysis, today's China greatly resembles the old Germany. First, there was no unified cultural awareness of Germany until the eighteenth century when over 300 vassal states were scattered in the territory. Even today Chinese people from the mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau, as well as Chinese diasporas, lack a certain unified cultural awareness or a Chinese cultural identity. When the incumbent Chinese Premier Li Keqiang visited Britain in June 2014, some Chinese protesters rallied outside the British Consulate-General in Hong Kong urging the UK to take back Hong Kong. Some even raised a poster bearing the slogan "Chinese go back to China". This event disclosed the dilemma for grand China – to adopt political nationalism or a cultural one? On the other hand, it presented the strong soft power of the UK on the part of the Hong Kong people. Today's China has yet to be culturally unified and has much less of a general cultural identity.

Second, patriotism was less popular in Germany in the past as people in the country only recognized themselves as Bavarian, Hanoverian, Saxon and Hessian. "They only recognized their German identity when traveling abroad"(Barzun 2002, p. 395). Yet today, the memory of China's initial reform and opening up from the late 1970s to the 1980s, during which the feeling of inferiority haunted those Chinese who went abroad, was quite similar to what the Germans had undergone. Many people still recognized themselves as 'Taiwanese' or 'Hong Kong natives' instead of Chinese who were considered to be lower Chinese than themselves.

Third, the rise of Germany challenged the 'civilized–barbarian' discourse established by Britain and France, which classified Germany as a barbarian country and deprived it of its privilege of development. Had Germany not broken the monopoly of the colonial discourse established by Britain and France and built a new one conducive to its national construction as well as to the world, it would not have been able to find a niche among the developed countries in the world. China is now facing the same challenge of the dominant discourses – 'civilization and culture' and 'civilized and barbarian' – imposed by the western world. However, the challenge to China is much greater than that to Germany in past centuries, as the western world – realizing it has been unable to restore its previous colonies by military force – is starting to resort to soft power, which has colonized less developed countries through culture, a less obvious and compulsory way of colonialism. Therefore, China needs to make even greater efforts to challenge the old discourses and create a new one to locate itself in the world.

Fourth, cultural awareness sprouted in Germany in the eighteenth century. In the second industrial revolution the German intelligentsia, led by Goethe and Herder, initiated the 'Sturm und Drang' movement, which featured 'Genius, Energy, Freedom and Creation' as its slogan, calling for thought unfettered by fossilized prejudices, setting free personalities and awakening cultural awareness. In respect of historical cultural elements, the cultural awareness initiated and encouraged by Professor Xiaotong Fei in the 1980s in China is just as valuable as the 'Sturm und Drang' movement in Germany (Fei 1985). It is surely to be marked as the fulcrum of the rise of Chinese academics and thought in the turning point of China, influencing a dizzying array of cultural practices and saving the country from losing out greatly in terms of cultural colonization in the post-colonialism era.

In the international arena in terms of political discourses, the terminologies are carefully prepared on different occasions to form exquisite discourse patterns and systems. Take the United States for example. Uncle Sam, who has the expertise to wrestle for control of international political discourse, rose in the third industrial revolution. I pointed out in my book *Communication and Culture* (Jiang 2011) that the United States dominated the discourse system with the two discourses, 'civilized–barbarian' and 'civilization–culture', to reshape the world order. Ignoring the culture concept created by Germany which criticized the Euro-centric industrial civilization dominated by Britain and France, as well as the criticisms of the post-colonialism era, spawned by more than 400 years of western civilization, made by scholars such as Edward Wadie Said, the former US president George W. Bush (Jr) called on civilized countries, under threat of 'barbarian invasion', to unite for the fight against the 'barbarians' after the 9/11 attack with the words "The civilized world is rallying to America's side" (Bush 2001). The White House speeches broadcast live in the United States described the anti-terrorist war, which they said would end in victory, as the fight for the common lifestyle of the 'civilized world'. According to Bush, the war was waged for the civilized world and for those who have faith in progress, multi-culturalism, tolerance and freedom. He called on the civilized world to ally itself with the United States[3]. The statement sent a clear signal to China and the world, that – despite Germany's culture concept, the mounting arguments and criticisms worldwide of post-colonialist culture as well as the peaceful rise of China, an over-5,000-year-old civilization – the 'western' civilized discourse inherited by Britain, France and the United States would in no way change or be shaken. The discourse is ingrained in the logic with which the culture and civilized knowledge in the western world dominated by the United States has been framed. Based on this discourse, the order of the 'civilized world' established and sustained by Britain, France and the United States has never changed fundamentally. Moreover, in the light of the transformed model of political and military struggle, scholars such as Samuel P. Huntington (1999) applied restructured philosophies to support and respond to the discourse with the hope that they might establish a new cognitive philosophy in terms of the global situation in the new century. Therefore the world order may be in danger of relapsing into the dualist discourse between 'civilized' and 'barbarism' (Jiang 2011, pp. 259–60).

In the third industrial revolution, the United States dominated and managed the world with its western allies. Unexpectedly, the new order has been running on double tracks: one track being America's inheritance of the logics and philosophies of the Orientalism established by Britain and France in the colonialist era, with which history seems to slide back from its destination to the starting line (Jiang 2004); the other is the 'culture–civilization' discourse established by Germany which continued to work in

the United States until the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. The double-track discourses enable the United States to integrate politics with academics and civil society.

The domestic and international discourse systems vary depending on conditions in the United States, which adopts the 'civilized–barbarian' discourse in dealing with its western allies, including Britain and France, on the basis of their common interests. Generally speaking, the western countries would call themselves 'civilized' and other cultures 'barbarian'. But when confronting its domestic culture with its multi-cultural background, America has been described by the elite among white people, like Samuel P. Huntington, as a nation dominated by 'Anglo-Saxons'. The core cultural value, in its cultural model dubbed as 'salad dressing', has been dominated by the white elite. Within the 'culture–civilization' discourse, multicultural civilizations coexist in the form of a tapestry – a metaphor applied to the American culture in particular (Deegan 1998).

According to Vladimir Alexandrovich Akulov, Academician from the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS), and Alexander Nikolayevich Shelepin, the renowned Russian physicist, the United States and its allies forecast the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and the dramatic restructuring of the world order long before the collapse of the biggest country in the world (Akulov and Shelepin 2003). From then on, Orientalism in the United States has changed obliviously. Since the disintegration of the former Soviet Union, the biggest opponent of the United States, the world has been polarized by the west, led by America, and many emerging powers in the multi-polar east. Many a time, the United States has acted as the spokesperson of the western world in dialogue with the east, composed of the emerging powers such as China and India. And that is not an order beneficial to the national interests of the United States. After losing the former Soviet Union as their common enemy, the highly united western camp was disintegrating, with the western countries driven by different national interests. Consequently, the common interests of the allies were dispersed and weakened and the situation became more complicated. It was high time that American intelligentsia deliberated on new national strategies. At that particular time, Samuel P. Huntington published *The Clash of Civilizations?* in 1993 and Joseph Nye proposed cultural soft power in 1990 (Nye 1990. The two concepts act like the logos of buildings. People should put them against their historical backgrounds to see which buildings they have illuminated.

The academic merits of *The Clash of Civilizations?* are far less valuable than the theory's influence on the restructuring of political discourse. *The Clash of Civilizations?* is an agenda-setting work that has attracted attention all around the world. The civilizations in that theory, which features subjectivity and boundaries, are a new model of the 'Supreme Classification of Culture', overtaking the 'civilized' concept initiated by Britain and France in the colonialist era and overturning the criticisms established by Germany and accepted by third world countries, including China, of the universality of the cultural concept of western civilizations. Tracing back the knowledge of past centuries, we find that it is culture which is the real subject featuring boundaries, specialties and initiative; culture which is superior to civilizations, including the industrialized civilization created by the western world; culture which stands at the highest stage of the development of mankind, whose ideas and thoughts have contributed to the creation of the subject. Samuel P. Huntington (1999) offset the power of the criticism resulting from the culture concept initiated by Germany as if striking back a loop on the ping pong table, setting a more sophisticated discourse of 'civilizations' in which western political culture was termed 'universal civilization' and other civilizations, such as that of China, were downgraded to 'indigenous culture' so that their contributions to the world could be obscured.

In doing so, he substituted cultural clashes with the term 'the clash of civilizations' (Jiang 2011, p. 84).

The political discourse restructured under the theory of 'the clash of civilizations' has resolved cultural disputes and enhanced the alliance of western countries, which, according to Samuel P. Huntington (1999), came from the same civilization. And it also multiplies the differences of the two original civilizations, those of the west and east, splitting them into several others, such as Islamic, Confucian and Christian civilizations. Therefore, the United States can retreat from its front-line role as the spokesperson of the west in the world's conflicts and disputes, intimidating the world with its formidable military power and using the 'extra dividends' of cultural soft power and financial tools, such as currencies, to maintain its hegemony, the only superpower dominating the world.

But the power of the new discourse is abating in terms of the accidents and wars with which the United States is confronted. The 9/11 attack and the Iraq War again involved the United States in conflicts, which lasted until the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq in 2011. At the same time, the rise of the BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) embittered the United States, even though the trend was nothing it had not expected. The absolute hegemonic power of the US, including its military and political influence, has been prone to suspicion because of its damaged national image, and its relative hegemonic power, such as its international prestige and influence, has undoubtedly been declining. Therefore, the soft power coined by Joseph Nye as early as 1990 reemerged after years of silence. It tries to salvage the 'smart power' of the United States in order to leverage historical dividends with less effort.

## The historical dividends of soft power

History is driven by supreme power without presumptions. In that process, a number of variables composed of time, subjects, space and events may affect the trajectory as much as the impact of the jostled planets which have subsequently changed track. The east changed track from agricultural civilization when it was shattered by the industrial civilization that took shape in the west. The parallel developments have been stratified into upper, middle and lower chains and the Oriental world has been incessantly confined to the laboratory like the white mice of the western world.

In respect of development, culture and civilization are two variables. Civilization is an independent variable while culture is a dependent one. Subject, space, time and medium, which are the coefficients of the independent variable ('civilization'), work on and cause change to the dependent variable ('culture'). Thereby, a function with variables and coefficients is established between civilization and culture (Jiang 2011, p. 96). In this particular function, the process, fruits and heritage of the western discourses which have been working on the eastern world with soft power have netted dividends from the non-western cultures and civilizations.

Take the cultures of India and China for example. When talking about Indian culture, skin color, costumes and religious rituals, which represent logical functionality, would first come into people's minds. India was as much an agricultural country as China used to be. But having been colonized by Britain for over 100 years from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century, India has been undergoing two processes – namely, transnational and translational – involving elements of western philosophies, industrial revolutions, western medicine, political systems and institutions

(Bhabha 1994, p. 5). These two processes comprise the major part of Indian civilization: indigenous civilization and foreign achievements, which functioned under the rubric of 'Indian', the space coefficients of the Indian subcontinent and the internationalized elements, added and subtracted to traditional, indigenous, inert civilization elements such as Indian foods, Sanskrit, Ayurvedic medicine and the caste system, have created the general concept of 'Indian culture'. Similarly Chinese culture, which also arises from an agricultural civilization, imported western industrial civilization through the same processes as India – the transnational and translational – forming a complicated system of modern civilization. Traditional Chinese foods, the Chinese language, the lunar calendar, traditional religions and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) are the comparatively inert elements, preserved from the time of the western colonialist era until today's globalization, as indigenous civilization integrated with modern civilization to mark 'Chinese culture' in the new era.

The logical function is illustrated in Figure 1.1.3.2 below.

The establishment of western culture can also be explained in terms of the logical function as the individual western country is influenced by civilizations ranging from those of Greece, Britain, and France to America and the industrial revolutions which have spread across the entire world. The countries have formed a comprehensive western subjectivity, inherited from the past, integrated with the unique elements of each country. The civilization system, including religions, philosophies, languages, arts, sciences, technologies, medicines, political systems and institutions and the mass media – which was exported by the west to the east – has been subsequently introduced by the eastern countries into their agendas for reference. Different from China and India, the coefficients of the west, symbolized by a question mark in the chart, are the civilizations which

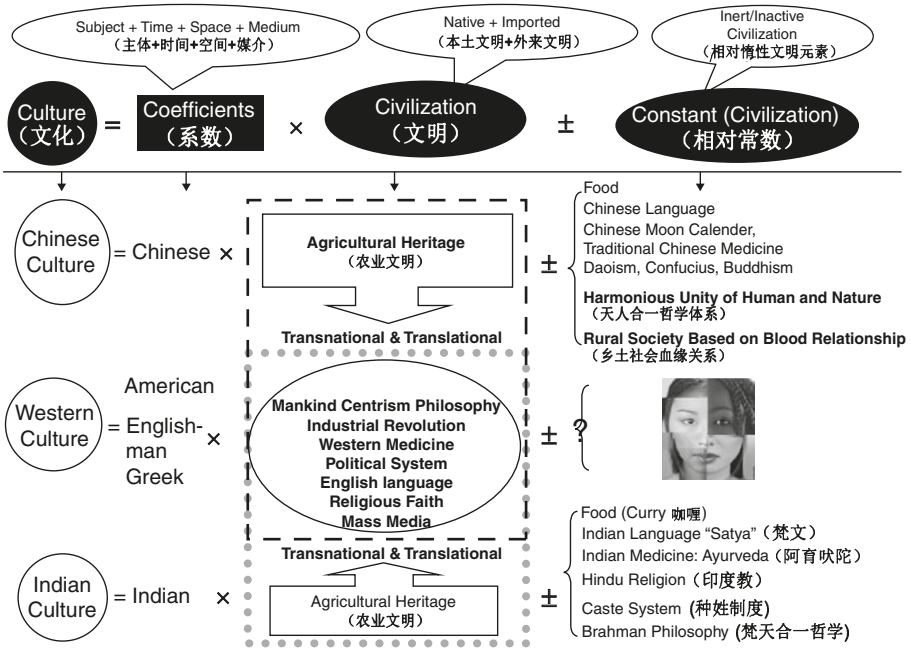



*Figure 1.1.3.2* The logical functional relationship between culture and civilization

cannot be indigenized by the non-western world. Logically they are the inert civilization elements of western cultures – much-condensed ideologies and values. Enabled by the global expansion since the industrial revolution, western civilization can evolve and culturally transform itself; this is called a civilized cultural phenomenon.

In Figure 1.1.3.2 above, the overlapped part inside the dotted line represents the civilization elements that have been shared by the world since the industrial revolution in the colonialist era. In respect of India and China, those elements have been forced into the indigenous agricultural civilizations via colonialism. The transplanted civilization has to coexist with indigenous civilizations. But 'civilized' culture accompanied by a universalized form of western civilization changes the ecosystem of indigenous cultures based on comparatively inert and feeble civilizations, transforming their subjects into "Black Skin, White Masks (Peau noire, masques blancs)" – see Frantz Fanon (Fanon 1968) – and 'banana people'.

Theoretically and logically speaking, the boundaries of civilizations can be obscured in evolutions, which mark a win-win situation for the civilizations involved, if we take the function of civilization and culture as well as their coefficients into consideration. This can be exemplified by China's four great inventions (paper-making, gunpowder, printing and the compass) which pushed forward the development of the west, the relocation of Indian Buddhism in China and the promotion of Chinese calligraphy in South Korea and Japan. This is ordinary evolution of the world's civilizations. But since the transplantation of western industrialized civilization, 'civilized' culture has been transplanted as an organ of non-western cultures, thus the ordinary process becomes extraordinary. In light of the logic and philosophy of Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution, the law of the jungle becomes a bible regarding relations among peoples and countries. Consensus has been reached that only the fittest can survive. Therefore, the four great inventions of China were eventually used as weapons by the colonialists to make China bend. The typical law of the jungle can be exemplified by the 'Bretton Woods System', with which the United States held global finance in a tight grip, and *Friendship Between Experts* (Graf 1987; Graf, as cited in Lehmann and Roth 2001, p. 405) indicating the G7 (G8) of the developed countries. The political discourse, using 'civilized and barbarian' to distinguish 'us' (the western countries) from 'the others', was an even greater invention. The legitimacy of modern western politics has been built and consolidated on the basis of the call by the US president for the united 'civilized' world to fight against the 'barbarian' world (Jiang 2011, p. 259), aiming their gun-muzzles at the non-'us' countries. This is not simply for ethical criticism and comfort, but also to maximize the interests of the 'civilized us' by entrenching and occupying the ethical high ground so that they feel culturally comfortable (Huntington 1999, p. 27). The vulnerable group has been incapable of distinguishing whether the established system is reasonable, the agenda-setting is fair, or their rights have been respected. Nor have they been willing to. That is what 'soft power' is expected to achieve – the historical dividends (or bonus) of the 'civilized us'.

## Soft 'soft power' – China's perspective

The 'Civilization–Culture' discourse created by the German intelligentsia was adopted as a countermeasure to the political discourse of 'civilized–barbarian'. But today, confronted with the clash of civilizations and soft power, the 'civilization–culture' theory is becoming an old wineskin which is incapable of holding new wines, such as that fermented for the 'Chinese road'. In an academic way, the US political scientist Samuel

P. Huntington restructured the model which shows the relation between civilization and culture. Unlike German thinkers, such as Oswald Spengler, who pointed out that civilization is the mummified stage of culture, Huntington said civilization is the supreme cultural category of mankind. "The civilization is the biggest 'us', in which we feel culturally comfortable, because it distinguishes us from all the 'others' other than it" (Huntington 1999, pp. 26–7). These words also disclosed the hidden dimension under the term 'civilization clash' invented by Huntington. Only through this perspective could we fully understand his deep and long-term intention.

The new wine can only be well-preserved in new wineskins. Although the wineskin which signals the political discourse of 'civilization–culture' became old and creased, its obsolescence has rarely been noted because of the dividends yielded from soft power. Therefore, people have little enthusiasm for creating a new 'wineskin'. But despite the obstacles, China, which has been required to take on more international responsibilities because of its increased national comprehensive strength, is pressed to build a new political discourse. In view of the logical function between civilization and culture, the media, which can be considered as both the civilization element and cultural coefficient, provides new opportunities to restructure the global powers and their extensions by changing the knowledge structures, communication situations and processes. China is trying to restructure the clash of civilizations and soft power step by step: the former Chinese president Hu Jintao proposed 'civilizations and the harmonious world' in response to the clash of civilizations in his tenure; meanwhile, the 'Chinese Dream' was coined by the incumbent president Xi Jinping, who tries to enhance the sense of initiative of Chinese citizens considered as shareholders in the theory, transforming soft power from a theory concerning international relations to one concerning cultures. Therefore, the consolidation of Chinese cultures and the fulfillment of the Chinese Dream are coherent in respect of the transformed theory.

It is the cognition and the analysis of the nature of soft power which leads to the innovation and restructuring of the soft power discourse.

## The hardware of soft power

The term soft power coined by Joseph Nye aims at enhancing the cultural influence of the United States so that its role in global affairs can be even more significant in addition to its formidable hard power, including politics, economy and military force. In view of the competition among global powers which is reviewed with the existing knowledge under the framework of civilization and culture function, soft power can be interpreted as a means, with both hardware and software functions, adopted by the interest group represented by Joseph Nye to influence the emerging economies, most of which are in the eastern world. The hardware of soft power relies on industrial civilization, penetrating to individual life through the channels of clothing, food, housing and transport to result in a change of values. Compared with economic and military powers, those elements belong to soft power. But universal values, a fruit of western industrial civilization, are dividends of soft power. The hardware of 'soft power' plays the role of a Trojan horse sent to other countries where the west tries to attract people with its ideologies and political values. These values have been injected into individual minds and the upper, middle and lower chains of the ideological 'production line'. As cultural xenophobia has rarely existed, foreign values have opportunities to proliferate by infiltrating into the values held by individuals and activating the ideological self-production mode.

## Software of soft power, soft-soft power

The value and significance of the software which is part of 'soft power' has been rising in the redistribution of global power and major restructuring of the international political order. It has already been mentioned that human-centered philosophies, industrial revolutions, western medicines, political systems and institutions, the English language, religious faith and mass media have been transferred from the west to the east, including China and India, where industrial civilization has been transformed into the form of values called 'the hardware of soft power', in light of the logical function between civilization and culture with the shared civilization elements between China and India in particular. Meanwhile, based on the same function, the software of soft power refers to those indigenous civilization elements which were created, transmitted by countries such as China and India and contributed to the world's development. They are comparatively inert, unchanged and unaffected as antibodies to the huge impact of globalization. I define them as 'soft-soft power'. Those inert elements of ideologies, which are immune to the hardware of soft power, should be accentuated and put under scrutiny by countries such as India and China, which lost the opportunity to seize the advantage of utilizing the art of soft power. 'Soft-soft power', which should be considered as the basis of the countries in competition with western civilization, should be codified and included in the agenda of the cultural development of each individual country.

The logical function illustrated in Figure 1.1.3.2 can be simplified to the model below (Figure 1.1.3.3), from which we can tell that the coefficients of civilization are the subject, time, space and medium while the constants refer to the inert elements, which are added or deducted in the process of cultural transformation (Jiang 2011, p. 201)[4].

In view of the huge influence of the industrial revolutions dominated by the west in the past three centuries, the impact of western civilization on the eastern world has multiplied, which leads to the transformation and replacement of indigenous agricultural civilizations. In the process, western regional cultural values and ideologies, which are cloaked

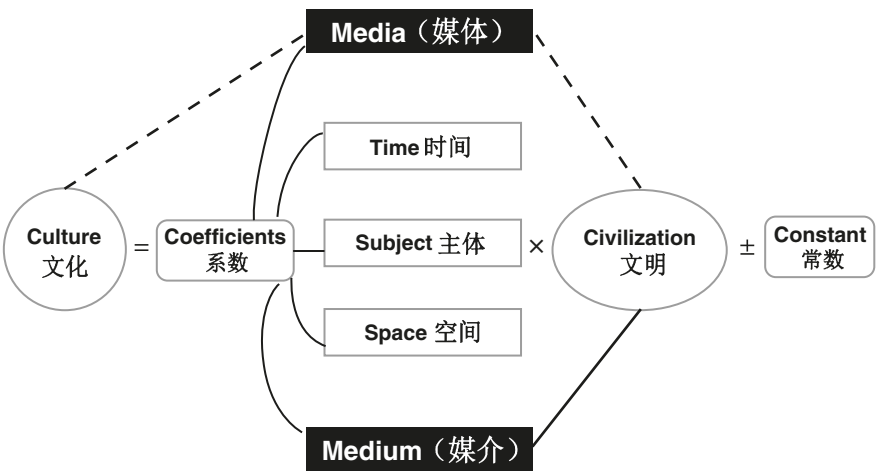



*Figure 1.1.3.3* The logical function model of the relationship between civilization and culture
*Source*: Author construction.

in the term of universal civilization, have been civilized and taken for granted. The soft power proposed by Joseph Nye can be taken as the 'son' of hard powers, including those of the military, economy and politics, but a son who was born out of wedlock and adopted by the non-western world in the colonialism era and ensuing globalization. However, when the father was unable to pay the bill for those who adopted his son, the biological father started to arouse the child's memory by transmitting certain information, such as cultural assets (Chitty 2010), to make his 'son' recognize him and, furthermore, to use him to impose threats on his foster 'fathers' in order to fulfill the biological father's will.

Theoretically, the position of civilization, the independent variable in the function, can be switched. If we move the inert civilization elements (which were taken as constants) forward to replace the independent variable – civilization – which can be multiplied with the coefficients, such as subject, time, space and medium, we deduce that in terms of the inert cultural institution, the powerful western civilization can be considered as the constant, and its development and transformation should be integrated into the indigenous civilization – a remodeling perspective in the international arena where indigenous cultures driven by 'soft-soft power' are wrestling with western civilization.

Despite the slightly different times at which the clash of civilizations and soft power were proposed, both have theoretically and strategically acted in concert with each other. It is reasonable to see that civilized western culture does not fit non-western indigenous cultures in many aspects, which has resulted in trans-cultural clashes. It can be exemplified by the Oriental practice of filial piety, which, if it were transferred under the civilized tag of 'universal civilization' to western society, would, to a certain extent, clash with western cultural values. The central part of this article argues that the key point of trans-cultural clashes results from cultures, composed of values and ideologies, rather than from civilizations. The civilizations in *The Clash of Civilizations?* are culturally defined and universalized, referring to western industrial civilization injected into non-western societies through colonialism and globalization that is also dominated by the west.

> Cultural communication, which can cross boundaries between countries, can often take on a trend. Once a culture becomes a fundamental value and a mainstream culture of other countries and international societies, the source country or society from which the culture was created will surely accumulate more 'soft power'.
>
> (Wang 1993, p. 93)

*The Clash of Civilizations?* aims to trigger disputes and even enmity between the 'son' and his indigenous 'adoptive fathers' so that a back door can be opened for the hard power built by western society through centuries-long colonialism and globalization to rush in. It can either be by scheme or by coincidence that *The Clash of Civilizations?* paved the road for the practice of soft power theory, which subsequently opened an entrance for hard power. The process has been elaborated in this article.

## Notes

1 Thanks to Dr Vivien Anne Marsh from University of Westminster, Professor Heikki Luostarinen from University of Tampere and Professor Kuo Huang from China Radio International for their invaluable contribution to this paper.

2 Here I would like to propose not to take the bellicose alternative but to talk about the good sides of German cultural patriotism. Germany was also a major colonial power, but lost all of them in the Versailles treaty.

3 In the book *Communication and Culture* I pointed out that the logic of the statement is philosophically supported by the theories of Samuel P. Huntington.
4 Dr Zhang Zhan from the Chinese Media Research Center of the University of Lugano, Switzerland, questioned the reasonability of the multiplication between the western civilization and the coefficients, the adding and subtracting between civilizations and the transformation of cultures and the changeability of the two civilizations when I (the author) spoke at the School of East Asia of the University of Milan as a visiting scholar.

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# 4

# UNDERSTANDING SOFT POWER THROUGH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN CONTRASTING POLITIES

*Efe Sevin*

## Introduction

This chapter uses the contemporary public diplomacy practice, within and outside the western world, to expand the discussions on the concept of soft power. The concept's well-known definition provided by Joseph Nye – the ability to get what one wants through attraction – is deceptively straightforward and presents a single understanding of how soft power works. In the definitions provided by Nye, soft power assumptions are based in reference to specific foreign policy needs, domestic policy culture and practices of the United States. In current international politics, soft power is embraced by a number of countries that do not necessarily share the same assumptions.

The reason for including public diplomacy is based on its status as a soft power tool and as a platform to observe the assumptions hidden in the definitions of soft power. There is an inherent and interdependent connection between public diplomacy and soft power, both of which point to an understanding of world politics beyond interstate relations by accentuating the role of publics as well as non-military means to achieve desirable results. Additionally, soft power is seen as "the closest thing to a *theory of public diplomacy*" (Hayden 2013, emphasis in the original) while public diplomacy is positioned an invaluable tool to wield soft power (Nye 2011). Thus, studying public diplomacy inherently means a study of how soft power operates to influence, inform, and manage foreign publics (Hayden 2012, p. 287). In other words, the two subjects are also connected as study fields as it is possible to understand the theoretical assumptions beyond soft power by analyzing the practice of public diplomacy.

This chapter presents an argument that public diplomacy practices of countries might portray different understandings of soft power, and introduces an explanation of soft power that embraces diverse approaches. More specifically, different polities have disparate foreign policy needs that might require a nuanced approach to soft power. This argument is presented in the next four parts. Initially, the famous Kitchen Debates are introduced as prototypes for public diplomacy attempts. This episode is used to describe the policy environment which influenced the birth of soft power and to unearth the

assumptions on how power works in the international arena. The majority of the definitions influenced by the American experience presents the concept through a hypothetical power scale in which hard power – or the attempt to reach desired results through threats and coercion – lies on the more destructive side while soft power provides the gentler alternative. The second part attempts to move beyond the aforementioned scale by incorporating power discussions from the international relations and political science fields, and presents a variety of soft power understandings. The third part examines selected public diplomacy episodes from contrasting polities to argue whether different polities might side with different soft power understandings. The chapter concludes by presenting a road map to better employing soft power as a theoretical framework in international politics.

## Kitchen debates: a soft power prototype

On 24 July 1949 Vice President Richard Nixon visited Moscow as part of the American National Exhibition and had a public discussion with Premier Nikita Khrushchev. The exchange between the two came to be known as the 'Kitchen Debate'[1] due to its setting – the kitchen of the American model home. Only two years after the launch of *Sputnik*, Nixon wanted to make sure that the Soviets were made aware of the superiority of American technology. The exhibition displayed various achievements and developments in the country ranging from fashion products to television cameras. The official objective to organizing such an exhibition was to increase the understanding of American people and their life – including science, technology and culture (Reid 2008). However, for internal planning purposes, the objective was worded as "to counter Communist fiction with facts on which Soviet people could base their judgments of the US" (cited in Reid 2008, p.862). Nixon and the exhibition were expected to compete with the Soviet rhetoric.

During their tour of the exhibition, Nixon and Khrushchev made a brief stop at the centerpiece: the American model home. Nixon proudly showed the appliances in the kitchen and argued that this home, equipped with the newest technology, could be purchased by an average American worker (Salisbury 1959). Khrushchev said that American houses were built to be outdated while Soviets built to last. Pointing to a dishwasher, Nixon added that "[i]n America, we like to make life easier for women." Khrushchev quickly replied back arguing that the "capitalist attitude towards women does not occur under communism." The repartee between the two repeated this pattern with Nixon demonstrating the advances of the American technology while Khrushchev defended the merits of communism. The Soviet Premier dismissed all American rhetoric by saying, "America has been in existence for 150 years and this is the level she [*sic*] reached. We have existed not quite forty-two years and in seven years we will be on the same level as America … When we catch you up, in passing you by, we will wave to you."

Even though the Kitchen Debate predates the concept of soft power and public diplomacy, the nature of the speeches as well as the accompanying national exhibition indeed has the characteristics of both. Soft power is the ability to change one's behavior through attraction and uses three assets: domestic values, foreign policy and culture (Nye 2011). Public diplomacy is an instrument that can be employed to mobilize these power resources (Nye 2011). The exhibition was expected to generate interest among the Soviet public and demonstrate the attractiveness of the American lifestyle. The attractiveness of the American lifestyle was mobilized in the exhibition. Similarly, Khrushchev's words

highlighted the merits of communism and the Soviet advances. His public appearance was used to mobilize the Soviet soft power assets.

The Kitchen Debate vignette thus characterizes a power-based correspondence between two actors within a public diplomacy setting during the Cold War. Foreign policy objective was similar for both parties – getting the support of the public. The countries were using hard power to deter respective aggressions and soft power to decrease support for competitor ideologies (Nye 2006). The nature of the interaction is no stranger to the realist school of international relations: conflict and competition. As both politicians had the same objective, a zero-sum power game was generated. If Nixon's discourse was to win, Khrushchev's had to lose. Both countries relied on existing power assets – in this case, the merits of their ideologies. The United States mobilized these assets through the exhibition and high-level representation. Their attempt was balanced by the Soviet presence. This prototype of soft power and public diplomacy demonstrates how our understanding of soft power is influenced by a realist understanding of hard power and competition. Soft power is exercised by mobilizing power assets and is observed when there is a behavior change. The next section challenges such a look on power and presents alternative views.

## A theoretical approach to soft power

When Joseph Nye first introduced the concept of soft power, his ideas were not far from realist power calculations observed in the Cold War era. Given the fact that the realism school of thought is labeled as that of the "theorists of power politics" in the study of international relations (Schmidt 2005, p. 524), it is not surprising to see similarities between hard and soft power concepts. Realists see international politics as politics power – with military power being the most important power type (Carr 1964). Essentially, international politics are seen as power calculations and states strive for power within an anarchic structure (Schmidt 2005, p. 547). As summarized in the prominent definition of power provided by Robert Dahl (1957, pp. 202–3), "*A* has power over *B* to the extent that he [*sic*] can get *B* to do something that *B* would not otherwise do." Power is observed in situations in which an actor carries out an unexpected action.

In *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, Nye (1990, p. 29) starts out with the argument that the importance of technology, education and economic growth in the assessment of power is increasing whereas geography, population and raw materials are becoming less important. He uses 'balance of power' as his operating assumption of international relations due to the anarchic system and the fact that political leaders act to reduce risks to their independence (Nye 1990, p. 35). Soft power balance constitutes another layer in power calculations. He further argues for power projection tools and techniques. Albeit more difficult to deploy than hard power resources, governments can wield soft power to achieve desired results (Nye 2004, pp. 99–102). As observed in the Kitchen Debate, the Soviet public was encouraged to take a more amicable stance towards the capitalist ideas – an action they would not have done without exposure to the American exhibition and accompanying discourses.

Along this thinking, Nye's novel contribution to power discussions does not necessarily lie in explaining power relations or in introducing a new ontological explanation of power, but rather in his acknowledgement of intangible sources of influence – such as culture and values (Nye 1990).[2] He made a strong case by placing soft power as one of the three types of power along with military and economic (Nye 2004, pp. 45–9). Military

power is used through coercion, deterrence, and protection by military force or the threat to use force. Economic power is used through inducement and coercion by payments or sanctions. Soft power gets you "what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments" (Nye 2004, p. x) through the use of domestic values, an actor's stand in international arena (foreign policy), and culture.

In brief, the fundamental definition of soft power is based on how American foreign policy might operate in the post-Cold War era. It is predominantly influenced by the American Cold War experience and realist power understanding. Soft power is observed only in instances of behavioral change and operates through mobilizing soft power assets. Yet these assumptions, not likely to be shared with other practitioners of soft power, might be less likely of those that do not share comparable polities and foreign policy with the United States. Therefore there is a need to theoretically expand beyond behavioral observation and asset mobilization.

Steven Lukes (1974) criticizes this understanding of behavior-based power by introducing a three-dimensional view. He primarily classifies the realist explanations of power introduced above as a *one-dimensional view.* An actor is accepted to have power over another actor to the extent that it can get the other party to do something against the intentions of the said party (this definition is based on the work of Dahl 1968). A *two-dimensional view* includes the critique of the behavior-based explanations of power (Lukes 1974). Power is not necessarily solely seen when an actor changes a behavior, but also includes instances in which certain policy options are limited through institutional structures and policy values (this view is based on the work of Bachrach and Baratz 1962). A *three-dimensional view* of power "allows for consideration of the many ways in which *potential issues* are kept out of politics" (Lukes 1974, p. 28). These dimensions present a challenge to the realist tradition. Power is not limited to the cases in which there is an observable attempt undertaken by an actor aiming at another actor's behavior. Given the nature of foreign policy objectives and expectations, soft power can be also observed within these three dimensions.[3]

Additionally, soft power does not necessarily take place through mobilizing assets: domestic values, foreign policy and culture. Barnett and Duvall (2005) provide two variables to explain additional power relations: kinds and specificity. The former argues that power assets are based either on the attributes of actors within their interactions or on the larger social processes (Barnett and Duvall 2005, p. 42). The latter is concerned about whether the relations between actors are direct or indirect (Barnett and Duvall 2005, p. 43). The resulting taxonomy provides four categories. *Compulsory* power focuses on the instances where an actor mobilizes its resources in direct interaction to change the behavior of another actor. *Institutional* power argues that an actor's existing control over formal and informal institutions can be a power asset and that said actor can affect another through these institutions. *Structural* power stems from an actor's position relevant to other actors in social settings. Lastly, a *productive* power concept posits that actors can also create certain rules and norms to control behaviors. Therefore, in addition to mobilizing assets, an actor can be deemed powerful based on its ability to control institutions, its relative position in existing structures and its ability to create new institutions and norms.

In short, Nye (1990, pp. 32–3) argues that the sources of power are always changing and twenty-first century power dynamics will be based on intangible assets. With the increasing cost of military build-up and decreasing legitimacy of direct force use, great powers might see resorting to 'softer' assets to change the behavior of other actors as a more useful option. As the title of Nye's first book – as well as his subsequent works on

the issue – suggests, soft power is the answer given to the changing nature of American power in the post-Cold War era.

In this section, existing literature on power is used to expand Nye's definition of power in two aspects. First, it is argued that Nye's focus on behavioral change is predominantly influenced by the realist understanding of power. Yet soft power can be also in the works in instances where policy options are limited and/or certain issues are kept out of agendas. Second, Nye's presentation of soft power requires mobilization of soft power resources. It should be added that soft power can also be exercised through controlling formal and informal institutions, utilizing actors' relative positions, and creating new institutions and norms.

This chapter started out with the argument that Nye's soft power assumptions are not necessarily shared by new practitioners of public diplomacy. The next section presents examples of different polities and their understanding of soft power through an analysis of their public diplomacy practice. It should be noted that the study of public diplomacy follows a recent trend in the international relations field that highlights the importance of studying the practice to provide a more comprehensive explanation of world politics (cf. Adler and Pouliot 2011a). Defined as competent performances (Adler and Pouliot 2011b), practice presents an opportunity to analyze the assumptions and knowledge of practitioners about their professions. The assumptions behind a theoretical concept – soft power – are created and recreated through day-to-day practices of public diplomacy. Thus an analysis of public diplomacy inherently unearths assumptions about soft power in the course of foreign policy practice.

## A practice of soft power: public diplomacy

Public diplomacy is generally used as an umbrella concept to cover international communication activities targeting foreign non-state audiences, such as international broadcasting and student exchanges. These activities are carried out with the expectation of managing the international environment through engagement with public. Therefore, public diplomacy should be seen as an internal component of a country's foreign policy. Given the fact that the practice of public diplomacy had been under American monopoly for decades,[4] the studies followed the American foreign policy assumptions (Gregory 2008). The United States still stands as one of the more – if not the most – prominent practitioner of public diplomacy; therefore, the American practice cannot be ignored in a study. However, it is not possible to generalize the American experience to different polities and structures.

In this section, American public diplomacy is supported by two other practitioner countries. Russia is included in the study as a country that has a skeptical stance towards soft power as Putin (2012) argued that soft power is "being used all too frequently to develop and prove extremist, separatist and nationalistic attitudes". Moreover, the country has a recurring position against the American objectives in various policy areas, including but not limited to the recent conflicts in Libya, Egypt and Syria. The Putin administration has been directly and indirectly in power since 2000 – a phenomenon that is not widely observed in Western democracies. The second practitioner, Iran, has had a strained relationship with the West due to various differences on issues such as nuclear proliferations and human rights (Parsi *et al*. 2011). Iran's government structure is officially linked with religious views where the head of state also holds the highest religious authority – another governance structure that is not common in Western democracies.

Thus, the American practice is used to assess whether the soft power assumptions made shortly after the end of the Cold War reflect the current reality. Russian and Iranian experiences are introduced to argue about whether different polities embrace similar assumptions in their practices.

'Telling America's story to the world.' This was the motto of the United States Information Agency (USIA) – the institution that was responsible for American public diplomacy for over half a century. USIA dedicated most of its efforts to combating Soviet propaganda, as exemplified in the American National Exhibition in Moscow. Yet public diplomacy has developed in the last two decades. The Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Reviews (QDDR), published in 2010 and 2015, outline the new American public diplomacy objectives: to build networks that share the American interests, to expand people-to-people relationships (Department of State and USAID 2010) and to partner with like-minded community leaders who can help counter the networks that extremist groups use to their advantage (Department of State and USAID 2015). Recent public diplomacy practices are in line with these objectives.

For instance, a Global Sports Mentoring Program was launched with the aim of using sports as a vehicle to create more social inclusion opportunities for women all around the world (DeCastro 2013). As part of the project, female sports industry leaders from a variety of countries were invited to visit the US and to work with American executives. As an outcome of this public diplomacy project, the participants were expected to work towards creating opportunities for women to participate in social life in their own countries. One such participant, Fatima Saleem of Pakistan, founded an organization called GO GIRL Pakistan that organizes sports clinics for Pakistani girls (Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs 2014b). In the course of Museums Connect, another American public diplomacy project, the objective was set as to "strengthen conditions and understanding between people in the United States and abroad" (Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs 2014a). Representatives from foreign museums were invited to visit the United States, to discuss relevant issues and to form a specific issue network. Within these instances, the expected outcome of soft power is not necessarily behavioral change. Instead of a direct influence, the projects attempt to shape the preferences of the actors (*two-* and *three-dimensional power*). Soft power assets – i.e. attractiveness of the American experience in sports and museum management – constitute the basis of the projects. Instead of projecting these assets, projects use their existing position in informal institutions (*institutional* power) to establish new informal organizations and spread professional norms (*productive* power).

Russia, the successor state to the second party in the Kitchen Debate, has also reconsidered its public diplomacy strategy. The country has "an increasing number of institutions created, which communicate and form relationships with an increasing number of people in foreign publics" (Simons 2014, p. 444). Soft power is seen as "a matrix of tools and methods to reach foreign policy goals without the use of arms but by exerting information and other levers of influence" (Putin 2012). The objectives are threefold: (i) promoting the Russian culture, language, and education system as attractive, (ii) countering the negative depiction of Russia by the foreign media, and (iii) creating a group of "Russia's friends" around the world (Lukyanov 2013). Thus Russia does not necessarily project the attractiveness of its assets. Moreover, the country attempts to establish itself as a provider of information. Consequently, it is possible to observe high levels of Russian investment in public diplomacy revolving around international broadcasting (Rawnsley 2015).

The state-funded broadcasting network RT (Russia Today) has programming in English, Spanish and Arabic, and argues that it exists to "provide[.] an alternative perspective on major global events … with the Russian viewpoint" (RT English 2015). This does not mean that RT reports about Russia. On the contrary, the station pays almost exclusive attention to global – and specifically American – issues and uses these events to present a critical view of the west (Rawnsley 2015, p. 4). Another Russian institution of soft power, Rossotrudnichestvo (Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation) works towards "the affirmation in foreign countries of an objective perception of modern Russia" (Rossotrudnichestvo 2015). In other words, Russia stands closer to an informational public diplomacy understanding in which it attempts to provide the Russian narrative in existing stories. Russian public diplomacy does not necessarily attempt to project the attractiveness of certain efforts but rather focuses on being a provider of information. The expected outcome can be better explained through a *three-dimensional* power understanding as the country does not seek to influence behavior directly but attempts to shape preferences. The objective is to sway public opinion by enabling the public's interaction with a more 'accurate' information resource. In other words, Russia also attempts to produce new norms and informal institutions (*productive* power).

Another newcomer to the public diplomacy scene, the Islamic Republic of Iran, organizes most of its public diplomacy projects through the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) – an institution established in 1995 to coordinate Iran's cultural outreach. The objectives of ICRO highlight the organization's role to establish networks based on shared cultural assets, such as the "promotion of cultural ties with other nations and communities" and "preparing the grounds for unity among the Muslims" (ICRO 2009). Iranian soft power understanding capitalizes "on common bonds for a deeper spiritual and moral connection with its target audience" (Feizi and Talebi 2012, p. 49). The country reaches out to foreign publics based on shared cultural assets. The attractiveness aspect of religion is not necessarily as important as the commonality. A representative example of this approach was the Nowruz[5] celebrations (Feizi and Talebi 2012). In 2011, the Iranian administration invited foreign heads of state to Iran to observe Nowruz (Feizi and Talebi 2012). In 2014, President Rouhani sent greetings to the heads of state of other nations that celebrate Nowruz (Ziabari 2014). Using a shared asset, Iran attempted to reach out to foreign publics through these high-profile events. The expected outcome is increasing support through preference shaping (*three-dimensional* power). Iran uses its control on existing religious structures (*institutional* power) and builds new networks to influence publics through these relationships (*productive* power).

In summary, countries do not have similar foreign policy objectives, therefore they execute a variety of public diplomacy projects based on their soft power assets. Despite the operational changes in their practices, the underlying soft power assumptions do not vary a great deal. In all three cases, soft power assets are used to influence the decision-making processes of other actors through preference shaping. The countries' existing positions in formal and informal networks, as well as their desires to create new norms and structures, were observed in all three practices. Even in the case of Russia, where the government publicly expressed a concern about soft power, the assumptions did not necessarily change. Therefore, it can be argued that the variation in governance structures and foreign policy needs have an impact on the form of public diplomacy projects (e.g. exchanges, broadcasting and cultural diplomacy) and the selection of target audiences. Different public diplomacy practices employ different soft power assets and organize

projects to reach different foreign policies; however, the underlying assumptions behind soft power do not seem to be influenced by different polities.

## Conclusion

This chapter started out by arguing that popular accounts of soft power limit its potential to explain world politics. It should be noted that this particular issue does not stem from the conceptualization of soft power but rather is due to the fact that scholars and practitioners alike continue to ignore the contextual changes in which soft power is practiced. Even though the practice reflects a more complex reality, soft power remains seen as the capacity to change the behavior of an actor through soft power assets.

Power is contextual and so is soft power. The realist tradition has been and still is influential in our understanding of power. The scholarly tradition managed to stretch certain assumptions, such as the commitment to military power calculations and to behavioral focus. Yet two legacies still hinder contemporary discussions of soft power. First, the expected outcome is behavioral change. Second, power is inherently related to resources and the ability to move them. As demonstrated in the examples of public diplomacy practices above, such operating assumptions do not always hold true.

It should be noted that the comparison in this chapter is not without its limitations. Case and project selections were done purposefully to increase the generalizability of the findings. It should also be noted that the findings are in line with contemporary public diplomacy studies that argue a move towards networking and relationship-building strategies (Zaharna 2007). It is not unexpected to observe a move away from behavioral change towards preference-shaping, and away from direct power relations towards more diffuse relations.

This chapter presented three arguments to ensure that soft power still reflects the assumptions of the practice. First, there is a need to break the link between hard and soft power. The legacy of hard power was observed in subsequent attempts to analyze cases through soft power. Soft power came to be seen as a process of controlling the behavior of other states and actors through norm (Bially Mattern 2005). As argued by Lukes (1974), behavioral change is not the only occasion to observe power, and soft power is no exception to this argument.

Second, soft power was created as a concept of practice to describe the future of American non-material power in the aftermath of the Cold War and was situated in a context where two parties were in constant direct competition. Such a bipolar perspective is no longer valid. Actors are expected to establish relationships with various other actors in a multitude of settings. Thus, as argued by Barnett and Duvall (2005), power might also be observed and exercised through constitutions of new networks and renegotiating relations between social actors.

Third, new public diplomacy is practiced by a larger number of countries. As the contrasting policies demonstrate, countries do not necessarily make use of soft power tools for similar – or even comparable – objectives. However, the impact of different governance structures and foreign policy needs are limited to the form of public diplomacy projects.

In conclusion, soft power should be seen as a separate concept from hard power, reflect the inner workings of the practice and be situated within the proper political context. Following the attempts in the literature to dissect the assumptions in soft power (e.g. Bially Mattern 2005; Hall 2010; Hayden 2012; Zaharna 2007), this chapter pointed

out how the inherent inconsistencies between hard power influenced explanations of soft power and practice. By highlighting diverse practices of public diplomacy, a more inclusive approach to soft power was proposed.

## Notes

1 The transcript of the Kitchen Debate is available online at www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/16/1959-07-24.pdf, Last accessed 24 July 2015.
2 It should be noted that other mainstream international relations theories also assigned varying levels of importance to non-military aspects of power. Even Carr himself acknowledged that power might go beyond military force and argued for the importance of public opinion – for instance – as a power source (1964). Liberalism introduced the role of international organizations in power calculations (Keohane and Nye 1972) and constructivism introduced that of norms (Wendt 1992).
3 For a more detailed discussion of the three dimensions of power and soft power readers may refer to Lukes S 2007, 'Power and the battle for hearts and minds: on the bluntness of sot power', in Berenskoetter F and Williams MJ (eds.), *Power in World Politics*, Routledge, London, pp. 83–97.
4 With probably the exception of the British Council of the United Kingdom, the contemporary public diplomacy institutions have all established their presence in the last two decades: China's Confucius Institute was founded in 2004, Russia Today started its international broadcasts in 2005 and India set up a Public Diplomacy Division in 2006.
5 Nowruz is the first day of the year in the Persian calendar and coincides with the spring equinox.

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## SECTION II

# Methodological problems

# 5

# MEASURING SOFT POWER (SECTION OVERVIEW)

*Li Ji*

## Introduction

The concept of 'soft power', coined by Joseph Nye in 1990, has been widely applied as a resource for public diplomacy and image cultivation by state actors, as well as widely debated by scholars mainly in the fields of international relations and international communication. Like any other power forms, soft power aims to exercise influence on others and to get preferred outcomes. The difference is that soft power achieves these goals through attractiveness rather than coercion, payments or inducement (Nye 1990). As Nye states, soft power attempts to win people's minds and hearts *per se*. In the political domain, soft power is considered as a preference to accommodate the new politics approach in the realm of the noösphere – noöpolitik – that refers to an approach to diplomacy and strategy for the information age that emphasizes the shaping and sharing of ideas, values, norms, laws, and ethics through soft power (Ronfeldt and Arquilla 2009, p. 357).

Three basic soft resources that have been identified by Nye contain its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when others see them as legitimate and having moral authority) (Nye 2004, 2011a, p. 84). Culture and political values are relatively stable, whilst foreign policies are variable and relate to actions of the country. These resources are mostly intangible assets, especially referring to culture and political values. By contrast with hard power, it is far more difficult to measure and evaluate effects of influence in a given country. The efficacy of soft power in public diplomacy practice has been questioned in international relations and international communication scholarship. Moreover, there is a lack of a comprehensive methodological framework for measuring soft power effects (what is of most interest to governments) and the challenge of evaluating power lingers to a certain extent in the literature. This chapter overviews the various methodological considerations, aiming to construct a methodological framework for evaluating soft power effects to fill the gap in the extant literature. To achieve this aim and to fulfil the objective of providing an overview for the methodology section of this volume, this chapter will begin with reviewing the concept of power and soft power, and revisiting the well-accepted research approaches in assessing soft power effects in the existing literature. The other chapters offer a counterpoise to the effects' imperative. Having

reviewed the literature, a conceptual framework, along with a methodological framework with an 'audience-centered' orientation recognizing the importance of listening (Cull 2008) in evaluating soft power effects, will be developed. This will be followed by an analytical example of framing analysis.

## Soft power and measurement of soft power effects

Soft power, first coined by Joseph Nye, is defined as "the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes" (2011a, pp. 20–1). By contrast with hard power, Nye (2004) claims that soft power gets the desired outcomes through attraction rather than coercion or payments. Reviewing the soft power and power discourse, it can be seen that the conception of soft power lies in the realist power tradition, and the interpretation of these three different power forms (hard power, soft power and smart power) is still within the power paradigm.

Power, an intricate and contested concept, is the core for soft power and hard power. In the realist power tradition, a widely accepted definition of power, offered by Yale political scientist Robert Dahl (1957, pp. 202–3), is that "*A* has power over *B* to the extent that he [*sic*] can get *B* to do something that *B* would not otherwise do". Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz (1962) advance the structural dimension of power. They argue that actors can structure the situation through framing and agenda-setting to make others accept it willingly. Steven Lukes (1974, 2005) critiques the behavior-based definition of power and proposes a three-dimensional view of power – three faces of power that governments have over people. He accentuates that governments control people not necessarily through decision-making power, but also through ideological power that can shape ideas and beliefs to form and alter preferences of publics. Teun A. van Dijk (1989, p. 20) emphasizes a similar idea in his social power analysis, that "power of A over B's actual or possible actions presupposes that A must have control over the cognitive conditions of actions of B, such as desires, wishes, plans and beliefs." Nye (2004, 2011a) further classifies three faces of relational power on the basis of Lukes' three dimensions of power. It identifies that realist power is the first face of power; soft power ability emerges from the second face (framing and agenda-setting) and the third face (shaping beliefs, perceptions and preferences) of power.

No matter what dimensions of power, it needs to be conveyed and communicated *per se* to have effects on subjects. "Power is conveyed through resources" (Nye 2011a, p. 8). It is a conversion process from resources to behavioral outcomes in an agent–subject relationship (Nye 2011a). Agents convert their resources to achieve desired behavioral outcomes from subjects. Nonetheless, power is not necessarily effective. As Nye (2011a) argues, power resources, no matter whether tangible or intangible, are not necessarily able to produce preferred outcomes because the conversion of power resources is a crucial intervening variable and power ability to affect others is relational and contextual.

Power works when agents implement effective strategies or means in a suitable context that can convert power resources into operational power ability. Nye's (2011a) tandem arrangement of resource and behavioral-based soft power illustrates that power resources need to be successfully transferred to preferred outcomes through effective conversion strategies (e.g. agenda-setting, framing), and it is stressed that power-conversion strategies deserve more attention in the resources to outcomes conversion processes. Power conversion strategy refers to agent behavior. Nye (2004, 2011a) elucidates that certain

power resources are associated with explicit types of behaviors in a spectrum of behaviors. These strategies (means or behaviors) are incorporated in all three faces of power that have been examined. The discussion above implies that the basic elements in the power conversion process include power resources, strategies, behaviors, contexts, relations and outcomes.

It is always necessary for power actors to understand the effects and consequences that their power exerts to recipients in order to adjust their power strategies and achieve their goals. In this power conversion process, policymakers tend to focus on the evaluation of power resources that are considered to determine the capacity of the power agents, and the direct behavior changes of subjects. The material resources in the hard power domain are observable and quantifiable. Hard power behaviors such as military coercion and economic inducement generally lead to expeditious and dichotomous outcomes – behavioral change (power success) or non-behavioral change (power failure). Emotion aversion and perception alteration are negligible in the desired outcomes of agents in the performance of hard power. The evaluation of the effectiveness of material-based hard power can be largely focused on the measurement of behavioral change against the capacity and expenditure of hard power resources. This approach is based on the assumption that power resources, when applied, will certainly have powerful effects on subjects. It is albeit a simplified approach that neglects other variables in the power conversion process that impact on the outcomes. Soft power resources, according to Nye (2004, 2011a), mainly contain culture, values, political ideals, institutions and foreign policy motivations of a country. These soft power resources are largely located in the low politics scope such as culture, education, health, media and sports (Chitty 2008), and these resources are mostly intangible and unquantifiable. The outcomes of soft power are associated with individual emotions, perceptions, evaluative opinions and behaviors. Consequently, soft power effects tend to act in a gradual manner over an extended period of time. These attributes contribute to the difficulties of evaluating the effectiveness of soft power.

Reviewing the extant literature in relation to measuring soft power, there are several prevalent approaches to the evaluation of soft power effects. A considerable volume of research has concentrated on the interpretation of soft power activities and soft power indicators that are associated with possible outcomes or influences of soft power activities. Those variables include political stability, government effectiveness, accountability, credibility, deep cultural values, policy preferences and so on. The quality of these variables is considered to be the key to the effectiveness of soft power resources. The success or effectiveness of soft power underlies the presumption that it is a natural progression that subjects will be attracted to good and reliable qualities of agents. Credibility is the key. The prevailing outlook of measuring the effectiveness of soft power among international scholars (e.g. Nye 2011a; Rawnsley 2012) is that soft power depends upon the 'credibility' of its resources. Credibility and trustworthiness contribute to the perceptions of an actor's attractiveness (Hayden 2012). The presumption of soft power effects is that soft power will be effective on subjects if they are attractive, charming, credible and trustworthy, in line with a range of behaviors (e.g. framing, agenda-setting and attraction) conducted by agents. As Hayden (2012, p. 41) claims, "*Approaches* to soft power reflects the way in which an agent relies upon soft power resources – that is, how an actor effectively converts resources into desired outcomes." Thus the assessment of the effectiveness of soft power outcomes has been borne on the examination of the attractiveness and qualities of resources and approaches that actors apply to the implementation of soft power resources.

Credibility and trustworthiness are salient attributes for the attractiveness of soft power resources, and appropriate operative behaviors tend to lead to the success of converting soft power resources into capacities to achieve desired outcomes. However, as Robert Gass and John Seiter (2009) have argued about credibility in public diplomacy practice, credibility is dynamic, situation-specific and culture-bound; they thus suggest that "public diplomacy must adopt an audience-centered approach" (p. 162). The deficiencies of this credibility-focused approach to assessing the effectiveness of soft power in the extant research, I would argue, include the following aspects: (1) perceptions of credibility are predominately based on western values neglecting other values as variables; (2) credibility-focused approach lacks systematic analysis and understanding of the insights of the targeted subjects in relation to the credibility of soft power resources of agents; (3) along with trustworthiness, credibility is one of the principal attributes of the attractiveness of soft power, but not the sole one. There are other variables such as the compatibility of cultural and political values, and policy interests between agents and subjects that are worth taking into account; (4) this approach is inclined to be an excessively simple cause – effect relationship, but neglects other variables in the power conversion process.

Even Nye himself clarifies that soft power evaluation should be focused on 'outcomes' rather than being based solely on examination of resources or solely through what actors do. However, he has placed substantial emphasis on the evaluation of resources and mechanisms of agents. As Hayden (2012, p. 36) argues, "soft power is predominantly *agent*-focused – actors do things with these resources to influence subjects, and to influence the agendas and preferences that would alter the attractiveness of soft power resources". The evaluation of soft power effectiveness should be two-directional – agents' resources, capabilities and behaviors, along with subjects' perceptions, affections and behaviors towards soft power exerted by agents.

Another prevalent approach to evaluating soft power effects goes in the other direction by focusing on examining the perceptions and sentiments of subjects towards the agents. The management of perceptions is an important goal of public diplomacy practice (Gregory 2005). After all, soft power aims to win people's minds and hearts *per se* (Nye 2004). In light of this view, soft power and public diplomacy practice increasingly turn to efforts of image and brand management (Dinnie 2008). Kahraman in Chapter 6 articulates the relationship between soft power and nation branding. Nation branding strategy will assist a country to gain soft power by projecting a positive image of the country. The co-responsive approaches to evaluating national image and nation branding, drawn upon marketing and public relations techniques, include looking at visibility and valence in national image analysis (Manheim 1994) and using factor analysis to uncover traits of nation brands such as indexes employed in the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index (Anholt 2005) to assess the nation brand. Manheim's approach aims to examine the attitudes and preferences of objects through a valence–visibility dimension in media discourse. Visibility refers to "the amount of media coverage that a given country receives" whilst valence refers to "the degree to which one content that is available reflects either favorably or unfavorably on the country in question" (Manheim 1994, p. 131). This approach is focused on measuring the percentage of the favorability of a host country (Country A, agent) to audiences in target countries (subjects) and the distribution of the visibility of the host country in the media of the target countries. This approach has been widely adapted by professional research institutes (e.g. Pew Research Center, Gallup International Polls).

The visibility–valence dimension is a model that Manheim (1994) developed for national image management through public relations and public diplomacy efforts.

Visibility and valence are considered as the two main aspects that reflect the image of foreign countries portrayed by media, as well as the important attributes of framing the perceptions and actions of policymakers (Manheim 1994). The locations of countries in the quadrants of Manheim's model reveal the correlation between visibility and valence of a given country, and also indicate the counter-strategies that may be designed to promote the image of a given country through managing visibility and enhancing positive valence in its international public relations and public diplomacy practices.

It is useful to discover the visibility and valence of a given country (subject) in international discourse, especially in the host country (agent) discourse. It reflects the media 'agenda' (visibility) and media 'emotions' (valence) of the given country, as well as offering an indicator for the directions of image change in the public diplomacy and public relations practices. However, I would argue that the deficiency in the visibility–valence model is that it cannot give explicit indications of what the problems are and what solutions can be tailored to change media and public 'emotions' towards the given country. 'Valence' is a term used in psychology, referring to "a basic property of emotion experience, and also a fundamental component of emotional responding" (Barrett 2006, p. 39). Apparently, this approach is merely associated with the emotions of favorability and unfavorability (or positivity and negativity); other types of emotions (e.g. surprise) and emotional responses are not observed in the analysis of national image management.

Factor analysis, commonly used in the analysis of nation branding, identifies the evaluation index system. The commonly recognized nation branding indexes include the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index, the Good Country Index, the Environmental Performance Index and the Democracy Ranking. The nation branding rating reveals the final scores of each factor or dimension in the index system. For instance, in the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index, seven dimensions – exports, governance, culture, people, tourism, immigration and investment – are identified.

Kahraman argues in her chapter (Ch. 6) that there are four issues – economic, managerial, stakeholder and assessment – regarding the methodology and application of the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index. These issues indicate that the rating results might be incomparable because the evaluation indexes overlook specific contexts. Her argument is suggestive of the need for a further examination of the current nation branding evaluation indexes. Similar to the visibility–valence approach, the results of nation brands indexes lack deeper investigation of the reasons behind the scores. To overcome the deficiency, Craig Hayden (2012) proposes a new perspective on measuring soft power effects by examining discourse. He questions that an agent-focused "performative effect" reflects a persistent analytical problem for soft power scholars and practitioners, and upholds a subject-oriented direction of assessing soft power effects. Hayden, in accordance with Niklas Luhmann (1995), Janice Bially Mattern (2005) and Manual Castells (2007, 2010), emphasizes that soft power works essentially as a communicative process around the global networks of communication. In these global networks, the deployment of soft power, like public diplomacy, aims to "harness the dialogue between different social collectives and their cultures in the hope of sharing meaning and understanding" (Castells 2010, p.45).

Hayden (2012) rationalizes the possibility of investigating how soft power resources and capabilities are perceived and understood by the target population through analyzing soft power discourse. Hayden (2012, p. 50) proposes textual analysis as an analytical approach to examining "how resources are realized as a capacity for soft power through analysis of specific programs and actions", and probing "qualities and contexts of actors, relationships, messages, and technologies – which then provides a crucial focus to our

understanding of attraction through behaviors and resources". Hayden's rhetoric of soft power opens a door to solving some analytical puzzles contained in the notion of soft power and provides analytical viewpoints for the measurement of discourse. He intensively explicates the rationale of examining discourse for evaluating soft power effects, but the identification and explanation of analytical procedures are not specific. Also, various possible analytical approaches to investigating discourses are not considered in his methodological framework.

Another emerging trend in evaluating soft power effectiveness is to conduct web ecological analysis of internet-based sources, especially social media, by applying classical qualitative approaches (e.g. content analysis, textual analysis) and developing a multidisciplinary methodological framework involving computer science (e.g. big data approach, data mining techniques). The internet generates an unprecedentedly large volume of data on a public online platform and redefines human networks in an online environment. The online interactive public sphere exposes individual emotions, opinions and interaction on public issues in cyberspace, which spans the evaluation scope of soft power effects. There is obviously a drive for the analysis of online engagement of social media users and the reconstruction of a multidisciplinary methodological framework in evaluating soft power effects to feed the current web ecology.

Ying (Ch. 8) offers a case study of web ecological content analysis of the usage of Chinese social media (i.e. Sina Weibo) by selected foreign embassies to investigate the effectiveness of the public diplomacy practice (i.e. e-diplomacy) of the embassies on the Chinese social media platform. The categorization of the Weibo posts in the three-month sample, including 'broadcast', 'broadcast mention', 'reply' and 'retweet', provides an evaluative framework for qualitative analysis of a small sample of data on social media.

Classical qualitative methods not having the capacity to cope with large volumes of online data and complex human online network relationships, Jean-François Simard and Pierre C. Pahlavi (2008) made a cogent theoretical argumentation about the necessity for multidisciplinary approaches, especially those involving information science and modelling of human networks, in the quantitative measurement of soft power effects (Ch. 7), which establishes a theoretical basis for the construction of the multidisciplinary methodological framework.

Integrating the positivist and interpretivist traditions, the multidisciplinary methodological framework adopts computational techniques and big data approaches for empirical data collection and analysis of the distribution and flows of social interaction on social media platforms, along with qualitative approaches (e.g. content analysis, textual analysis, discourse analysis and framing analysis) for the investigation of motivational triggers, social context and meanings of communication flows, behaviors and interactions (Dennis, O'Loughlin and Gillespie 2015; Boyd and Crawford 2012). Dennis *et al.*'s (2015) research on audience engagement with Twitter during global media events is a recent notable application of a big data approach to the analysis of audience interaction (tweet and retweet) and responses (attitudes and opinions) to the events. They illustrated an explicit methodological design including using social media analytical tools (e.g. Sysomos MAP and Brand 24) to collect data, applying content and discourse analysis for coding. Their data analysis workflow (see Dennis *et al*. 2015, Figure 3, p. 446) offers a research model for analogous research. This model can be applied to the evaluation of soft power effects on audience perceptions and opinions through exploring audience engagement on social media platforms.

However, as Dennis *et al*. (2015) have argued, these multidisciplinary social media research methods are still at early experimental stages. The conflation and compatibility

of the research traditions of computer science and social science require further research investigation. Another limitation of applying this methodological framework for measuring soft power effects, I would argue, is that big data approaches are used to obtain and manipulate large datasets and are used as 'information flow' mapping tools; the analysis mainly focuses on the effects on discursive agenda and interaction among event subjects and social media users. The application of big data approaches to mapping effects on the behaviors of audiences (e.g. individual consumption, economic revenue) is lacking. This is a very complex, multi-layer system. Davis and Ji (Ch. 7) further explore the advantages of big data approaches to advance the multidisciplinary methodological framework. They convert conceptualizations of soft power into a marketing-related method, and draw insights from online social network analysis to develop a theoretical, methodological and technological framework for modelling data, relationships and players in the soft power network. Their research sets out to further explore the application of big data approaches in the research of soft power effect evaluation, but should be recognized as a preliminary attempt. The theoretical and methodological framework needs further construction.

## Conceptual construction of the methodological framework of assessing soft power effects

Collating definitions of soft power, it can be seen that soft power is a dynamic process wherein resources are converted by agents into desired outcomes by subjects. Although it is a highly contested concept, some common elements – resources, ability, strategies, contexts and outcomes – are manifested in the academic discourse of soft power. The two ends of the relationship in the soft power process are resources and outcomes. A complete soft power process includes the conversion of resources into desired outcomes in a voluntary manner. The soft power conversion process is a dynamic one influenced by a variety of variables including context, relationship between agents and subjects, strategies and means that agents deploy. A simplified model of soft power relationship is presented in Figure 1.2.5.1 below:

As discussed in the literature review, soft power resources mainly contain intangible resources – culture, values, political ideals, institutions and foreign policy motivations of a country. They are conveyed into capabilities through the application of strategies in soft power practice that mainly refer to agenda-setting, framing and attraction. Compared with hard power effects, Nye's resource–behavior conversion process in the soft power

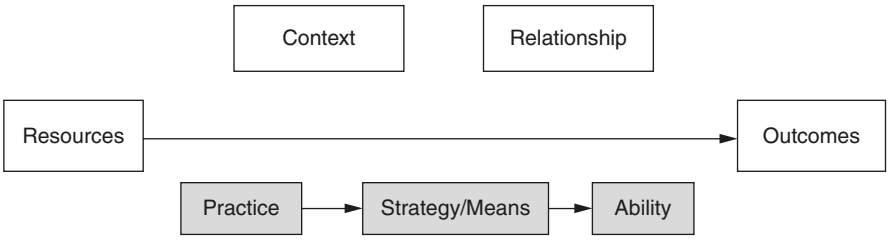



*Figure 1.2.5.1* Soft power relationship
*Source*: Nye 2011.

paradigm is far more intricate due to the intangible attributes of these resources and the mutable and fluid nature of attraction associated with recipients' psychological structures. Furthermore, since agents exert soft power to achieve desired outcomes through attractiveness, the attraction approach determines that recipients make their choice for acceptance and behavioral change voluntarily. This voluntary attribute contributes to the mutable and fluid outcomes. Also, whether something is attractive or not depends on an individual's cognitive and affective units such as values, beliefs and affective responses and so on. The acceptance and attraction of soft power resources is individual-specific. Due to the attributes of soft power resources and the variables in the soft power conversion process, I would argue that there are three big challenges in the resources-to-outcomes conversion process in respect of evaluating the effectiveness of soft power.

One big challenge of evaluating soft power, in tune with the consensus that IR scholars have come to, is that agents implement soft power with intangible resources, and the outcomes of attraction are difficult to measure and observe. Some resources may have very slow effects on recipients. The change of mindsets that have been fixed in the cognitive system requires a long cultivation process. The cost of time capital in the cultivation process is difficult to calculate. In the process, there might be mixed factors that exert influence and result in behavior change. It is difficult to identify whether the change occurs owing to the attractiveness of the soft power resources or some other factors, and how much influence the soft power resources have on the change. Another facet is that individual perception, affection, and even behavior are fluid. It is very difficult to capture snapshots of individual internal cognitive, affective and evaluative structures (Boulding 1959) that are always in flux.

The second challenge is that there are different variables in the conversion process, and the impact of soft power is usually volatile in the face of changes to these variables. Two notable variables are context and relationship. The effectiveness of soft power is influenced by the relationship pattern between agents and subjects. As Alexander, Levin and Henry (2005) have tested in their empirical research, state-to-state relationship patterns can result in different types of images (e.g. ally image, enemy image). This infers that the attraction of soft power resources is commonly fostered by a cooperative relationship and undermined by a deteriorated relationship between agents and subjects. An adversary state-to-state relationship will cultivate an enemy image among people in the two countries (Alexander *et al*. 2005). With an enemy image, the subjects normally distort ideology and political values of the counterpart as well as block the flow of soft power products to the market. Distortion and obstruction will inevitably catalyze hostile and suspicious perceptions. In addition, the impacts of soft power practice on recipients may be compromised or fade after the context is altered. For instance, students under educational exchange programs may gain new perspectives during their study in the host country, but they may have to adapt to their old environment for survival and self-development after returning to their home country. It is difficult to measure the quantity of new insights students carry back from their erstwhile host country into their work in their home country.

The third challenge, neglected in soft power scholarship, is the compatibility of these intangible soft assets owned by the agents with counterpart assets owned by subjects. Compared with ideology and political values, culture[1] is the softest asset of soft power. Globalization and modernization contribute to the 'homogenization of global culture' through the global distribution of "certain influential kinds of political, economic, and sports discourse" (Boyd-Barrett 2000, p. 300), and the same commodities, images and capital from the US-led western metropolitan centers (Iwabuchi 2010). American cultural hegemony has transformed some subordinate cultures into assimilators of the

dominant culture. However, cultural resistance and conflicts never cease, as the political scientist Samuel P. Huntington (1996, p. 22) argues: "[t]he great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural … The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics." Apparently, no country's culture will be attractive to the entire world population. Thus the compatibility of the soft 'assets' in the subjects is one of the parameters of evaluating soft power effects. The understanding and discovery of the reasons for the incompatibility can provide tailored strategies for the implementation of soft power.

The challenges indicate the difficulties in assessing soft power effects, but it is not impossible. Nye (2011a) emphasizes that attraction and persuasion are socially constructed. This position has gained some currency in soft power scholarship and practice. Koichi Iwabuchi (2010) argues that the cultural imperialism thesis neglects the analysis of empirical evidence of audience reception in subordinate cultures, and 'cultural domination' is a discursive construct rather than the reflection of the subordinate people's actual experience. I would argue that the soft power thesis shares the same deficiency. Evaluation of soft power has placed considerable emphasis on a discursive construct, but has neglected the analysis of empirical evidence of audience reception. For instance, the identification of the credibility of soft power resources eventually rests on the audiences' perception and cognition. These challenges imply that the evaluation of soft power can be oriented towards soft power subjects.

In terms of the notions of power discussed in the literature review, power effects are associated with cognitive conditions including "cognitive, affective and evaluative structure" of individuals (Boulding 1959, p. 453) as well as behavioral outcomes. I would suggest that soft power leads to two main categories of outcomes (cognitive and behavioral) at micro, meso and macro levels (individual, institutional and state).

Table 1.2.5.1 reveals that the soft power practices will have effects on two parameters (cognition and behavior) of actors at three levels (individual actors, institutional actors and state actors). Individual perception and opinion refer to cognition, affection and evaluation on the soft power resources and practices in an individual dimension. It will lead to individual behavioral variation such as consuming cultural products and supporting foreign policies. Opinions and policies are the two outcomes located at both meso and macro levels. Group and public opinion refer to collective views in a group or the whole society on the soft power resources and practices that have an impact on institutional policy, foreign policy and policy-related interaction such as economic trade, educational exchange and so on.

*Table 1.2.5.1* Soft power outcomes/effects to the subjects

| *Hierarchical level* | *Individual actors (Micro)* | *Institutional actors (Meso)* | *State actors (Macro)* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cognitive | Perception/opinion | Group opinion | Public opinion |
| Behavioral | Behavior | Institutional policy and policy-related outcomes | Foreign policy and policy-related outcomes |

*Source*: Author's construction.

*Table 1.2.5.2* Soft power evaluation approaches

| *Scales* | *Example approaches* |
|---|---|
| Emotion/sentiment (valence) | Poll, survey, questionnaire, content analysis, big data |
| Perception/opinion (discourse) | Content analysis, textual analysis, discourse analysis, framing analysis, big data |
| Behavior (products consuming; institutional and foreign policy related outcomes) | Big data, framing analysis |

*Source*: Author's construction.

In line with these two parameters and three levels, I would like to suggest three scales for evaluating soft power effects on both individuals and collectives along with the corresponding research approaches in both positivism and interpretivism traditions.

The first scale is associated with individual emotions and sentiments (valence) towards the soft power resources and activities that agents exert. This is the first step of testing the attractiveness (positive valence) of or degree of aversion (negative valence) to soft power resources with audiences. The expected outcomes at this scale usually allude to favor and disfavor of the soft power resources and practices by recipients. The commonly used approaches to collecting empirical evidences include poll, survey and questionnaire, and the analytical approach can be content analysis that copes with coding the positive references and negative references to soft power in text. The empirical results at this scale are normally presented in a numerical fashion. The numbers or percentages reveal the positive and negative trend of the soft power practices deployed to subjects. The empirical results can give an initial indicator of the favorability and popularity of the soft power resources and practices in the target population. As I discussed in the literature review, this approach initiated by Manheim (1994) to the evaluation of national image has been popular in both soft power scholarship and practices. The key limitation of this approach is that it cannot reveal how audiences interpret soft power resources and practices, the reasons for the results and the problems emerging in the negative valence.

The second scale relates to individual and collective perceptions and opinions including understandings, interpretations and views on soft power resources and practices. This scale follows Hayden's (2012) communication-centric approach through discursive analysis of specific programs and actions, directed at exploring "how certain resources and capabilities are seen by international actors as both available to them and likely to be effective in persuasion or some form of influence" (Hayden 2012, p.36). In the social power domain, van Dijk (1989, p. 20) states that "social power is usually indirect and operates through the 'minds' of people". This kind of 'mental control' by social power is commonly exercised through persuasion or other forms of discursive communication. This provides a basis for the "analysis of the role of discourse in the exercise, maintenance, or legitimation of power" (van Dijk 1989, p. 20), as well as soft power. Needless to say, symbolic interactionism theory (Blumer 1973) provides a theoretical foundation for the analysis of the discourse in the interactive power relations.

Discourse generally refers to the use of spoken and written language (Fairclough 1992). It consists of sets of language data including various modes of language (e.g. spoken, written, multimodal and electronic corpora) and covers various themes including academic discourse, news discourse, policy discourse and any other written or spoken

documents and informal forms of discussions and debates (e.g. forums, blogs, tweets on the internet) (Baker and McEnery 2015). Van Dijk (1989, pp. 27–30) classifies various sets of language data into four discourse genres associated with different power dimensions; namely, discourse with directive pragmatic functions backed by institutional power (i.e. commands, laws, regulations and instructions), persuasive discourse types based on financial power resources (i.e. advertisements and propaganda), professional descriptive discourse that may influence future action (i.e. scholarly reports) and influential narratives that may have recourse to emotional appeals (i.e. movies and news reports). The analysis of discourse not only reveals the meaning of the content, but also reveals the reasoning and power relations behind the discourse.

I would suggest two sets of analytical approaches in both positivist and interpretivist traditions for the analysis of discourse. Several commonly used qualitative approaches including content analysis, textual analysis, discourse analysis and framing analysis can be applied for investigating discourse in target countries in connection with soft power deployed by agents. Besides the perceptions and opinions discovered through these qualitative approaches in the discourse, they can help investigate and understand the reasons for negative views on soft power resources and deployment through unpacking texts and interpreting the meanings conveyed in texts, as well as further examine the social contexts in which the discourse is embedded. Certainly different approaches have slightly different foci, and the selection of methods is dependent on the research purpose. In the following section I will introduce framing analysis as a research method for evaluating soft power resources and practices.

The big data approach is a research approach from computer science. It has the advantage of allowing to mine an incredibly large amount of data, especially on the internet, that can enhance the accuracy of data analysis. One of the limitations of qualitative approaches is that they can only handle limited amounts of data. Thus the selection of data has normally been focused on the discourse of "symbolic elites" (van Dijk 1989) or Lasswellian influentials, which groups exercise power on the basis of "symbolic capital" (Bourdieu 1977, 1984; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). Apart from formal documentary data (e.g. policy documents, reports, speeches), the big data approach is able to excavate a large volume of informal discourse such as blogs, comments (e.g. Facebook and forum comments) and tweets on the internet. It is also feasible to trace the geographic and demographic distribution of the discourse. The analysis of big datasets helps increase the accuracy of the evaluation outcomes of soft power resources and practices. The big data approach can be a complementary analytical approach to those qualitative methods that are applied at these three scales.

## Framing analysis: an analytical example

Originating from cognitive psychology (e.g. Bartlett 1932) and anthropology (e.g. Bateson 1972), the framing concept has been adopted by other disciplines (e.g. sociology, linguistics, policy research, communication) with a broad theoretical and methodological approach. The recent conception of frame is ascribed to the work of Erving Goffman (1974) – *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Goffman defines a frame as "an arbitrary slice or cut from the stream of ongoing activity" (p. 10); the purpose of frame is for individuals or groups "to locate, perceive, identify, and label events and occurrences, thus rendering meaning, organizing experiences, and guiding actions" (p. 12). Kinder and Sanders (1990, p. 74) define a frame as an "internal structure of the mind" and frames as "devices embedded in political discourse". Van Gorp (2005, p. 487)

identifies that a frame itself is "a specification of the idea that connects the different framing and reasoning devices in a news article". In policy studies, Verloo (2005, p. 20) defines a policy frame as an "organizing principle that transforms fragmentary or incidental information into a structured and meaningful problem, in which a solution is implicitly or explicitly included". These definitions of frame imply three directions rooted in the framing research: one is to find out what frames are embedded in discourse; another one is to discover how these frames interact with individuals' perceptions and guide their individual actions; the third one is to uncover the reasoning and solutions suggested in the discourse.

Soft power resources need to be communicated to reach or be accessed by a target population, and they need to be converted into effective power capabilities to achieve desired outcomes. Framing is identified as one of the strategies that are applied for converting soft power resources into capabilities (Nye 2011a). In media and communication studies, framing scholars have widely accepted that framing is a dynamic communicative process. The framing process includes two basic construction stages: frame-building and frame-setting (D'Angelo 2002; de Vreese 2003; Scheufele 1999). Applying the media framing process in the context of the soft power paradigm, frame-building is the strategic construction process of soft power resources and the conversion process into soft power capabilities, whilst frame-setting refers to the effects of frames in discourse on recipients and the interaction with individual characteristics (de Vreese 2003; Scheufele 1999). To evaluate soft power effects is indeed correlated with scrutinizing the frame-setting stage. To understand how target populations or international actors perceive soft power resources and capabilities of agents can be conducted through unpacking frames in the identified discourse. The examination of frames in the discourse of subjects can help discover whether the soft power resources and practices deployed by agents are compatible with the perceptions of subjects. Also, it helps explore meanings and reasons for different frames that emerge in two terrains of agents and subjects as well as the variables that lead to the variance in the conversion process from soft power resources to the desired outcomes.

Framing analysis (or policy frame analysis in policy studies), as an analytical approach to discourse, aims to unpack or reveal the interpretive packages that shape the meaning of an issue by identifying 'symbolic devices' or 'framing devices' and 'reasoning devices' (Gamson and Lasch 1981; Gamson and Modigliani 1989; van Gorp 2005) that are embedded in text. It helps to resolve the questions about "[h]ow language choices invite us to understand an issue or event" and "how news frames act to affect the political consciousness of news audiences" (Kuypers 2010, p. 298). The uncovering of frames is achieved through the identification of 'framing devices' and 'reasoning devices' in the texts considered. Regarding 'framing devices', there have been several highly used models identified by framing scholars in various fields. In this chapter, I take news discourse as an example, and explain how to apply this methodological approach to analyze news discourse.

Gamson and Modigliani (1989, p. 3) propose five 'framing devices' in news discourse: metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions and visual images. Pan and Kosicki (1993, p. 59) provide alternative devices in the structural dimensions to analyze news discourse: syntactical structure, script structure, thematic structure and rhetorical structure. In each structure, their corresponding subdevices are included. Gamson and Modigliani's five devices are classified in rhetorical structures, which are supposed to discern the stylistic choices in the text. FrameWorks Institute (n.d.) has developed a list of elements (or subdevices) in a frame for strategic frame analysis of various social issues: contexts,

numbers, messengers, messages, visuals, metaphors and simplifying models and tones that may help people relate new information structures of expectation in their heads.

Drawing on those devices and subdevices mentioned above, I assemble framing devices and subdevices for analysis of soft power in news discourse selectively in a two-tiered framework. I select three structures from Pan and Kosicki's four structural dimensions as the first level of framing devices – thematic structure, script structure and rhetorical structure.

Thematic structure refers to a core idea in a story, so the themes normally facilitate with audience comprehension of core ideas of the text and, what is more, salient themes in an issue normally determine the primary perception of receivers audiences on the issue. Script structure, containing the structured components of an event, helps audiences to understand who are the key actors in the presented issues, and the key messages conveyed by actors, to further reveal latent salient actors in the discourse. The analysis of stylistic choices in the rhetorical structure helps to comprehend how message senders use language symbolically to invoke images, to increase the salience of a point, and to heighten the vividness of a report (Pan and Kosicki 1993). I omit syntactical structure in the framing analysis of soft power discourse because the concern is focused on the frames and meanings that the discourse presents and the meanings that the recipients may take on in the interpretation process, rather than the pattern of arrangement of words or phrases in each sentence. Different syntactical arrangements would have distinct latent effects on the audiences' perception of the issue, but Pan and Kosicki (1993) claim that syntactical structure, characteristically an inverted pyramid, conveys very little information to make news a distinct genre of composition. This is also applied in the analysis of any other types of texts. Therefore, I argue here that, for analyzing discourse regarding soft power resources and practices in news discourse, the other three structural dimensions have more manifest elements to be unpacked in order to reveal the framework for the frames and meanings.

Under each structure, the second level of framing devices – subdevices – are identified if needed. It is suggested that the examination of headlines and leads in news discourse are supposed to condense the core meaning of the entire text as subdevices of thematic structure, in order to accelerate the coding process with large amount of data. Under script structure, I choose messengers (who), messages (what) and the third views as subdevices to discern the dominant actors selected in the discourse and the meanings constructed by those actors on soft power. The rhetorical structure is restructured with subdevices of metaphors, depictions, tones, exemplars and catchphrases in order to detect stylistic choices in the representation of an issue. It is noted that metaphor is entailed with an essential role in both language and thought by the constructivist approach (Ortony 1993) and in the way in which we think about the world (Lakoff 1993). The identified framing devices construct a framing matrix, which is viewed as the end product of the inductive phase of framing analysis (van Gorp 2010). The framing matrix, supposed to be a pattern filled with elements of framing devices, provides an explicit and clear structure, including categories for further deductive analysis.

Concerning 'reasoning devices', some framing scholars (e.g. Gamson and Modigliani 1989; Iyengar 1991; Pan and Kosicki 1993) propose the presence of causal reasoning as a second step bridging frame and policy options. Causal reasoning covers causal attributions of the roots of a problem and inference about the responsibility for treatment of the problem as well as appealing to higher level principles in framing an issue and in weighing various policy options (Pan and Kosicki 1993). Entman (1993) identifies four framing

functions in a text, namely to define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgements and suggest remedies. Van Gorp (2010) connects these four functions with 'reasoning devices', which, along with 'framing devices', constitute a frame. This paper employs van Gorp's terminology – reasoning devices – but I add 'indicate effects' (or consequences/results) to the four reasoning devices. Under the philosophical paradigm, it is believed that causality is associated with an event, and also that an action or event will produce a certain response to the event, namely an effect, which may lead to a result or change. To 'indicate effects' is to denote the existence of possible consequences or responses generated by causal agents. Effects indication is obviously an important function of framing, particularly for weighing various policy options. Based on framing scholars' perspectives, five reasoning devices are developed for evaluating soft power effects – define problems (problem definition), diagnose causes (causal interpretation), make moral judgement (moral evaluation), indicate effects (effect indication) and suggest remedies (treatment recommendation).

I would suggest using reasoning devices in the process of thematic structure analysis and developing these five devices as categories of the thematic structures. The idea is based on Pan and Kosicki's (1993, p. 64) interpretation of policy options, thematic structure and causal reasoning:

> Sometimes, policy options or preferences are implied in the news text in that readers could derive them from the central idea of the news discourse concerning an issue; at other times, policy options or preferences are explicitly stated in news discourse. The latter is particularly possible when the thematic structures of a news story clearly reveal causal inferences and responsibility attributions.

Suffice to say, the manifestation of causal reasoning inhering in a news story reflects policy options or preferences, and the causal reasoning could be revealed in the thematic structure. Applying it to the evaluation of soft power effects, the identification of causal inferences and responsibility attributions, on the one hand, reveals the causal reasoning of frames in the news discourse; on the other hand, it provides insights for the possible policy options of soft power resources and deployment in the target subjects. Certainly, a news story sometimes complicatedly contains several elements of causal reasoning. However, there is normally a dominant or salient element of causal reasoning (or framing function or reasoning device) in each news story, which coordinates with the core idea of the story to represent the theme of the story.

A framework for framing analysis of news discourse is presented as follows in Figure 1.2.5.2. This figure shows an example of a framing analytical tool. As mentioned in the previous section, discourse incorporates different modes of language and covers various discursive themes. The essential of analyzing these different discourses with framing analysis is to construct a framing matrix. The framing matrix relies on the analytical traditions of each discipline.

## Conclusion

This chapter attempted to develop a conceptual and methodological framework for evaluating soft power effects. The concept of soft power suggests that there are some common elements including resources, ability, strategies, contexts and outcomes which

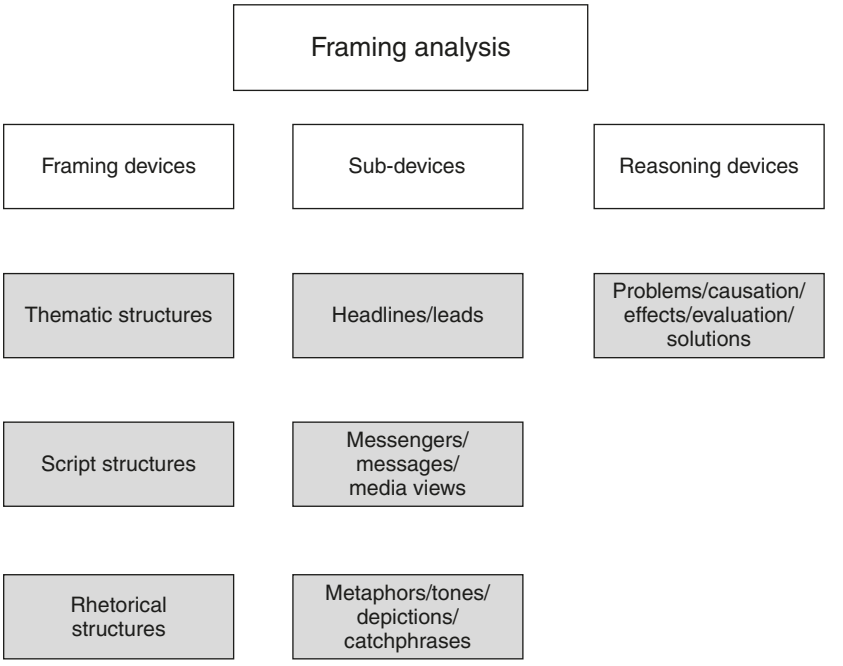



*Figure 1.2.5.2* An illustration of identified framing devices, sub-devices and reasoning devices for framing analysis
*Source*: Pan and Kosicki 1993.

are inherent in the soft power relationship; also, there are some big challenges in the evaluation of soft power effects due to the intrinsic attributes of soft power resources and the variables in the soft power conversion process. Nonetheless, I argued that soft power effects are principally associated with cognitive conditions and behaviors. Therefore, soft power effects can be categorized into two outcomes at individual, institutional and national levels (i.e. individual perception and opinion, group and public opinion, individual behavior, and institutional and foreign policy). At the cognitive parameter, I proposed to separate the two scales – emotion/sentiment and perception/opinion – for specific evaluation purposes. Some pertinent analytical approaches were recommended for each scale within the framework. This methodological framework broke the 'agent-focused' circle and adopted an 'audience-centered' approach. The importance of evaluating soft power effects is not only to get the direct results (e.g. favor or disfavor, consume soft power products or not) from the target audiences, but also to understand the reasons for and differences between the results. This chapter, in the end, took framing analysis as an analytical example to showcase how to use the method to analyze the discourse in the target countries.

This methodological framework for assessing soft power effects is psycho-sociologically oriented. It is not comprehensive of all the existing research methods pertaining to the evaluation of soft power or related aspects such as public diplomacy activities, national image, nation brands and public relations in various disciplines. Further research needs to be done to enrich this methodological framework.

## Note

1 The definition of 'culture' here follows the UNESCO definition, "cultural heritage, printed matter and literature, music, the performing and visual arts, cinema and photography, radio and television, and socio-cultural activities" (cited in Dayton-Johnson 2000, p. 6).

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# 6

# A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO NATION BRANDING

## Measurement and issues

*Elif Kahraman*

### Introduction

Throughout history, nations have tried to assert power over each other mainly through the use of military force and economic sanctions – through what is called hard power. However, hard power is not the only measure of the status of a powerful country; nations have sought to connect with people of other nations by using social, cultural and political values, using what is called soft power, in order to influence them. Nation branding can be regarded as a technique for projecting soft power. As Ying Fan suggests, "nation branding can be used as an important tool in developing and maintaining a nation's soft power" (Fan 2010, p. 100).

Branding is a marketing term that has been transferred to the international context to explain the image and reputation of nations in the minds of people of other nations. "There is in reality nothing new about national branding, except the word 'brand' and the techniques that are now used, which derive from mainstream marketing and branding techniques" (Olins 2005, p. 170). The term is mainly misunderstood due to the fact that the word 'branding' when applied to a nation sounds like the nation is selling itself in the international market without a factual basis. That is why the term itself is not always welcomed and is looked upon with suspicion. Nation branding should reflect reality and the honest efforts of nations, rather than groundless advertising and/or propaganda. Image and reputation should be built on solid ground and this solidity makes them endure. "Nation branding in essence, is to align the nation's image to the reality" (Fan 2010, p. 101). Along with nation branding, nations should make investments and innovations in the country through policy refinement in export, tourism and cultural areas.

Simon Anholt introduced the term "competitive identity" (Anholt 2007) to complement 'nation branding' in order (for nations) to change the negative connotation of the word 'branding'. It is important for their nation to have a positive image in the minds of citizens. The image and the reputation of a nation also contribute to its economic development by attracting foreign tourists, investment and trade in the context of heavy international competition. "Similar to public diplomacy, propaganda and nation-branding

are about the communication of information and ideas to foreign publics with a view to changing their attitudes towards the originating country or reinforcing existing beliefs" (Melissen 2005, p. 16). Soft power and nation branding are gaining in importance because communication technologies such as social media can today easily distort the reputation of a nation across the world in a virtual instant.

This chapter first explains the terms soft power, nation branding and competitive identity along with their correlations in order to discuss the nation branding methodology. It goes on to identify methodological issues of nation branding assessment and indicates their effects on the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index, having compared several indexes.

## Soft power, nation branding and competitive identity

### *The relation between soft power and nation branding*

In today's world, military force and a strong economy that can afford to apply sanctions are not the only tools for power; that is to say, hard power is not the only power available for nations. Nations should convince both their own people and the people in other nations about their strength both through image and reputation management. Olins (2005, p. 170) states, "nations have always tried to create and modulate their reputations in order to create domestic loyalties and coherence and promote their own power and influence in neighbouring countries". This is an indication that it is now the era of soft power. Both democracy and widespread communication technologies, that is to say, the facts of the globalized world, contribute to people having greater access to information; the powerful nation is that which possesses information and spreads it throughout the world. Rather than sending propaganda messages and commands, it is important to be able to influence people with 'soft' messages. "This soft power – getting others to want the outcomes that you want – co-opts people rather than coerces them" (Nye 2004, p. 5).

The term nation branding illuminates the idea of the importance of soft power. The reason why this marketing term is now applied to nations is that "countries behave … just like brands. They are perceived – rightly or wrongly – in certain ways by large groups of people at home and abroad; they are associated with certain qualities and characteristics" (Anholt 2005, p. 105). Nation brands have attributions resembling those people place on brands, yet nation branding differs from traditional branding in that the former is a process that includes the members of the nation as participants and who live the image of the nation in reality and not just in their imagination (Anholt 2005). Benedict Anderson calls nations "imagined communities" and says, "[i]t is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members … yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 1991, p. 6). Regarding nation branding, it becomes clear that not all citizens subscribe to the presented image when branding the nation but a common image should take on a life in the minds of its citizens.

Nation branding is important for understanding the essentiality of soft power in relation to hard power, and it places emphasis on people and democracy due to the fact that in the current democratic order, governments should work to satisfy the needs of the people rather than those of elites. "A successful nation branding campaign will help create a more favourable image among the international audience thus further enhancing a country's soft power" (Fan 2008, p. 155). If nation branding as a technique for soft power is used strategically, it projects a positive image of the country and consequently

the country will gain soft power. Hence it is clear that soft power and nation branding are in a direct relationship with each other.

## *Nation branding and competitive identity*

Nation branding is sometimes confused with branding and therefore seen to imply the groundless selling of a nation. To counter this, Simon Anholt coined a new concept – 'Competitive Identity' (CI). He explains the reasoning clearly, saying, "but I now call the approach *Competitive Identity*, because it has more to do with national identity and the politics and economics of competitiveness than with branding as it is usually understood in the commercial sector" (Anholt 2008, p. 22). Identity is 'competitive' mainly due to the effects of globalization on nations. Now, in every area like tourism, exports, environment, health and education, nations are in a race; they are indexed, assessed, praised or criticized. It is obvious that this competition has an effect on both a nation's image and reputation and also on more tangible features like the economy.

Standing on a solid platform, a nation can gain an advantage by projecting a positive reputation and image. This Competitive Identity especially concerns nations with poor reputations. Anholt (2007) makes it clear that nations with poor reputations struggle to compete against nations with good reputations. The first step for a nation in developing Competitive Identity is to learn how 'others' see them. They must then create a strategy to reinforce the existing image if it is a positive one, or craft a new image if there is limited knowledge about the nation or to eliminate a negative one. This is related to the term 'projected image' which refers to "the messages through which image makers attempt to generate or change public perceptions" (Manheim and Albritton 1984, p. 645).

According to Anholt's Hexagon of Competitive Identity, tourism, brands, people, culture, policy and investment are the factors for creating Competitive Identity (Anholt 2007). In the process of creating Competitive Identity, it is important to add contributors – national stakeholders – such as national companies, tourism boards and cultural organizations. National stakeholders are very important for the process because people should agree about the strategy and be willing to contribute to building a Competitive Identity. "Competitive Identity is about government, companies and people learning to channel their behaviour in a common direction … so they can start to *earn* the reputation they need and deserve" (Anholt, 2007, p. 30). The country-of-origin (COO) effect plays a crucial role in building Competitive Identity. COO (discussed below) is a trigger for brands of a country to raise people's awareness about their perception of that country, which can have a positive effect on tourism and investment. Hence as the identity of a country becomes more visible, their products and services are likely to benefit from higher demand, and the country may find its place in the global competition. This is the essence of holding a Competitive Identity.

## *The methodology of nation branding*

The Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index describes the dimensions of a Nation Brand Hexagon. The first dimension, 'exports', measures 'country of origin' effects on the basis of whether people relate their favoring or disfavoring a brand to its country of origin. The second dimension is 'governance' and measures "perceived competency and honesty of government, respect for citizens' rights and fair treatment, as well as global behavior in the areas of international peace and security, environmental protection, and world

poverty reduction" (The Anholt-GfK Roper 2014). The third dimension is 'culture'. "Cultural aspects measured are perceptions of a country's heritage, its contemporary cultural 'vibes' from music, films, art and literature, as well as the country's excellence in sports" (The Anholt-GfK Roper 2014). The fourth dimension is 'people'. Visitors are asked if they find the people in the country friendly. Respondents are also asked if they would like to have a close friend from that country and/or whether they have a preference for hiring an employee from that country. The fifth dimension is 'tourism'. "Respondents rate a country's tourism appeal in three major areas: natural beauty, historic buildings and monuments, and vibrant city life and urban attractions" (The Anholt-GfK Roper 2014). They are also asked about a country's tourism potential. The sixth dimension is 'immigration and investment'. In this section, "a country's power to attract talent and capital is measured" (The Anholt-GfK Roper 2014). The assessment is conducted online.

## The methodological issues in nation branding

There are four issues regarding both the methodology and the application of the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index. These are economic, managerial, stakeholder and assessment issues.

### *Economic issues*

In the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index, both developed and developing countries are included in the assessment. Although it is fair to exclude underdeveloped countries from the assessment, rating the developed and developing countries together is less than fair. Expecting image-building and development from a nation plagued by problems such as famine, war, poor education, etc. is inappropriate. The main reason behind this unfairness is the economic inequality in the racetrack of nation branding. It is important not to measure nation branding comparatively between developed and developing countries.

A strong economy is a pillar for a nation's developed status due to the fact that it is a natural magnet for investment, immigration and hosting a communication network; these are among the features selected when measuring the brand of a nation. It is clear that developed countries have a head start on developing countries in these areas. Economically well-developed nations are also the ones holding economic, military and media power; that is to say, these nations are also powerful in social and cultural areas. Although being developed does not guarantee stable economic status, developed countries may have images of being or may be perceived as more trustworthy than developing ones. Olins says, "image determines the capacity to promote exports, attract foreign investment and promote a country as a desirable tourist destination" (cited in Hocking 2005, p. 31). In contrast, in developing nations there is not always a level playing field. Hence these nations are seen as risk-laden for investment because there are chances of quick changes in economic fortune and growth in inflation, and they do not have much opportunity to represent themselves well. Regarding foreign investment in banks and bonds, it is more likely that a developed nation with a strong economy would attract investment ahead of a developing country.

As Li and Chitty mention, "National images, in fact, are one part of a state's soft power" (Li and Chitty 2009, p. 4). Images are not necessarily part of the brand, but are highly related to perceptions, that may be rooted in experience, media messages and so on. Certainly, people may form negative images of a country through its coverage by media, its policies that have negative consequences or through their own personal

experiences such as meeting someone and having an argument, all of which need not directly relate to the brand of the nation. Creating a strong national image helps foster a strong national brand, and this helps in the projection of soft power.

When immigration is taken into consideration along with its correlation to the economy, it becomes clear that people tend to choose to immigrate to economically powerful countries. Developed countries offer greater opportunities for finding jobs or conducting research (especially in science). For example, recently Syrian refugees have preferred to migrate to Europe rather than to developing countries, taking great risks, with some dying on the way. "For Syrians, the idea that they could seek asylum in a country offering the combination of safety, work prospects and education was worth the steep smugglers' fees and the danger of getting there" (Fleming 2015). They perceive opportunities to live under better conditions in developed countries.

A strong economy goes together with having information channels, through which the image of the country is distributed throughout the world. It is difficult – but not impossible – for developing countries to compete in the information sphere. Under these circumstances, developing countries need to redouble their efforts. First of all, information channels like television networks, radio stations and newspapers are important in distributing the positive images of a nation and stressing its power. Also, cultural distribution channels such as the film industry are effective in placing images in the minds of people in other nations.

The COO or 'made in' effect was introduced to address the unequal racetrack and profile success stories from the developing countries (Anholt 2005). "Nation branding is about influencing and creating positive platforms and an effective environment for a nation's brands to compete in markets" (Gudjonsson 2005, p. 286). Products may create a bond with consumers strictly due to their origin, which may create an understanding about a country and have an effect on other products that the country has on the market. Focusing on creating strong brands and using the COO effect is a good strategy for countries to adopt.

While developing countries struggle to catch up with developed countries, the latter are constantly forging further ahead. The problem is that building strong brands does not always match with sustainable and democratic development. Anholt (2007) states that the richer countries have greater access to media, products and services, and their citizens can travel more freely; naturally they are better-represented. In such circumstances a nation may create an image immune to stereotypes and prejudices and it may elevate itself to a prestigious position. There is a weakness in the methodology of nation branding, namely the indexing of distinctive nations, that has the effect of developing countries facing difficulties in obtaining high enough scores to be placed in the top ten.

Even if an optimistic COO effect is applied it is still difficult to elevate the image of a nation. Anholt (2005) states that the upper income countries have front seats in the 'value-adding' game, which refers to their position as designers and brand owners, whereas the middle-income countries take on the role of manufacturing by offering a cheap source of semi-skilled labour and the third world takes the back seat as a supplier of raw materials.

> If the brand's strong image is partly or mainly based on the country of origin, then this positive image can be shattered if the political or cultural factors are not synchronized with the perception the brand is trying to form in consumers' minds.
>
> (Gudjonsson 2005, p. 286)

So, imagine that a developing country becomes successful in COO effect and creates an image of a country associated with quality, yet at the same time faces an upheaval for democratic rights, a struggle for LGBTQ rights, or a bombing incident in a capital city which is then trumpeted in the international media. Under such circumstances it is hard to expect an image of quality or of a 'democratic country' to continue in the minds of people abroad.

### *Managerial issues*

This section concerns the creation of a brand for a nation, the process of branding; although this is not directly about the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index, being on that has an indirect effect on the assessment. If problems in creating a strong nation brand are not solved, it is not possible for nations to earn good points in the branding index. This category stresses two problematic areas in creating a nation brand: the issue of encapsulation and the issue of policies.

Nations should consider representing themselves by creating their own identity/image with the inclusion of all the people rather than just the majority. But the challenging part is that nations should not cause internal confusion in introducing their ethnic diversity to others. The inclusion of diversity in a brand requires careful study and the acceptance of the people before being released to the world. Dinnie (2008) discusses the dilemma of encapsulation when talking about brand essence and its application to nation branding. He mentions the problem of compacting the identity of a nation because it is hard to reduce cultural diversity into a single image of a nation. Also, there is a problem in picking one or two among a variety of communities. A nation full of people with different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds still needs a unified image of a nation in its brand. It is hard to fit every segment into the picture. It is inevitable that some parts of the nation will be out of the picture. Yet it is necessary to obtain the consent of the people for the selected national image.

Policies, on the other hand, are one of the critical factors of nation branding. Nations must make efforts to change negative aspects of policy and/or contribute more to developing or should-be-developed areas. "Politics is a very important communication channel with its diplomacy and influence on every single part of a nation's existence and image" (Gudjonsson 2005, p. 289). For instance, if a nation wants to increase the flows of inward investment, there should be well-conceived policies for taxation. It is no simple task to change policies and laws, as a significant number of members of the parliament need to be convinced first. The challenge is that government actors must be unified in order to change policies related to branding the nation.

### *Stakeholder issues*

Stakeholder issues are about thinking of the whole nation branding process of a country as a part of a company's own branding. Every actor included in the process is regarded as a stakeholder. Nation branding is not a process solely for government actors; it is a process that must also include the people of a nation. Melissen states that "public diplomacy is initiated by practitioners, whereas branding is about the mobilization of all of a nation's forces that can contribute to the promotion of its image abroad" (Melissen 2005, p. 19). When creating a nation brand strategy, stakeholder issues are among the primary concerns that must be considered throughout the process. This

part consists of three related issues: identity-building, representatives and change in governments.

Identity-building is the core of nation branding. Anholt points out that "branding is the process of designing, planning and communicating the name and the identity, in order to build or manage the reputation" (Anholt 2007, p. 4). There being an ideology behind creating a brand for a nation, one closely related to the ideology of the government, can the identity developed in the branding represent the entire nation? The government and its main representatives may require a more traditional identity whereas other representatives, particularly minorities, may prefer one that is more modern. Also, there is the possibility that the ideology of the government in power may exclude minority ethnic communities and build an image based on the identity of the majority. If there is a right-wing government in power, the image of the nation is likely to be more traditional, stressing the majority; whereas if the government is left-wing, the image of the nation is more likely to include racial, ethnic, religious, gender and sexual preference minorities. Brand strategy being likely to be colored by government ideology, it is important that an identity must first be honed and polished internally or the messages will not resonate with publics as intended.

Another problematic category, representatives, is highly related to the process of identity-building. "Branding, therefore, is not only about 'selling' products, services, and ideas and gaining market share and attention; it is also all about managing identity, loyalty, and reputation" (van Ham 2008, p. 7). While the ideological dominance of a government may rest on a parliamentary majority, in many countries female representatives are in the minority in parliament. There is a likelihood of underrepresentation of some groups in a nation and these are automatically excluded from the identity-building process.

The last problem is the transitory nature of governments. As mentioned earlier, the ideology of nation branding changes from government to government. While nation branding is clearly a long-term process, governments typically change around every four years. "[M]ost countries face two obstacles to achieving these conditions: a lack of patience stemming from the four-year event horizon of most elected politicians; and the political difficulty of imposing shared purpose on the stakeholders of the national reputation" (Anholt 2007, p. 83). The standard four-year period of a government is too short for suitable application of nation branding strategies. Nation branding is a long-term process and if government strategy is applied thoroughly in every aspect of the nation branding strategy, misunderstandings may arise and/or messages could fail. Creating a consistent and evolving national image is a difficult endeavour.

### *Assessment issues*

There are four issues related to the assessment of the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index. First, the index registers different results from other assessment systems. Second, there is an undermining effect of the media, which is called 'lack of media' effect. Third, there is an issue concerning the people involved in the survey and the problem of excluding opinions of people in underdeveloped countries, and this is entitled 'imbalance in ratings'. Last of all, there is the issue of the online assessment, which concerns the exclusion of people who do not have access to new media technologies.

There are many assessment systems available for nations, and each assesses different attributes of nations. "Modern nations look more and more like one another, and

there are few things that officials detest more that their country being confused with others that are seen to be ranking further down the league table of nations" (Melissen 2005, pp. 19–20). The ranking of countries is similar to the ranking of companies. It shows the perceptions of people about countries if the Nation Brands Index is the issue. Regarding the other rankings, they show the status or position of countries by looking at their positive and negative sides. That is why rankings are important to measure conditions in countries. Here, three assessment systems are compared with the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index to show how results differ. The three are the Good Country Index (GCI), the Environmental Performance Index (EPI) and the Democracy Ranking (DR). Where a country's branding may be higher in the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index, other indexes may register different results for the same country. The reason for the differences is that the Nation Brands Index includes economic, investment, environmental, cultural and social issues; the overall Nation Brands Index also reflects the situation of these other areas. Differences in results indicate that a country's image may differ according to the areas considered.

The Environmental Performance Index (Yale University 2016) measures health impacts, air quality, water and sanitation, water resources, agriculture, forests, fisheries, biodiversity and habitat, and climate and energy. "Country image is a key element in international affairs and nations strive to cultivate and maximize their image and reputational capital on the world stage" (Wang and Sun 2012, p. 5). These are highly related to the image of the nation and to the Nation Brands Index criteria due to the fact that a country with a good environmental record is a country whose government is aware of the importance of the environment. Besides, the country's resources, ecological investment and exports will be greatly welcomed if the country is considered good for tourism (clean air, clean seas, clean and healthy food, etc.) and if people see it as being eco-friendly.

The Democracy Ranking (2015) includes the concept of freedom and other characteristics of the political system, and performance in the areas of gender, the economy, knowledge, health and the environment. The profession of democracy does not mean that it is thoroughly practiced in a country. An assessment of the practice of democracy is important to the Nation Brands Index and the measure of practice has an impact on the image of the nation. The democratic character of a country has an effect on the investment, government, immigration and even culture.

The Good Country Index is Simon Anholt's other assessment system for countries. "The idea of the Good Country Index is pretty simple: to measure what each country on earth contributes to the common good of humanity, and what it takes away" (Anholt 2014). They use data from sources such as UN reports and create a balance sheet accordingly. Table 1.2.6.1 shows the rankings of each assessment system mentioned above. It is clear that the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index and its criteria are all related to the other assessment systems but results show some variance, and some factors may not affect branding.

Lack of media effect is about the non-consideration of the media's role in the assessment of nation branding. The effects of both traditional media and new media are very important regarding the image and the reputation of nations. Although developing countries may have press counselors at their embassies, there are factors related to the press that are sometimes hard to cope with, the foremost of which is the framing of countries by the press (Ch. 5). Mass communication technologies have an impact on shaping people's ideas. Framing in news is necessarily related to the ideology of the media conglomerates. The second factor is agenda-setting. A developmental success story may not be on

*Table 1.2.6.1* Comparisons of top ten rankings of Nation Brands Index with other assessment systems

| | *NBI (2015 Data)* | *GCI (2014 Data)* | *EPI (2016 Data)* | *DR (2015 Data)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| USA | 1 | 21 | 26 | 16 |
| Germany | 2 | 13 | 30 | 7 |
| UK | 3 | 7 | 12 | 12 |
| France | 4 | 11 | 10 | 14 |
| Canada | 5 | 12 | 25 | 15 |
| Japan | 6 | 25 | 39 | 20 |
| Italy | 7 | 20 | 29 | 27 |
| Switzerland | 8 | 3 | 16 | 2 |
| Australia | 9 | 15 | 13 | 13 |
| Sweden | 10 | 6 | 3 | 3 |

*Sources*: The Good Country Index, Overall Rankings Data, The Anholt-GfK Roper 2014 Nation Brands Index Report, New Zealand Abridged, Global Democracy Ranking 2015 Full Data Set, Yale Environmental Performance Index, EPI 2016 Rankings, Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index℠ Overall Brand Ranking 2015 (Top 10 of 50 Nations).

the news agenda and people may have no knowledge about development in the country concerned. Or they may always encounter negative news about that country. The third factor is the role of social media and citizen diplomacy. This part should be considered carefully because of the fact that, via YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, etc., the image and the reputation of a nation can be revealed or distorted easily and rapidly throughout the world.

The other issue of imbalance in ratings involves the fact that the branding of a developed or middle-income country may score higher in an underdeveloped country. For example, the rating of Turkey may be higher if conducted in Azerbaijan in contrast to France. Comparative results for just high income and middle-income countries should not be applied to the whole world. Applying high and middle-income country results to the rest of the world would be like the Eurovision Song Contest practice of rich countries giving the highest points to their neighbors or 'sibling' nations.

Lastly there is a problem regarding online assessment. Online assessment is not fair because of the inequality of access to new communication systems. The respondents to the assessment are those with instruments like personal computers, laptops, smartphones and internet connections, which means that these people are mainly from middle and high income groups in a country. Second, they are probably educated and from urban areas. Third, it is unclear whether they receive messages mostly from traditional media sources or from the alternative sources offered by new media technologies.

## Conclusion

To summarize, this chapter first described the term nation branding and its place in relation to soft power, stressing that nation branding is an important factor in international competition. "Branding a nation is much more than just finding a catchy slogan or window-dressing but requires the study of a nation's soft power sources in order to exploit them effectively to promote the national image" (Fan 2008, p. 155). Following

this, the term Competitive Identity, that not only eliminates the negative connotations of nation branding but also affords a chance for economically poor nations to compete with the rest, was introduced. "One has to recognize that the *un*branded state has a difficult time attracting economic and political attention" (van Ham 2008, p. 6). After that, the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index is introduced with its assessment categories. In the main body, the issues related to the methodology of nation branding were discussed.

The methodological issues were analyzed under four categories; economic, managerial, stakeholder and assessment. In the economic issues part, it is made clear that although nation branding supposedly offers opportunities to all nations to compete with the rest of the world, especially when COO effect is included, it is clearly seen that this is not a realistic position. This is because poor nations find it hard to increase inward investment while rich countries have a head start on them. In the managerial issues part, problems about creating a national identity for nation branding, condensing the whole country and citizens from all walks of life into one image and excluding other images, were discussed. In addition, this part draws attention to the difficult task, one requiring consensus-building, of changing existing policies.

In the stakeholder issues section, three main areas were discussed. Identity-building, affected by encapsulation, needs decision-making, the problem being who will decide on the identity of a nation. There can be tendencies to exclude some ethnic or cultural groups within a nation. In addition, skewed parliamentary representation can create problems, whether in terms of underrepresentation of women or other groups. Also, if the representatives of a nation have a white, heterosexual and patriarchal ideology, how is a nation supposed to build a positive identity, especially when 'the others' challenge the primacy of these factors?

In the assessment issues part, the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index was taken into consideration. First, other assessment systems that measure the situation of countries and their results were compared. Clearly there were differences found. And criteria of other indexes also had an effect on Nation Brands Index measurement. The other issue raised was the media's effect on nation branding not being sufficiently considered in the measurement of nation branding. In the imbalance in ratings part, it was made clear that people in underdeveloped countries were ignored in the assessment and that their inclusion would likely affect the results. Last of all, online assessment is problematic because lack of accessibility of the internet and related technologies excludes many people. Overall, this chapter has pointed out important factors that have an effect on measuring the branding of nations and through this their soft power.

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# 7

# CHALLENGES OF A BIG DATA APPROACH IN MAPPING SOFT POWER

*Richard Davis and Li Ji*

## Introduction

Soft power aims to achieve desired outcomes through attractiveness rather than coercion (Nye 2004). The influence of attractiveness exerts on the individual cognitive system first, and then on the individual behavioral decision. The process of the cognitive acceptance and admiration and the behavioral implementation tend to be voluntary, fluid and culture-specific; so does the process of the cognitive and behavioral change. As it has been argued in the overview chapter of this section (Ch. 5), due to the attributes of soft power resources and influence, the evaluation of soft power effects faces three big challenges: difficulty in measuring intangible resources and the long cultivation process, variables changing in the conversion process, and the cultural compatibility between power 'agents' and 'subjects'. Keohane and Nye (1998) highlighted the interdependence of the elements of power in the information age, which leads naturally into the question of how to model and quantify these elements.

The extant approaches to measuring soft power and its effects have been developed in different academic disciplines. Some approaches, more agent-focused, concentrate on the evaluation of the credibility of soft power resources and project implementation; other approaches are concerned with the sentiments of recipients, including favourability (disfavourability) via valence–visibility dimension, and opinions through unpacking discourse. These conventional approaches are qualitative-orientated. The qualitative approaches, as Jean-François Simard and Pierre C. Pahlavi (2008, p. 1) argued, "are too often affected by subjective considerations and leading most of the time excessively indecisive conclusions". Simard and Pahlavi (2008) made a solid theoretical argumentation about the application of multidisciplinary approaches, especially involving information science and modelling of human networks in the quantitative measurement of soft power effects. Their augmentation provides a theoretical basis for this chapter that aims to apply a big data approach from computer science to assess the soft power effects.

In this chapter, we convert the conceptual soft power to a marketing-related phenomenon and take insights from online social network analysis to develop a theoretical,

methodological and technological framework for modelling data, relationships and players in the soft power networking. We also develop a hierarchy of cause and effect relationship, describe how to integrate a big data methodology with this hierarchy, and perform rigorous analysis.

## A review of social network analysis and social media analytics: a herald of big data application in mapping soft power

Social network, rooting in the work of early sociologists (e.g. Georg Simmel and Émile Durkheim), has been denoted to "complex sets of relationships between members of social systems at all scales" (Capuruço and Capretz 2008, p.12), and all sorts of social interaction. With the boom of the internet and the proliferation of social media, the social network expands to the cyber-sphere and social media sphere. Traditional social interaction such as trade, transaction, information sharing and communication occurs in a new form through web-based services that allow individuals to interact through online self-created profiles in the cyber-sphere, where it generates an enormously large volume of information.

Traditional analytical tools are not sufficient to cope with large datasets for the social network analysis. Data mining techniques from computer science have been developed to deal with a large volume of data generated on the internet. The techniques are used to "interrogate datasets for patterns, trends, and other useful information" (Glyn 2015, p. 18). These approaches that emerged from computer science techniques have been found applications in various academic disciplines such as marketing, communication studies, sociology and political science, as well as real-life practices such as criminal detection.

In online social network analysis, scholars have identified eight key research issues, along with tailored data mining tools and models to tackle these issues. These key research issues include influence propagation, community of group detection, expert finding, link prediction, recommender system, predicting trust and distrust among individuals, behaviour and mood analysis, and opinion mining (Nandi and Das 2013). The current research covers linkage and structural techniques to model nodes, links, communities and critical areas of the network.

The graph-theoretic techniques use the analysis of nodes and links in the social graph to address the eight research issues in mining social networks. For example, influence propagation is modelled using two propagation models: Independent Cascade and Linear Threshold. Network connectivity and structure is modelled using graph-theoretic techniques. A number of variations on this have been explored to address issues such as scaling and outbreak detection. Community or group detection is addressed using Bayesian analysis and hierarchical clustering techniques.

Predicting links, modelling trust and distrust, and topic detection and tracking are done using hierarchical classification models such as support vector machines for opinion and sentiment. Expert finding and recommender systems are done using semantic web analysis and filtering algorithms. Analysis of behavior, mood and opinion is done using online status information and contextual sentiment analysis and sentiment clustering techniques. In marketing research, these data mining techniques help to investigate the consumers' perceptions and opinions of the products and services, potential behaviors, influencers and followers in the network and so on.

In the extant literature of the evaluation of soft power effects, most of the evaluation is discussed in the context of international public relations using valence and visibility

(Manheim and Albritton 1984) to assess the positive and negative image or influence of the country. Another prevalent research direction for measuring soft power effects is to examine the social discourse of soft power resources and practices viewed by the target population through qualitative approaches. In the social media sphere, there are some innovative evaluation methods such as using social media analytical tools (e.g. Sysomos MAP and Brand 24) to mine the data relating to the responses of the internet users to particular public diplomacy events and apply qualitative approaches (e.g. content analysis and discourse analysis) to analyze the opinions of the internet participants (Dennis, O'Loughlin and Gillespie 2015). Some research has been done to analyze the effect of soft power variables on economic factors such as exchange rates. As Cevik, Harris and Yilmaz (2015, p. 5) state, "there is a burgeoning literature on the institutions-growth nexus, laying out a conceptual framework that is relevant to the analysis of how 'soft power' can influence the behaviour of exchange rates (or other asset prices, for that matter)". However, the soft power impact in a complex social network has not been fully investigated yet; and also, there has not been much research linking soft power products with their corresponding effects using big data approaches (or data in general).

Another good example of a study in this direction is found in the recent work of Berger and Morgan (2015) in which they use a Twitter database to study the demographics and links between ISIS supporters. This work used a sample of 50,000 Twitter accounts with known ISIS-related content to build up a picture of ISIS-related activity across the world. Unidirectional and bi-directional relationships are mapped, effectively highlighting key areas where ISIS has found a strong support base and where their soft power products are having an impact on their target audience. An analysis of links and hashtags was used to segment the data and conduct a detailed analysis of behaviors, patterns and locations. The work is a useful building block for this discussion since it highlights the practical challenges of constructing datasets from which useful conclusions may be drawn. The ISIS Twitter study also provides an example of the application of machine learning techniques to the analysis of the data of soft power effects, in particular the problem of data categorisation. This categorisation was then used as the target variable in a machine learning model designed to predict whether additional accounts were in fact ISIS supporters. This method proved effective when the accounts had profiles supplied, with a 94 per cent classification accuracy, but as 30 per cent of the accounts did not supply a profile, the overall accuracy dropped to 70 per cent. In addition, applying the machine learning approach to a broader set of accounts without limiting the network size further worsened the performance of the system, with a clear increase in noise levels. Data collection and completeness is a key challenge in building big data systems capable of modelling soft power effects.

The application of data mining techniques for social network analysis and the analysis of effects of soft power variables on economic behavior illustrate that, whilst the current literature is far from establishing how to model the relationship between soft power products and effects, there is nevertheless a fairly clear path towards establishing a suitable framework. This path involves studying real-world structures such as the relationship between institutions and growth, and from that relationship developing statistical models relating the key elements of soft power to their effects. By building up a number of such models, the first steps towards constructing maps of the relationship can be undertaken. Once this scaffolding is in place then the complexity of the data and models can be increased towards the big data scale.

## Theoretical and methodological construction of big data application in mapping soft power effects

For Joseph Nye (2004b, p. x), "soft power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country what you want through attraction". Culture, political values and foreign policies are identified as three basic resources that soft power heavily rests on. Chitty (2015) develops a two-column model of soft power resources that contains two components – marketable culture and political culture – based on the deep and broad culture of a country. Arising from these two categories of soft power resources are cultural exports and policy exports, which can be transferred to pertinent products – cultural products and policy products. The assessment of soft power effects can be achieved through an investigation of the links between soft power products and soft power 'consumers'. The soft power effects are transformed to an economic and marketing matter. Thus, data mining techniques applied into the marketing analysis and social network analysis can be employed, and the measurement of the effects of soft power products becomes quantifiable and manageable.

The two-column model provides a conceptual basis for the application of data mining approach in the analysis of soft power effects. Resting on this two-column model, our study attempts to theorize a hierarchy of soft power products and soft power effects that enable modelling at all levels of granularity to be performed, identify soft power indicators, and design an architecture for the measurement of soft power effects through the application of data mining techniques (methods for modelling data and extracting insights) to big datasets. A soft power effect evaluation model will be designed for use with a big data approach.

### *Soft power product (cause) hierarchy*

The first step in measuring soft power effects is to identify soft power products. The following hierarchy will be used as the top-level categorical system. We use the basic structure of the two-column model (Chitty 2015). Further refinements can be implemented using keyword groupings (arts – music – Beethoven for example). The top few layers of the hierarchy are shown in Table 1.2.7.1.

UNESCO defines culture as "cultural heritage, printed matter and literature, music, the performing and visual arts, cinema and photography, radio and television, and socio-cultural activities" (cited in Dayton-Johnson 2000, p. 6). Cultural products contain cultural goods and services (Dayton-Johnson 2000). The United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) identifies ten categories of cultural statistics, and classifies various cultural products and services under each category.

The classification of policy products is based on the types of public diplomacy context that includes high politics, medium politics and low politics, followed by examples of policy issues in each policy arena (Ch. 1). Soft power is usually associated with policy issues in the low politics arena such as education, culture, health and sports. The assumption here is that the public is generally more concerned with the policy issues in the low politics domain, and have more direct benefits from the related policy. By contrast, policy issues in the high politics arena such as military intelligence are normally closed to the public, so the public does not access and consume high politics-related policy products. Nevertheless, the policy itself does have an impact on the public perceptions and opinions on the credibility of the policy and the country's reputation

*Table 1.2.7.1* Soft power product hierarchy

| *Soft power products* | *Category* | *Sub-category* |
|---|---|---|
| Cultural products | Cultural heritage | Historical monuments, archaeological heritage, musicological heritage, archival heritage, other forms of cultural heritage |
| | Printed matter and literature | Books and pamphlets, newspapers and periodicals, library services |
| | Music and the performing arts | Live music, music theatre, drama theatre, dance, other performing arts (circus, pantomime, etc.), common issues of which audio and audiovisual records |
| | Visual arts | Painting, sculpture, graphic arts, art handicrafts, other forms of visual arts, photography |
| | Audio and audiovisual media | Cinema, photography |
| | Radio and television | Radio, television, video |
| | Social–cultural activities | Associative life, multi-purpose sociocultural facilities, social–cultural practices, individual practices, family life, community life, inter-category data |
| | Sports and games | Sports events |
| | Environment and nature | Natural environment, urban environment (quality of life in the urban setting) |
| Policy products | High politics | Military, security, counter-terrorism |
| | Medium politics | Energy, environment, human rights, immigration, trade |
| | Low politics | Culture, education, health, sports |

*Source*: Adapted from UNESCO 2004.

and image. Therefore, we can infer that the analysis of low politics-related policy products can be associated with cultural products, and adapt marketing research and social network analysis approaches to investigate consumers' perceptions and opinions of the products and services, consumptions, and the influences in the network, whilst the analysis of the high politics-related policy can remain at the cognitive level (perceptions and opinions).

The classification of soft power products allows the analysis to be specific and explicit. Certainly, more soft power products, along with public diplomacy programs, can be filled in the classification. The analysis of soft power effects can be focused on one or more particular products, and the comparison of the effects of individual product(s) is possible. The essence of the analysis of soft power products effects rests on the classification of soft power effects, the indicators and variables of soft power.

### *Soft power effects hierarchy*

As has been argued in Ch. 5, soft power leads to two main categories of outcomes (cognitive and behavioral) at micro, meso and macro levels, namely individual valence, group and public opinion, as well as individual behavior, institutional policy and foreign policy.

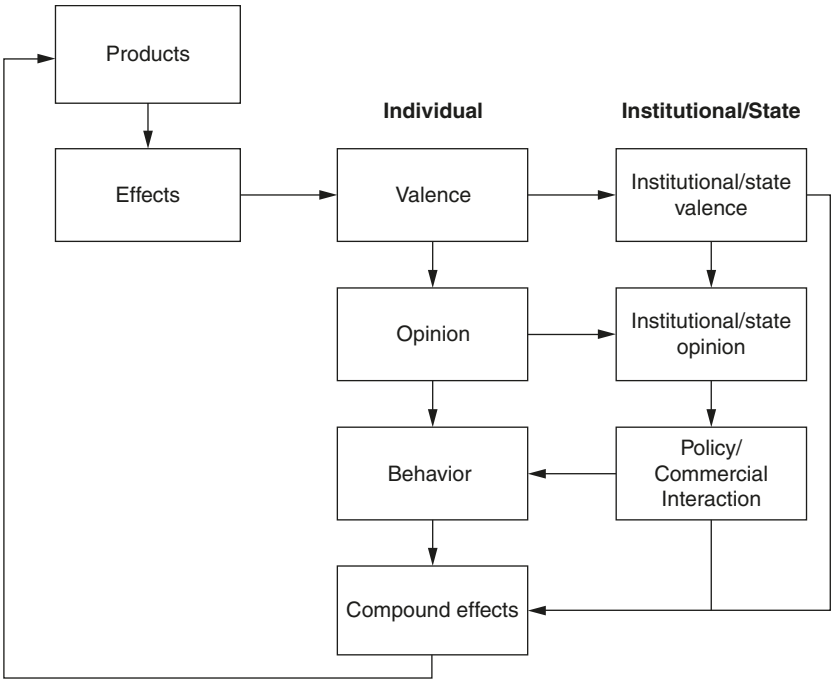



*Figure 1.2.7.1* Soft power effect hierarchy flowchart
*Source*: From authors.

Based on this classification, a soft power effect flowchart (Figure 1.2.7.1) is organized to show how soft power products lead to corresponding effects, which are organized in multiple stages.

The soft power effect flowchart illustrates that first comes individual valence, then public opinion as a whole, then the individual behavior is affected, followed by a possible change or adjustment of public policy, which in turn generates compound or second-stage effects. In parallel there are corresponding elements of valence, institutional opinion, and policy/commercial interaction, also leading into the set of compound effects. These then feed back to new soft power products and the cycle continues. The figure also manifests the three scales of soft power effects – individual (micro), institutional (meso) and national (macro) scales.

We propose to use the hierarchical analysis of soft power products and effects in combination with the soft power effect flowchart to design methodologies in the big data analysis of soft power. Each stage of the flowchart is assigned a selected level of the hierarchy (products or effects as appropriate). The tool scans available data resources (the internet and other datasets), building maps of the relationships between each of the links on the soft power effect flowchart. As each relevant combination of product and effect is explored, a multilevel map of the dynamics of soft power can be assembled.

Identifying valence is about individual emotions and sentiments (opinion leaders included), and how to assemble a database of information about these emotions and sentiments. This database can contain indicators of visibility and valence (favorability

vs. disfavoribility and positivity vs. negativity). Quantitative metrics can be constructed by volumes of hits or sharing and likes on social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter), and the distribution over spatial networks.

Public opinion (including individual opinions) can be tracked through responses or comments on certain soft power products or diplomacy programs across multiple media channels. The database of public opinion contains indicators of affective and evaluative discourse and key sentiment drivers and components. Data can be collected by using social media analytical tools (e.g. Sysomos MAP and Brand 24) on database; a qualitative coding can be conducted to analyse the explicit opinions on certain soft power products or public diplomacy programs.

For the policy database, a hierarchy of policy can be used to index policy information and link it to other components of the soft power effect flowchart. The resonance of an issue in public opinion towards a certain product, the level of government support for that product, measures of policy strength, cost and effectiveness and the key players in government and the private sector will enable the relevant relationships to be modelled to an appropriate level of detail. Compound effects – where a soft power cause and effect network can have subsequent impacts in other areas, such as the two-step model discussed in Nye – can arise from government responses to strong public opinion on an issue. They can be modelled in terms of policy information, public opinion measures and resulting effects links.

Other hierarchies of soft power effects have been discussed in the literature, and these works can be used as a basis for detailed soft power effect models. For example, McClory (2010, 2015) constructs an international ranking system for soft power using an expanded definition of the components of soft power: business/innovation, culture, government, diplomacy and education. Roselle *et al*. (2014) further expand the notion of soft power to the concept of strategic narrative, arguing that soft power components are a simplification of the real forces at place in international affairs. They develop an alternative structure consisting of actors, environment, conflict and resolution in which to understand the dynamics of soft power. Armitage (2007) integrates soft power and hard power into a broader framework, termed smart power, which describes the interaction between hard and soft power elements in the application of power internationally. Alternative frameworks such as these can be integrated and their dynamics modelled (Wilson 2008). Characterisations of the structure of soft power can be linked within the dynamic big data framework we describe, with the potential to yield new analysis and conceptual and practical insights. An analysis modelling changes in America's soft power such as Nye (2004a) and Datta (2009) is a good example of a situation where these techniques are applicable.

### *Soft power indicators (variables)*

Indicators may be organized into the following hierarchical structure. For each indicator, a set of variables describes its characteristics. In building a model of soft power causes and effects it is necessary to identify, structure and quantify each component. Soft power products (both causes and effects) can be measured in a number of ways depending on the individual product. It is useful to distinguish between cause and effect components as one component can play a role both as a cause and an effect, as the system is strongly interlinked.

### 1. Cause indicator categories

We categorize cause indicators (indicators for soft power products high up in the soft power effect flowchart) as follows:

- Economic outcomes – GDP, fiscal deficits or surplus, employment;
- International commerce – imports, exports, balance of trade between countries and regions;
- Social indicators – social sentiment, interest in a particular topic;
- Political indicators – political sentiment and activity;
- Cultural indicators – measures of activity in a particular cultural area.

These indicators can be binary, numeric, network-based, or other quantitative measures of the size of a soft power cause or effect component. They are described in more detail in the following sections. The IfG-Monocle Soft Power Index (McClory 2010) used this hierarchy and combined a range of statistical metrics and subjective panel scores to measure the soft power resources of 26 countries.

### 2. Effect indicator categories

Due to the sequential nature of cause and effect, we apply a sequential order to describe the stages of soft power effects as follows:

1 visibility
2 valence
3 decision
4 action
5 cascading effects.

Distribution (visibility) and sentiment (valence) are two general concepts which can be applied for measuring the strength of soft power effects. Correlation is another useful tool for measuring the strengths of product–effect interactions. Correlation is particularly suited to our approach since it can be built into a general framework capable of handling arbitrary indicators for each stage of the soft power effect flowchart (see Figure 1.2.7.1).

### 3. Economic and internet-based effect indicators

In addition to visibility and valence definitions given in Ch. 5, it can be useful to further refine these definitions according to the type of soft power effects being evaluated, and to quantify the effects using semantic, link-based and numeric measures. Frequently these will include the same broad measures as the causes, since links in soft power frequently go both ways, but cause and effect will often be identified and quantified using different measures depending on the available information. Examples include:

1 economic outcomes (e.g. GDP, employment levels)
2 international commerce
3 imports, exports, balance of trade
4 social indicators (internet-based)
5 political indicators (internet-based)
6 cultural indicators (internet-based).

### 4. Internet distribution: measures of effectiveness

Visibility and valence are two indicators of the scope and effectiveness of a particular soft power effect. These may be quantified as follows:

1 number of data sources containing the specific effect within the specific effect hierarchy area;
2 valence of the data source within the specific effect area, measured in terms of average positive or negative sentiment;
3 online discourse, using sentiment and link-based analysis to measure the distribution, connectivity and strength of effects.

Examples of detailed soft power variable categories are listed in Table 1.2.7.2.

*Table 1.2.7.2* Soft power variable categories

| *Variable* | *Definition* | *Soft power product category* |
|---|---|---|
| Political stability | The likelihood of political instability and/or politically- motivated violence, including terrorism | Political |
| Government effectiveness | The quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies | Political |
| Voice and accountability | The extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association and a free media | Political |
| Life expectancy | Life expectancy at birth for both sexes combined | Cultural |
| Primary schooling | Average years of primary schooling, age 15+ | Cultural |
| Tertiary schooling | Average years of tertiary schooling, age 15+ | Cultural |
| Bank Z-score | (ROA+[equity/assets])/st. dev. (ROA) where st. dev. (ROA) is the standard deviation of ROA calculated from underlying bank-by-bank unconsolidated data from Bankscope. | Financial |
| Bank concentration | Assets of three largest commercial banks as a share of total commercial banking assets | Financial |
| Financial openness | The Chinn–Ito index measuring a country's degree of capital account openness | Political |
| GDP agriculture minus services | % share of agricultural sector in total GDP minus % share of service sector in total GDP | Economic |

*Source*: Cevik, Harris and Yilmaz 2015.

### *Computing architecture for a soft power effects model*

The objective of the computing architecture is to design a hierarchical tool for evaluating different stages of the soft power effect flowchart using the internet and other compiled datasets. This means it needs to have the following properties:

1 modular (i.e. can be built from simpler components which can be flexibly connected together);
2 hierarchical (i.e. can handle queries at different levels of the soft power products and effects hierarchies);
3 fast (should be able to work efficiently with large datasets);
4 flexible and easy to use.

To this end we propose the following three-stage process:

1 Map the main backbone of websites relevant to the query (this is necessary to ensure that the query has a reasonable chance of returning good results). There are many possible ways of doing this, for example leveraging search engine results.
2 Define a broad search within the backbone, for example 'Hollywood films'.
3 Define more specific queries from within those search results, for example 'Hollywood action movies', for the soft power product and effects.

The user specifies the type of query (link analysis, statistical analysis, causality analysis, Bayesian net analysis). The user interface is designed to help the user translate from a high-level query into raw SQL[1]. The output of the raw SQL is processed into a high-level form suitable for viewing and analysis. This could be charts, correlation analysis, causation analysis, trends over time or network analysis. The software could be designed to help the user draw statistically rigorous conclusions from these outputs and to determine significant trends.

Big data in our context is the use of large and varied datasets in an analytical framework to build up a hierarchical, multi-scale representation of soft power and its effects. There are many different types of available resources. We categorize these as follows:

1 internet (web) maps/weblink maps
2 international commerce datasets
3 trade statistics
4 social media datasets (e.g. Twitter and Facebook datasets).

The Web Data Commons[2] hosts one of the largest sources of multi-level maps of web hyperlink information. It can be an excellent source of information on the connectivity between different sites. In combination with a search through a given site, it can be used to construct detailed maps of soft power effect relationships. Web statistics tools can also be used to assemble datasets[3]. These resources may be used to construct datasets to model various phases of the soft power effects flow (Figure 1.2.7.1), as detailed in Table 1.2.7.3.

The type of software tool employed is dependent on the dataset being constructed. The following give some of the major types of software tools that can be employed:

- Standard SQL query tools (for manipulating datasets and performing statistical analysis, for example when datasets from different sources need to be joined or summarised).

- SAS (for manipulating datasets and performing statistical analysis, when a more detailed statistical analysis is required).
- R environments (with SQL functionality, for performing statistical and network analysis using high-level statistical and mathematical tools).
- Hadoop, Hive, and other big-data management tools (for sourcing, joining and manipulating very large datasets and generating basic statistics). Describes a reference architecture that promotes a unified vision for information management and analytics (Chappelle 2013).
- Web crawlers (for generating large network and content datasets from the web) are critical for building models of relationships between data sources on the web.

An overview of web crawler technologies is given by Shkapenyuk and Suel (2002). Web crawlers are used to assemble link statistics and page counts for a given search topic (which can be stored as a phrase, a piece of text, an image, a hyperlink, or through any other user-defined medium):

- link statistics analysis (number of links between two user-specified site types, total link volume);
- page statistics (by phrases, links, images).

### *Data structure*

Data can be structured using a network architecture or in any other desired format. Typically, the data will have the following underlying characteristics:

- stored in SAS datasets
- accessed using SQL
- viewable in statistical, graphical or network oriented forms.

Techniques for network visualizations over large complex geospatial (geographic) datasets are outlined in Madhavan *et al*. (2012), where big data fusion tools developed by Google are applied to geographic data to generate distribution, correlation and qualitative insights through merging geographic datasets.

### *Data sources for refracting soft power*

A key step is the identification and refraction of suitable data sources to be used in building models of each stage in the soft power effect flowchart. 'The notion of soft power relationship', an article to be published by Jilin University in *China and the World* in 2016, was shared with the authors, and this and Ch. 1 have provided a framework for refracting soft power which we adopt in this chapter. In order for this framework to be effective it requires good data sources for each component of the framework. In addition, each data component needs to be easily linked to other components so that the relationships between each can be established.

We propose the use of centralized data sources as described above for this purpose. The data they assemble is designed for studies of trends and makes use of many of the key ideas outlined above, including link analysis (Kolda and Bader 2006). The Australian National Data Service and other national data aggregation and compilation

services, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations and other international bodies all maintain datasets which can be used in analysis of economic effects. Other soft power effect data can be obtained from bodies such as AidData, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), International Aid Transparency Initiative, the Centre for Global Development and Departments of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Assembling all the identifications and interpretations of the application of big data approaches to the evaluation of soft power effects, we provide an example (Table 1.2.7.3) to give an overview of how each component of the soft power effect framework may be analyzed using corresponding indicators, variables, data sources and software tools.

*Table 1.2.7.3* Soft power effect evaluation model and associated data and software framework

| *Hierarchy level* | *Type* | *Indicators* | *Variables* | *Data sources* | *Software* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Soft power cause | Cause | Tabulation of products, measures of product scale (financial, cultural) | Financial scale, characteristics of products | Product-specific, government and industry association data | SQL and statistical tools |
| Soft power effect | Effect | Tabulation of effect, measures of product scale (financial, cultural) | Financial scale, characteristics of products | Product-specific, government and industry association data | SQL and statistical tools |
| Valence | Effect | Visibility and awareness, valence | Distribution and exposure, emotion and sentiment | Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) | SQL |
| Opinion | Effect | Judgment and evaluation | Text frequency | Website/text analysis | Web crawler |
| Behavior | Effect | Tabulation of behaviors, assessment of impact | Financial commitments, voting, industry action, individual actions | Website/text analysis, industry and consumer data, government data | SQL and statistical tools, web crawler |
| Compound effect | Effect | Tabulation of compound effects, measures of scale | Financial scale, characteristics of products | Product-specific, government and industry association data | SQL and statistical tools |

*Source*: From authors.

## Application: a case study

Applications of these tools within the soft power effect framework can be found in academia, in government and in media. Academics can identify, demonstrate and quantify soft power relationships, in particular power effects. Organizations and governments can use this analysis to drive business activity and policy. Media can use the findings to inform and drive their reporting of related events. Commerce can also benefit by understanding trends in soft power and their effect on business and trade.

To illustrate the application of this methodological framework, we give the example of soft power effects from several Hollywood films in European cities. This involves the key stages of cause quantification, effect quantification, opinion quantification and policy quantification on the soft power effect flowchart. In addition, we illustrate how compound effects can be modelled in this framework, which is a key benefit of the approach. To quantify causes, we quantify the distribution of several Hollywood films on the Twitter network graph in each European city using a matrix. To quantify effects, we quantify the resulting tweets, retweets and comments which closely follow the initial release of Hollywood films. To quantify opinion and policy, we study the visibility and valence of these effects on the network graph to generate a quantitative cultural impact model for Hollywood's soft power. Finally, to quantify compound effects, we quantify the

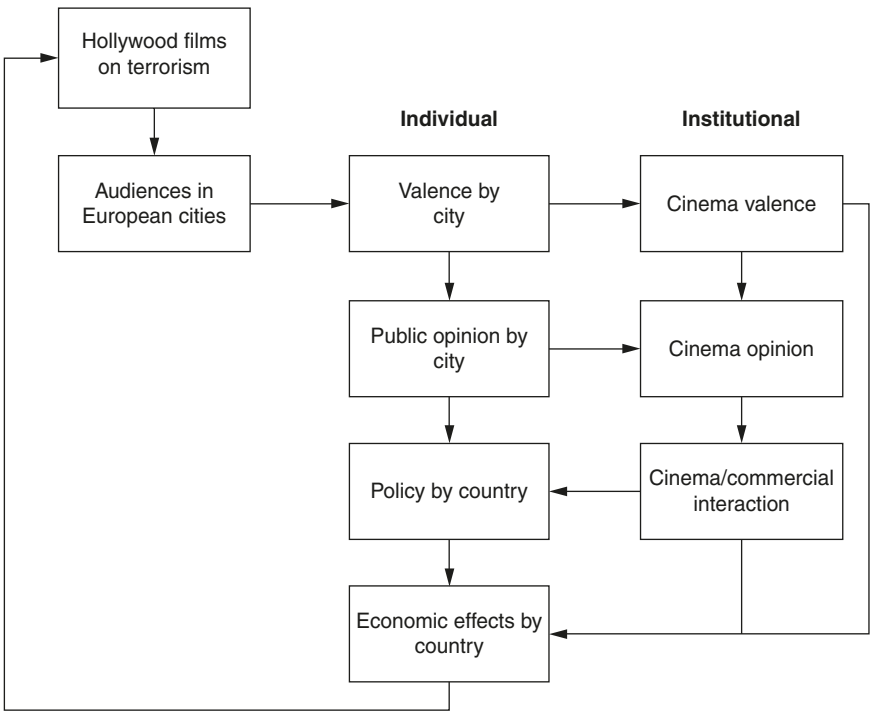



*Figure 1.2.7.2* Soft power effect flowchart for Hollywood films in European cities
*Note*: Link arrows denote correction matrices over a range of timeframes (e.g. one day, one week, one year)
*Source*: From authors.

relationship between Hollywood films and economic indicators (the cinema/commercial interaction) such as unemployment, GDP growth, web connectivity and international trade. This forms a quantitative economic impact model resulting from Hollywood's soft power cultural and policy products.

To illustrate the use of big data in this example, Table 1.2.7.4 shows the design matrix involved in modelling soft power causes, effects, variables, datasets and software tools. Each effect fits within a level of the hierarchy and its associated indicators, variables, datasets and software are designed to match the available information for that level of the hierarchy.

From an architecture point of view, web crawlers are used to assemble datasets from web relationships such as Twitter feeds and other network structures on the web. Datasets are merged using SQL/Hadoop and fed into database-statistical tools such as SAS/R to extract more compact tables and relationships, which are then analyzed using higher-level statistical tools such as SAS/R to draw conclusions and pinpoint statistically significant relationships. An example of this processing architecture is given in Figure 1.2.7.3.

Policy effects and compound effects are handled in this framework by identifying, collecting and analyzing government funding and policy data, and by the analysis of government statistics for compound effects such as economic effects, policy, and the cinema/commercial interaction (the relationship between cinematic activities and other companies and consumer spending). This analysis is done using Hadoop/SQL to join and prepare the data and statistical tools such as SAS/R to identify statistical relationships and correlations with preceeding stages and stage components of the soft power effect flowchart. This is illustrated in Figure 1.2.7.3.

*Table 1.2.7.4* Design matrix for big data analysis of the soft power flowchart for Hollywood films in European cities

| *Type* | *Cause/effect hierarchy* | *Effect indicators* | *Variables* | *Datasets* | *Software* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cause | Selection of films | | | | |
| Effect | Valence | Visibility, valence | Volume and sentiment | Twitter datasets | Web crawler |
| Effect | Public opinion by city (media included) | Visibility, valence | Volume and evaluation | Twitter, media websites | Web crawler |
| Policy effect | Policy by country | Level of support for foreign films | Cinema and film industry government funding | Government funding | Statistical/SQL |
| Compound effect | Economic effects by country | Economic indicators | GDP, unemployment, growth | Government statistics | Statistical/SQL |

*Source*: From authors.

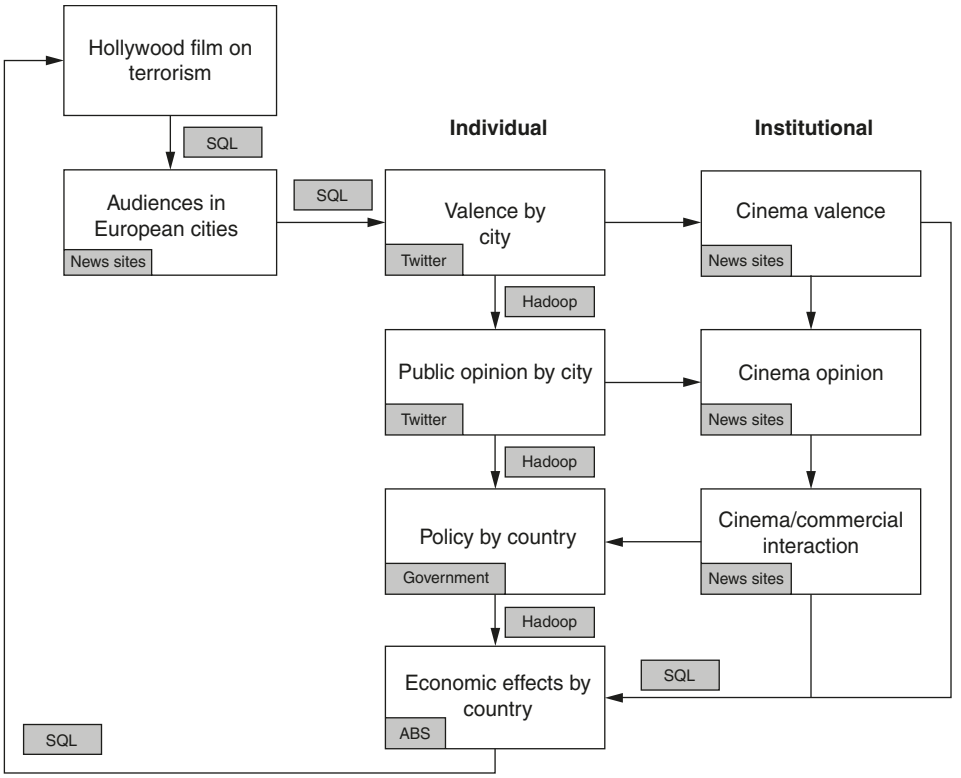



*Figure 1.2.7.3* Soft power effect flowchart with data sources and data handling tools illustrated
*Source*: From authors.

## Challenges of the big data approach in mapping soft power

Big datasets have a number of key attributes. Whilst they can provide a wide variety of insights, they can often be difficult to obtain or construct. Often they require customized solutions for each individual research question. When a general dataset is available, it may not contain enough useful information on any given, specific problem.

The challenges of big data in soft power research can be summarized as follows:

1 defining a hierarchical data structure for soft power products;
2 defining a hierarchical data structure for soft power effects;
3 identifying a focus area for products and effects;
4 identifying a suitable process flow for modelling the effects (for example, product, effect, perception, public opinion and public policy);
5 identifying the most suitable source or sources of data;
6 developing tools capable of processing web data and pre-assembled datasets into the required form;
7 developing queries which are appropriate for the focus area;
8 running the queries in a timely manner;
9 drawing appropriate conclusions from the results of the queries;

10 obtaining quality results from search queries;
11 filtering search queries.

The use of a high-level framework such as this has some key advantages but also presents some challenges. It encourages a systematic, hierarchical approach to collecting data in a form which makes it suitable for use in the analysis of soft power products and effects. In turn this enables the data to be reused in a flexible way, so that the full soft power dynamic can be explored.

Soft power is renowned for being a somewhat ambiguous field. Whilst at first glance this may appear a challenge for our goal of constructing a framework for studying soft power products and effects using big data, from our perspective the construction of such a framework may actually serve to remove ambiguities and clarify the field.

Due to the complexity of the analysis of real-world soft power products and effects, it will never be possible to fully automate the process. However, the use of automated tools can systematically build up a framework which can be used to support such analysis. Due to the strong relationship between soft power and hard power, the integration of hard power elements into such a framework would also add to its effectiveness as an analytical tool.

Clearly, there are many challenges inherent in this approach. Due to the complex nature of the elements and actors of soft power, it is also necessary to carefully model specific details so that a high-level analysis does not obscure or gloss over key conceptual and practical aspects. Integrating the high-level and fine-grained analysis in a systematic conceptual and analytical framework is a key challenge. However, the difficulties do not seem insurmountable and it should be possible to make rapid progress through a systematic application of the techniques outlined above.

## Conclusion

The extant literature has provided an illuminating theoretical and methodological framework as well as analytical tools to evaluate the effects of particular public diplomacy programs or activities by applying big data approaches. The field has broken through the evaluation of visibility–valence (distribution and quantified sentiments) dimension, and gone further to the evaluation of opinions. Welding the existing frameworks and analytical tools, especially the social network analysis framework and techniques, this chapter constructs a comprehensive theoretical, methodological and technological framework for modelling data, relationships and players in the soft power network. This framework includes the following: a hierarchical framework for soft power products and their resulting effects; a big data methodology for assessing the relationships within this framework at various hierarchical levels; and a set of data sources and corresponding software tools. The framework goes even further to evaluate the soft power effects on behaviours, including the individual consumption of soft power products, commercial trade between institutions, corporations and national policy towards the soft power products.

The Soft Power Network Analysis tool will be an invaluable technique for the study of soft power elements and their relationship across organizations, governments, countries and the internet. The model of how these methods and tools we have constructed in this chapter can be applied to evaluate the effects of soft power products and public diplomacy practices. However, this is a preliminary attempt to apply big data approaches in mapping soft power effects. The framework, especially the compound effects, needs to be further reinforced through additional real-world applications.

## Notes

1 SQL refers to Structured Query Language that is a special-purpose programming language designed for managing data held in a relational database management system (RDBMS).
2 Web Data Commons, viewed 6 April 2016, <http://webdatacommons.org/hyperlinkgraph/>
3 Web Statistics Tools, viewed 6 April 2016, <www.hongkiat.com/blog/top-14-free-web-statistics-tools/>.

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# 8

# SOCIAL MEDIA AND E-DIPLOMACY

## Scanning embassies on Weibo

*Ying Jiang*

### Introduction

Social media is one of the fastest-growing tools of modern public diplomacy. It is arguable that the perceived ease with which social media can be accessed and the low cost in comparison with other methods can make it an attractive tool for embassies as well as other organizations (Fisher 2013). Social media is an ideal communication tool for organizations needing to increase levels of social engagement while facing budgetary restraints. Social media provides an apt bridge to youthful populations (Mershon 2012). To reach out to the younger generation is one of the major goals of contemporary public diplomacy, and social media has soft power over audiences. Equally important as reaching out is listening to and understanding young peoples' thoughts, aspirations, information-seeking and other behavior in conducting public diplomacy (Riordan 2004).

Social media platforms having become popular tools of modern public diplomacy, methods of investigating their effectiveness need systematic development. Previous methods of measuring effectiveness of public diplomacy are not applicable to new platforms such as Facebook and Weibo. After reviewing existing research on social media and public relations in general, I have developed the research method of this particular project based on Levitt's work on Australian politicians' use of Facebook to engage with voters.

Research addressing whether it is useful for embassies to employ social media was not to be found. This empirical research aims to answer the following questions by addressing gaps in the research:

1 Are countries that have embarked on a Chinese social media platform conversing or simply broadcasting about themselves?
2 Are embassy Weibo accounts a more effective tool than other media for connecting with citizens and encouraging more interactive engagement?
3 What benefits has the use of Weibo brought to embassies in China?

At present we simply do not have a systematic understanding of what foreign embassies are doing on Weibo. Apart from contributing to the development of the research methods in this field, this chapter seeks first to address, through empirical research, three gaps in existing knowledge. First, we need to find out which embassies have the most followers on Weibo, how often they use Weibo and what they post. Without this information we cannot know which embassies exercise greater and which lesser soft power on audiences via social media and how. Second, this chapter seeks to address the fact that we do not have a clear understanding of the benefits that foreign embassies gain from the Chinese online platform. It is not clear that benefits gained are due to embassies' Weibo behavior. Finally, this chapter seeks to address the deeper question of what the uptake by foreign embassy users of Chinese social media – and Chinese Weibo in particular – means for public diplomacy. Does Weibo offer better ways for public diplomacy workers to communicate with potential audiences, or is it instead a fragmentary, dangerous and disempowering distraction?

## Background

### *Brief overview of social media and public diplomacy*

Social media is one of the fastest-growing tools of modern public diplomacy, providing the right channel for connecting with youth populations. Researchers have started paying attention to social media and public relations/diplomacy in recent years; for example, in 'New Media and Public Diplomacy in Network Society' Jordi Xifra analyzed the role of new media and social media in public relations, focusing on nation-building (Xifra 2012). Xifra and Grau (2010) found that Twitter discourse related to public relations contributed more to practice than theory. Smith (2010) observed that communication power was shifting away from public relations practitioners to social media users whose organizational interests or roles may not be well-defined. He suggests that this results in "a social model of public relations in which traditional public relations responsibilities are distributed to social media users", emphasizing that "scholars move beyond efforts to simply translate public relations models into the online sphere … [and] consider this an opportunity to consider new levels of risk, relationship, and interactivity" (pp. 329–34).

Research on the application of new media in governance (e-governance) has a lengthy history. In 1985, Harris, Garramone, Pizante and Komiya were the first to discuss how computers could provide a two-way flow of information between elected officials and their constituents. McKeown and Plowman (1999) explained how 1996 US presidential candidates used the web to reach voters during the general election. Trammell (2006) explained how blog-based attacks were utilized during the 2004 US election. Levenshus' (2010) article explained how the Obama campaign utilized the internet for grassroots efforts in 2008. Other scholars looked at how Middle East and United Arab Emirates (UAE) governmental organizations used the internet (Curtin and Gaither 2004; Ayish 2005; Kirat 2007), as well as the role of culture in country-sponsored tourism websites (Kang and Mastin 2008), the diffusion of social media in public health communication (Avery *et al*. 2010) and the impact of transparency laws on Latin American government websites (Searson and Johnson 2010).

Public diplomacy generally refers to "a government's process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and

ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies" (Tuch 1990, p. 3). Nicholas Cull (2009, p. 6) refers to public diplomacy as "an international actor's attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public", while Melissen describes it as "the relationship between diplomats and the foreign publics with whom they work" (Melissen 2005, p. 17). Traditionally, public diplomacy has been understood in terms of the relation between one nation-state and its foreign publics, that nation's main objective being to cultivate a favorable image of itself on the world stage. However, a young and multidisciplinary area, public diplomacy, is often criticized for a paucity of theoretical grounding and the tools necessary to attract and persuade foreign publics.

Signitzer and Coombs (1992) identify conceptual conversion between public diplomacy and public relations because public diplomacy and public relations have similar aims of affecting public opinion to benefit their client or organization. Public relations is often studied and practiced as relationship management (Broom *et al*. 1997; Ferguson 1984; Ledingham and Bruning 1998; Ledingham and Bruning 2000). Public diplomacy, described as "the actual communication activity by a political entity" (Zaharna 2010, p. 79), may be perceived as a form of international public relations insofar as it also involves relationship management and public relations tactics intended to effect change in foreign publics.

### *Social media platforms used by embassies in the US*

In 2013, research specifically focused on the use of social media by embassies started to make its appearance. A noteworthy project is the global communication master program jointly run by the Elliott School of International Affairs and the School of Media and Public Affairs, schools belonging to George Washington University. The uses of e-diplomacy by foreign embassies in the United States are examined in this program. With over 170 diplomatic missions in the United States, American citizens and social media users around the world have a vast range of channels with which to engage. Adding to the range of channels, many embassies also have multiple accounts on the same platform, often an account representing the Ambassador and an account for the embassy. Dr Ali Fisher found that every embassy in Washington DC that uses more than one platform uses at least one Facebook or Twitter account as part of their e-diplomacy strategy. Some embassies will use more than one platform to conduct e-diplomacy (Fisher 2013) – see Figure 1.2.8.1.

However, this capstone project did not deal with some in-depth questions, such as the following: Which embassies are reaching the most users? Which Ambassadors or representatives are reaching the most users? Are embassies using the persona of an 'Ambassador' more frequently than 'embassy' accounts? Do the same social media users engage with both an Ambassador and an embassy from the same country?

### *Social media platforms in China*

The social media landscape in China is very different from that of the rest of the world. While Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are regarded as the top three social media platforms in the world, none of these are available in China due to the country's internet regulations. Instead, the three most popular social networks in China are Sina Weibo, Tencent Weibo and Renren Net.

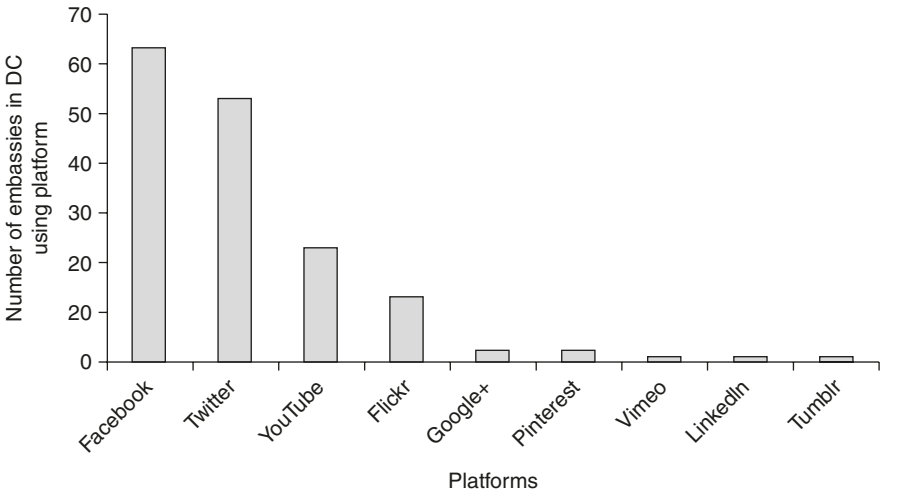



*Figure 1.2.8.1* Social media use by embassies in Washington DC
*Source*: Author construction. http://takefiveblog.org/2013/02/19/the-use-of-social-media-in-public-diplomacy-scanning-e-diplomacy-by-embassies-in-washington-dc/

As introduced in the opening section, Weibo is a Chinese microblogging (*weibo*) website, in use by well over 30 per cent of the world's internet users, with a similar market penetration in China as that which Twitter has established in the USA. Although the most recent China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) report, from December 2012, announced that there are 309 million Weibo users in China (CNNIC 2013), the sum of the self-disclosed numbers of their own Weibo users published by each Weibo service provider are much higher than the figures in the official report. While higher self-disclosed numbers are probably attributable to competition between Weibo service providers, scholars and journalists in China often estimate the total number of users as being more than 400 million, a figure that sits between CNNIC's officially reported figure and the sum of individual commercial Weibo service providers' figures.

It is important to note that when Chinese people say 'Weibo' they commonly refer to Sina Weibo. However, Sina Weibo is just one of several Weibo service competitors. Sina Weibo claimed 500 million registered accounts as of December 2012 (Gao 2013). Other providers include Tencent Weibo (the owner of QQ.com), which reportedly had micro-blog sites with 400 million registered accounts, and Sohu Weibo, which had over 100 million registered accounts in the same year (Business in Asia.com 2012). While it is more accurate to distinguish between Tencent Weibo (*Tenxun Weibo*), Sohu Weibo (*Souhu Weibo*) and Sina Weibo (*Xinlang Weibo*), Sina Weibo is the best-known Weibo service due to its success in attracting overseas users.

Weibo, similar to Twitter, is more 'conversational' than many other social media platforms. Weibo users can use 140 characters to share with others what is happening. Weibo is based on a model of human relations (Porter 2009). One does not need to become friends with others to be able to read their posts. One might follow 10,000 users while being followed only by 50 users oneself; conversely one might only follow 5 users but have 10,000 followers.

Renren Net is China's equivalent to Facebook and, like Facebook, disallows 'conversation' between non-friends. If Renren and Facebook are viewed as a parlor in someone's home, Weibo and Twitter would be a bar or street plaza, because anyone who is interested in a user's topic can join a conversation about it whether or not they are followers (Raymond 1999; Grant *et al*. 2010). Therefore, Weibo and Twitter are closer to being public spaces, and have unique advantages of being available as effective communication tools for reputation management and community engagement. According to the 2010 statistical results published on WebBizideas.com, 26 per cent of American corporations would pay for business functionality on Twitter (Hwang 2012). Celebrities in the world have also embraced social media to gather more 'followers' (Faina 2012; Marwick and Boyd 2011).

Weibo, like Twitter, restricts posts to a maximum of 140 characters. However, it is over-simplistic to define Weibo as 'Chinese versions of Twitter'. Both Sina Weibo and Tencent Weibo provide more complex and advanced services than Twitter. Due to the blockage of Twitter and Facebook in China, the social media landscape in China is dominated by domestic rather than international brands. Chinese domestic companies such as Sina and Tencent are intent on developing more complex hybrids that build on their respective advantages as multi-faceted web portals (Dashan 2012). Thus it would be more accurate to say that Weibo in general refers to Chinese micro-blogs that are hybrids of both Twitter and Facebook (Dashan 2012).

Journalists and a handful of scholars in China started paying attention to foreign embassies' use of Weibo (Chinalabs 2013); however, there have been no systematic studies conducted on the effectiveness and challenges of using Weibo for public diplomatic communication. Some scholars started looking at the use of Chinese social media generally; for example, Luo Yi's research examines how public relations practitioners in China use social media for relationship management in China (Luo 2012). Men and Tsai (2012) examined how companies use popular social network sites to facilitate dialogues with publics in China.

But research on the governmental organizations' application of Chinese social media is rare. Importantly, when it comes to incidents like the Kunming terror attack in China in March 2014, Chinese Weibo users tended to express strong nationalistic sentiments towards foreign countries' statements, and Weibo accounts of the embassies of these countries became targets. Nationalistic comments left on foreign embassies' Weibo pages, mainly criticizing the embassies' 'soft statements' and calling for immediate action, have contributed to e-diplomatic tensions (Tang 2014).

## Key research questions

1 Which are the social media platforms that are used by embassies to conduct e-diplomacy in China?
2 Which platforms do embassies use most frequently to conduct e-diplomacy in China?
3 Which embassies reach out to the greatest numbers of users?
4 Are those embassies that have embarked on using a Chinese social media platform conversing or simply broadcasting themselves?
5 Are embassies' Weibo accounts effective tools for reaching citizens and encouraging more active engagement?

## Method

To address the above issues, I first compiled a list of embassies on Chinese social media platforms. For the purpose of this study, the definition of an embassy's Chinese social media account refers to the embassy's official account that is verified by the service provider. This definition excludes ambassadors' personal accounts and consular or consular staff members' accounts.

To gather this list I mainly used the simple method of trawling for known embassies through Weibo's celebrity plaza (Mingren Tang), where embassies are categorized under their country names. Following this, I gathered a list of foreign embassy Weibo users. Numerical and descriptive data (self-written Twitter biography, representative avatar, number of friends, number of followers) was collected for each of our examined Weibo users. Further descriptive data (country, registered date) was collected and archived with both text and time/date tweeted. In order to analyse a similar series of tweets, this was then redacted to a three-month period (March to June 2015). Echoing the web ecological content analysis of social media method of Leavitt *et al*. (2009), I then categorized each of the Weibo posts in the three-month sample as one of our four basic types: 'broadcast', 'broadcast mention', 'reply' and 'retweet'. Here a 'broadcast' tweet is an isolated statement without reference to any other Weibo or Weibo user. A 'broadcast mention' is also an isolated statement, but one that mentions another Weibo user. A 'reply' is a response to another Weibo user's post, with that user listed at the start of the tweet. Finally, a 'retweet' is the quoting and re-posting of another user's Weibo in order to pass that Weibo on, usually in the form 'RT @username text'. These were collectively treated as either 'broadcast' (broadcast + broadcast mention) or 'conversational' (reply + retweet).

## Results

### *1. General information collection*

Up to 6 June 2015, there were 33 foreign embassies with Weibo accounts. Eleven foreign embassies were on Tencent Weibo, eight of them also ran WeChat platforms and two of them had Douban accounts (see Figure 1.2.8.2). Given that Sina Weibo clearly had the greatest number of embassy users, this research chose to focus on Sina Weibo. Embassy names,

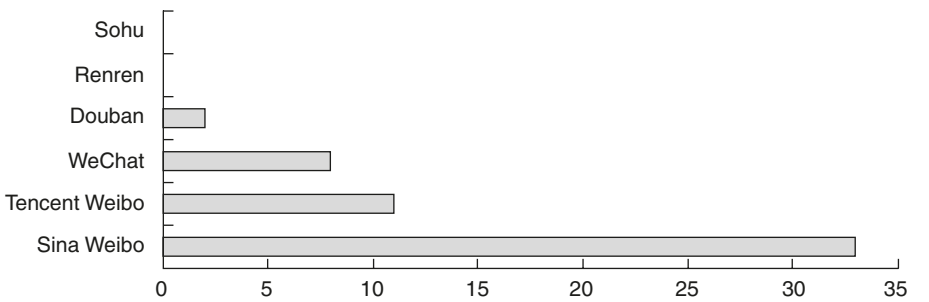



*Figure 1.2.8.2* Social media platforms used by foreign embassies in China
*Source*: Author's compilation based on her own research (data updated 6 June 2015).

*Table 1.2.8.1* Number of followers and posts of each selected embassy

| *Country* | *Canada* | *US* | *Cuba* | *UK* | *Korea* | *Japan* | *France* | *Russia* | *Denmark* | *Australia* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of followers | 1,120,000 | 900,000 | 360,000 | 360,000 | 330,000 | 290,000 | 230,000 | 140,000 | 130,000 | 110,000 |
| Number of following | 137 | 262 | 52 | 1,035 | 477 | 70 | 691 | 95 | 161 | 55 |
| Number of tweets | 4,674 | 8,549 | 417 | 4,070 | 2,947 | 2,807 | 4,866 | 2,370 | 3,037 | 1,416 |

*Source*: Author's own compilation based on her research.

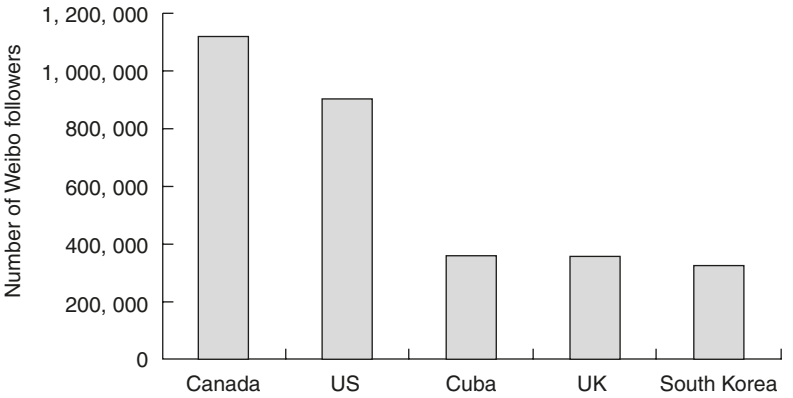



*Figure 1.2.8.3* Top five embassies with most followers
*Source*: Author's compilation based on her own research (data updated 6 June 2015).

number of followers, number of followings and number of posts are categorized as below (see Table 1.2.8.1).

Based on the data collected during this research, Canada had the largest following on Sina Weibo. Canada's followers surpassed those of the US in number, reaching more than 1.1 million. The US embassy had around 900,000 followers up to 6 June 2015. Cuba and the UK had about the same number of followers and ranked third on the list, while the South Korean embassy's Sina Weibo followers were slightly fewer than those of Cuba and the UK (see Figure 1.2.8.3).

Although Canada had the highest number of followers, it was not the most active foreign embassy account on Sina Weibo. With more than 8,000 Weibo tweets, the US embassy registered the largest number of tweets. The French embassy's number of Weibo tweets ranked second, which was slightly higher than Canada. The UK and Denmark had 4,000 and 3,000 tweets respectively (see Figure 1.2.8.4).

### *2. Statistics on 'conversational' communication*

If we categorise 'reply' and 'retweet' as conversational and 'broadcast' and 'broadcast mention' as broadcasting, the level of each embassy's conversational communication

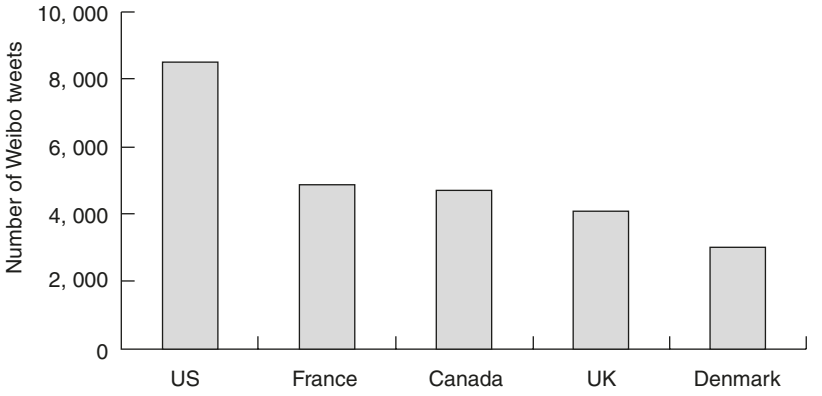



*Figure 1.2.8.4* Top five embassies with most tweets
*Source*: Author's compilation based on her own research (data updated 6 June 2015).

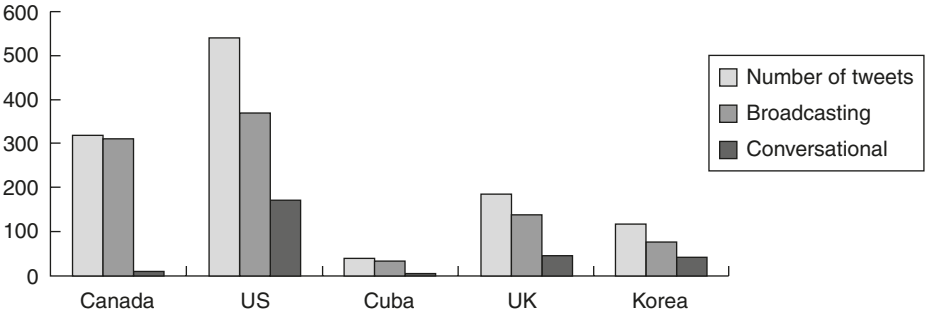



*Figure 1.2.8.5* Conversational communication statistics on embassies in China
*Source*: Author's compilation based on her own research (data updated 6 June 2015).

degree on Weibo can be presented as follows. While 'broadcasting' posts were the most numerous, the US embassy had more conversational posts than the rest of the embassies. But if we look at the ratio of tweets to conversational tweets, the South Korean embassy's Weibo account was the most 'conversational' (see Figure 1.2.8.5).

### *3. Statistics on Weibo influence*

The influence of each embassy on Weibo can be assessed by calculating the number of comments on and retweets of their posts. After analyzing the number of comments and retweets each embassy received on their Weibo from March to June 2015, I have garnered the information that the South Korean embassy had the highest ratio of retweets and comments (see Figure 1.2.8.6).

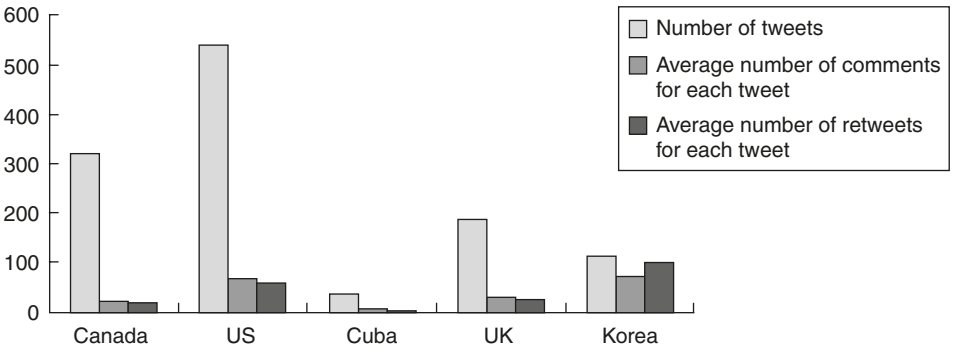



*Figure 1.2.8.6* Foreign embassies' Weibo influence
*Source*: Author's compilation based on her own research (data updated 6 June 2015).

## Discussion

Which social media platforms are used by foreign embassies to conduct e-diplomacy in China? Which platforms are embassies using most frequently to conduct e-diplomacy in China?

Based on the information collected during this research, the top three social media platforms most frequently used in China by foreign embassies are Sina Weibo, Tencent Weibo and WeChat. The number of foreign embassy accounts on Sina Weibo was almost three times that of Tencent Weibo and four times that of WeChat. However, given that WeChat is catching up very swiftly in China, and Tencent Weibo is gradually losing its popularity, it is very likely that there will be a sharp increase in the use of WeChat by foreign embassies and a significant decrease in the use of Tencent Weibo in the near future.

Which embassies are reaching the most users? Based on the data collected during this research, while Canada has the most followers on Sina Weibo the US has the highest number of tweets. However, the number of followers does not necessarily signify a strong connection with an audience. An account might have a million followers, which arguably shows a high degree of attraction to or soft power in the account. However, these followers could be inactive ones who say nothing. Also, even if a post gets retweeted a thousand times per day, this does not indicate whether tweeters are supportive of or against the embassy's communication goals.

Are embassies that have embarked on using a Chinese social media platform conversing or simply broadcasting themselves? According to the statistics conducted in this research, all the embassies on Sina Weibo have 'conversational' tweets. However, the number of 'conversational' tweets varies significantly between embassies. It is evident that the embassies of South Korea, the US and the UK attempt to engage interactively with their followers. Arguably, the South Korean embassy has the highest 'conversational' communication mainly because of the soft power of South Korean pop culture, attractive as it is to the – mainly young – Chinese Weibo users.

Are embassy Weibo accounts a more effective tool than other media for reaching citizens and encouraging more interactive engagement? What benefits has the use of Weibo brought to embassies in China? According to the data collected in this research,




*Figure 1.2.8.7* Comments left on US embassy's Weibo account
*Source*: Screenshot taken by author from Sina Weibo, 6 June 2015.

it is evident that Weibo can be effective in connecting with citizens. Compared with conventional offline public diplomacy, reaching out to target groups via social media is much more cost-effective and efficient. When it comes to encouraging more active engagement, Weibo is also effective. However, active engagement can be negative in character and followers can be against the policies of the country represented by the embassy. For example, the US embassy had the highest number of followers as well as the highest number of reweets and comments, but more than half of the comments received were negative and contained nationalistic and hostile content (see Figure 1.2.8.7).

## Brief translation

Original Weibo post by US embassy:

Do you like Robin Williams' films? Are you a fan of him? Would you like to watch Robin Williams movies with us and have fun together? October, Beijing American Centre will start memorializing Robin William with one of his movies. The next Robin William movie review will be decided by you.

## Comments left by users

Yanzhiai: Who is the most effective sh*t mixing stick? Support me if you agree.
Jiuyier Tiger:Hong Kong belongs to China, belongs to Chinese people, stop interfering in China's domestic affairs! Take care of your own democracy.
Lubianyicailang: Why did your American soldiers go to Ukraine? What's happening to your democracy?
Choulegeyande: The UN calls you to pay membership fee.
Chenchentaba: I am relieved after seeing those comments targeted at you.
Huhanweibo: Let love and peace occupy the White House!
OVO: Why can't you just pay the bloody UN membership fee?
Binbin: Why don't you tweet that Confucius Institutes are close[d] down in America?

## Conclusion

Weibo has been used actively by a number of foreign embassies. It is evident that it can be employed effectively in engaging with citizens, which is one of the goals of public diplomacy. Importantly, this research illustrates that greater follower numbers do not automatically signify greater influence and the level of 'conversational' communication does not signify e-diplomatic success. Conversely, negative and hostile comments left on some of the embassies' Weibo accounts show that the outcome of their public diplomacy task can be unsuccessful. The research method employed in examining these Weibo accounts proved to be effective and can be applied to other similar research in the field of soft power and public diplomacy.

Future research can investigate the challenges for foreign embassies posed by the use of Chinese Weibo and provoke thoughts about better ways to use social media or other tools to generate soft power. It is not intended to argue against the use of local popular social media for public diplomacy purposes, but rather my intention is to encourage public diplomats at embassies to take a critical and analytical look at practice.

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## SECTION III

# The cultural imperative

# 9

# CULTURAL APPROACHES TO SOFT POWER (SECTION OVERVIEW)

*Jacob Udo-Udo Jacob*

## Introduction

To start this section, an understanding of the meaning of 'culture' is useful. Although culture is part of our daily experience and encounters, it does not have any single definition. Rightly so. Indeed, Kluckhohn and Kroeber (1952) found some 150 different definitions of culture. If anything, the multiplicity of definitions demonstrates the diverse views of culture across lenses – shaped, as it were, by the cultural encounters of the various authors that attempt to define it. Anthropologists have tended to link culture to shared understandings of symbols. Clifford Geertz in his classic work *The Interpretation of Culture* sees culture as a historically transmitted "pattern of meaning embodied in symbols", and "a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms" (Geertz 1973, p. 89). Contemporary scholars of culture and intercultural communications such as Kathryn Sorrells have built on Geertz's anthropological association of culture with meaning and symbols, seeing culture as a system of shared meanings passed from generation to generation through symbols (Sorrells 2013, p. 4). Critical to this view of culture are *shared meanings of symbolic forms.* Symbols are the core artefacts upon which human communication is built – words, images, slogans, colour combinations, etc.

The assumption that culture is a system of shared meanings, however, is contestable when viewed in the context of divided societies or even an unequal global system where verbal and cognitive abilities of populations are as disparate and unequal as their social and economic circumstances. Seeing culture as a system of shared meanings becomes even more cumbersome when one begins to unpack the *meanings shared* and how such meanings are acquired, organized and transmitted. Shared meaning presupposes that culture is coherent, stable and meaningful. This ignores the inequalities that are sometimes masked as 'cultural differences'. Moreover, shared meanings of symbols are even more contestable when one considers the relation of language and thought to inequalities in the international system and within social and economic classes. Arjun Appadurai in his seminal work *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation* has argued that culture should be seen beyond a mental substance of shared meanings, as this

privileges "the sort of sharing, agreeing and bounding that fly in the face of the facts of unequal knowledge and the differential prestige of lifestyles" (Appadurai 1996, p. 12). Appadurai's position tends to support Marxist views of culture as a site not of shared meanings, but of contested meanings. This view is prevalent in the Gramscian Cultural Studies tradition that originated from the works of Stuart Hall and his colleagues at the University of Birmingham, England.

Unlike anthropologists, Cultural Studies scholars see culture as an instrument of power within a larger architecture or system of domination, or as a form or apparatus of hegemonic influence (Sorrells 2013). Gramsci's thesis on hegemony suggests that subordinated groups "accept the ideas, values and leadership of the dominant group, not because they are physically or mentally induced to do so, nor because they are ideologically indoctrinated, but because they have reason of their own" to do so (Strinati 1995, p. 166). The mandate of soft power is to provide this reason.

Cultural hegemony, therefore, in Gramscian terms, presupposes a constantly readjusted and re-negotiated system that creates 'spontaneous consent' for cultural transfer and indeed cultural dominance to the extent that reality (be it moral, conceptual or logical) is seen through the lenses constructed by the dominant group or culture. Hegemony basically sees culture as an apparatchik of dominance or an instrument of ascendancy obtained through 'spontaneous consent', with its exerted influence going beyond the receiving or dominated people's lived experience. It includes generally accepted notions of what is right, fair and ethical (values) and the language with which these and other ideas are communicated. Language is a particularly powerful tool for creation and maintenance of cultural hegemony as it underlies how daily meanings are acquired and the social formations that link words to concepts, thoughts and action. When seen through these lenses, culture becomes an even more critical tool of soft power.

The use of cultural forms by states as a tool for soft power, and in some cases global dominance, has a long history. The Greeks from 323 BCE successfully projected the Hellenistic culture across Europe and extensive parts of Asia and North Africa. Indeed, as Koester has observed in his work *History, Culture and Religion of the Hellenistic Age*, the most characteristic phenomenon of Greek domination was the intensification of the process of Hellenization or the expansion of Greek culture, language and education (Koester 2012). By 31 BC, Hellenistic culture peaked, extending Greek politico-cultural domination through the Greek language, arts, theatre, music, poetry, philosophy, mathematics and science. The export of Greek culture was fundamentally at the heart of Greek foreign expansion policy, building on Alexander the Great's military campaigns in Persia and various other parts of south-west Asia and north to east Africa. Unlike other world powers that existed before and after Greece, Hellenism (or the imitation of Greece) did not seek to forcefully exert Greek culture over the cultures of conquered tribes and kingdoms; rather, Greek culture achieved spontaneous consent, with conquered kingdoms willingly accepting and adopting Greek language, art and science. By presenting their soft side – language, poetry, knowledge, art and literature – the Greeks showed that, in addition to their fierce military or hard power, there was an attractive side to them that was worth identifying with and imitating. The success and endurance of Greece as a superpower, despite its many internal problems, arguably owed much to their adroit use of culture as a key element of soft power. At the heart of ancient Greek foreign policy was a mesh of connections between not only the Greek political class and the political class of colonies, but an even stronger connection between citizens, peoples, societies, trade

networks and schools through language, art, knowledge exchange, etc. Hence years after the fall of Greece as a superpower, Hellenistic culture and language endured, remaining visible for many centuries not only in the Hellenization of Rome but also in the development of ancient Christianity (Koester 2012). Indeed, as Rajak (2000) has noted, Roman rule (years after Greece) was mediated through 'Greekness'. It drew on Greek language, Greek political ideas and Greek literature. Enos (2008) has aptly observed that, though oriented towards a fundamentally different ontology, Roman rhetoric drew on Greek rhetoric – the most residues being manifested in the *Rhetorica ad herennium* and in Cicero's *Rhetorica*. Indeed, by the time Pompeius made an entry into Judea in 63 BC Greek culture had already become an intrinsic part of Jewish culture and religion for centuries (ibid. p. 4). Koester affirms that although the Greeks fell to Roman political domination, it prevailed culturally, with the Greek language, culture and religion gaining ground, so much so that the eastern part of the Roman empire essentially remained Greek (Koester 2012, p. 42).

Over 2,000 years later, with increasing technological innovations in communications, the breadth and depth of cultural contacts between peoples and societies across national boundaries have increased, thus creating even more sophisticated opportunities for cultural relations. Also, the cultural industries have become increasingly sophisticated even as political diplomacy and cultural diplomacy have forged increasingly intricate interrelationships.

## The globalization of culture

New communication technologies, changes in global communication governance, the end of the Cold War and the attendant changes in international relations and economic policies have all combined to create a more intricately interconnected world. Lifestyles and livelihoods are more easily shared and experienced, not only through traditional governmental cultural exchange programs but through direct exchanges, mainstream media and online virtual spaces in ways that are unprecedented. Globalization has enabled not only the movement of people but also the movement of cultural products and corporations. US corporations such as Facebook, Google, CocaCola, McDonalds, Starbucks, Microsoft and Disney, among others, are key parts of most people's lives around the world.

In today's world, countries that have technological dominance, with their citizens better-connected to the internet, have more agents and agencies of global cultural relations. While it took radio over 30 years and television 15 years to reach 60 million people, it took the internet three years to reach 90 million people (Ting-Toomey and Chung 2012). With YouTube, an individual can reach several millions worldwide in days. On Facebook, millions of people post several millions of pictures and videos of their daily lives. Thus closer connections between identities are forged daily among citizens globally, beyond the capabilities and control of governments.

There are increasingly new, technological modes of cultural relations, driven not necessarily by states but by individuals and organizations. Countries are doing their bit through a range of programs ranging from China's Panda Diplomacy (see Hartig 2013) to the Nigerian government's bankrolling of Nollywood movies in exchange for themes that promote Nigerian national culture. Other countries use more traditional tools such as educational exchanges, language centres, museum and art exhibitions and international broadcasting.

## The cultural resource of soft power

Soft power, a term used by Joseph Nye to describe the ability of states to maximize their international influence and achieve their objectives through attraction and co-option rather than coercion, has gained currency particularly in recent years. Nye, in his work *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (Nye 2004), identifies culture as the first of three primary resources upon which a country's soft power rests. The other two are the political values of the country and foreign policies. For this overview, 'culture' is seen as a society's values, norms, practices and epistemes that distinguish that society from other societies. Culture is expressed in various forms including life, literature, art, songs, language, food, sports, education, and entertainment in film, theatre or music.

Popular culture which draws its life from media portrayals is a key agent of soft power, mainly because of its massive appeal. Over the years, Hollywood, along with American TV series (including children's television series) and sitcoms (including animated sitcoms) have thrilled generations globally and have been great exports of American popular culture. Music, particularly the works of Berry Gordy's Motown, has produced enduring ballads that have brought the power of soul music and African–American culture and experience to millions around the world. The availability of global satellite networks has brought such music channels as BET and MTV, among others, to millions of homes globally. American sitcoms like *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air, 8 Simple Rules* and *The Jeffersons* have popularized not only American jokes and means of laughter, but also American family life. These create a form of epistemic familiarity between the foreign audience and the American way of life – even for those who have never set foot on US soil. This attraction thus inspires in several millions a longing for America, with which they have come to develop some form of cultural link. Although many, particularly in Muslim-dominated countries, love to hate America because of its foreign policies, millions of people each year, even from countries that supposedly disdain America, still apply for one of the 50,000 spaces available in the US Green Card lottery. Several others seek to study, work or do business in the US. Although the US, since the end of the Cold War, has degraded most of its public diplomacy capabilities, including funding for its international radio operations, and has waged unpopular wars, the projection of American popular culture has helped to prevent a massive decline of America's pulling power. Within this 'reserve' pulling power lies America's awe and influence. These are contained in the narratives and projections of not only American culture but also American might, domination and values in Hollywood movies, which are sometimes raised to mythical proportions. Andrew Ali Ibbi (2013) tells an interesting story of two Nigerian traders who found it simply incredible that the US could not prevent the 9/11 attacks. After coming to terms with the shocking reality that the twin towers had actually been brought down and that it had indeed happened in America, one of them said, "leave Osama alone, America will show him Rambo!" – with obvious reference to America's capability to deploy a Stallone-like one-man army to hunt down and punish bin Laden wherever he may have been hidden. Soft power is not restricted to the power to pull; it also includes the power to awe, to inspire confidence, trust and faith among global audiences.

For soft power to translate to real power, the use of images and symbols of power within cultural portrayals is essential. Hollywood movies such as *Armageddon, Saving Private Ryan* and *Independence Day*, among others, have more or less built a national personality cult around America, portraying its invincibility and resilience. The public diplomacy rewards thereof cannot be quantified. Culture becomes a key power tool,

sometimes of propagandistic proportions, when cleverly used to extend influence beyond the realm of words, action and presence. Again, this is not new. Philip M. Taylor (1995) notes how Alexander's images on coins, buildings, statues, pottery and in art provided "an excellent substitute" for his actual presence (1995, p. 33). "Regardless of the reality", Taylor adds, "it was the image which captured the imagination" (1995, p. 34). Though sometimes dumbed-down and sensationalist, the capability of popular culture to achieve consensual acceptance is undoubtable. This makes it a critical soft power asset for all nations, particularly within the context of an increasingly globalized visual culture.

## "The West in Retreat"?

As previously noted, the projection of a nation's way of life is not new, but what are new are the means with which it is projected and the increasingly complex reasons for such projection. Reasons range from countering Islamist ideologies to creating and/or projecting a stronger economic and political voice among a comity of nations. Ironically, despite the growing reasons for cultural projection, western countries appear to be on the retreat – closing their cultural relations outposts to focus more at home – whereas other countries, particularly emerging powerhouses such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and MINT (Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey) countries, are increasingly pushing outwards.

Britain, for example, has significantly cut spending on the BBC World Service. Indeed, the World Service, which was previously funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), is now funded by a share of the compulsory TV licence fee paid by TV owners in Britain. Cuts have already affected services in Serbian, Albanian and Mandarin Chinese and there are growing fears for services in the Hindi and Hausa languages. More significantly, the FCO has reduced its oversight of the World Service. Also, British education, which has been a key element of British soft power over the years – much sought-after internationally – is now threatened as a soft power tool by new government limits to net migration in apparent response to local apathy towards foreigners and the increasing popularity of far-right anti-immigration parties such as the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). Recently the UK voted to leave the European Union. In a 2013 report, 'Influence and attraction: culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century', the British Council, in an apparent warning to what it describes as "The West in Retreat", notes that western governments are cutting back on foreign language broadcasting. They are also making it difficult for foreign tourists and students to get visas and generally viewing cultural relations as a cost. The document aptly describes this trend as "surprising". Warning that short-termism in cultural relations is shortsighted, it calls on governments to think longer term, "move from short-term transactional and instrumental thinking to long-term relationship building" (British Council 2013, p. 34).

China and Russia, on the other hand, are spending more on CCTV and Russia Today (RT) respectively. Nigeria is expanding its financial and political support to its Nollywood movie industry. Nigerian music, once unheard in clubs outside of Lagos, is now playing not only in nightclubs but also on radio stations from Kinshasa to Cotonou. Former Nigerian president Goodluck Jonathan once said that Nigeria's movie actors are the country's greatest ambassadors. He launched a $200 million state-backed scheme to boost the Nigerian film industry. Although the project has been dogged by problems, it does suggest that African countries have at least realized the potential of soft power in a rapidly changing world.

Although Britain has cut back on most of its state-supported international cultural relations activities, it does not necessarily mean that Britain is losing its global soft power influence. On the contrary, the UK's soft power is appreciating, but not from state cultural relations operations. Rather, the appreciation is from sports – another key agency of soft power. The English Premier League in the past 15 years has done for the UK's image what the FCO can never do in 100 years. From China to Kenya, the Premier League is the most popular football league in the world. There have been reports of fights breaking out between supporters of Liverpool and supporters of Manchester United, not in Old Trafford, but in a pub in Kenya or at a viewing centre in downtown Lagos. I have met several downcast people in Nigeria whose weekends were completely ruined because Arsenal or Chelsea lost a game. The refrain is usually the same – "we lost". That phrase encompasses the unique strength of the United Kingdom – the spontaneous projection of the personal identities of vast millions into the identities of Premier League clubs and the people and cities that host them. Chelsea, for example, is not just a place or a football club. It is an identity that millions of fans around the world have willingly and proudly adopted and into which they have projected their own identities. In addition to the huge revenue the Premier League brings to the British government, it also brings the British way of life to millions of hearts every week. It is not just the beautiful game of football that is transmitted, it is also the sheer passion of the British spectators on the stands that is projected, match after match, week after week. The passion yet dignity of the spectators, the grandeur of the stadium, the quality of the refereeing and the beauty of the English language intensified via the passion of the commentators combine to make the Premier League Britain's greatest and most valuable soft power asset. Furthermore, the poise and elegance of the Royal Family in Britain and the rich history and culture that surround the monarchy remains a major pulling power for Britain. Thus, although the UK has degraded most of its international broadcasting capabilities, cut military spending and introduced tough immigration policies that limit international students, its pulling power has hardly declined.

Few countries have the kind of attractive sports or royal institution that Britain has, but every country must find an element of its culture and national life that can be projected with vigour, authenticity and authority as a form of cultural hegemony. For the US, it may be popular culture; for Britain, the Premier League; for China, cuisine and pandas; for Nigeria, Nollywood; for India, yoga and Bollywood. But central to the cultural approach to soft power is the ability of each country to find within its way of life an attribute with a strong pulling power that will give global audiences their own reasons to yield. Indeed, as Rajak (2000, p. 4) has observed, "it is of great assistance in running an empire to have a culture to 'sell'".

## Conclusion

In conclusion, culture is a way a society lives its life, sees itself and projects itself. These combine to create a form of identity with a life of its own, distinct from any other. It is not every element of this identity that is worth projecting, but within every national identity lies a unique attraction that can be packaged, told and sold abroad with confidence and authenticity. Indeed, Michael Hecht (1993) in his Communication Theory of Identity (CTI) has argued that identity is not complete if it is not enacted or expressed. The enactments are in themselves a frame of identity. In an increasingly interconnected global system, nations are almost mandated to develop a means of communicating not

just their capabilities but also their identities beyond and outside the realm of hard politics or normal diplomacy. There is increasing need particularly for global powers to obtain spontaneous assent even in the violently divided societies they seek to transform. Never has there been a greater need for global powers to develop ways and means of exercising legitimate influence through cultural influence and persuasion than now, when the world is grappling with increasingly violent religious ideologies. Communication, as Hecht's CTI has suggested, is identity and is not just caused or influenced by it. Essentially, culture or a nation's national identity is incomplete without stories. The narrative frameworks within which these stories are woven and told are as important as the stories themselves. Whether they are drawn from folklore, historical realities, music, ideologies, national assets or the imaginations of a scriptwriter, they should transcend culturally-constrained spaces that contend with other national cultures.

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# 10

# SOFT POWER AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

## Cultural policy and inter-Asian regional flows in Hong Kong and Singapore

*Peichi Chung*

### Introduction

This chapter analyzes the regionalization narratives represented in the cultural policies of Hong Kong and Singapore. It strives to compare and contrast the development of creative industries in these two Asian cities during the era of Asia's regional integration. In Asian popular culture, two East Asian soft powers developed from transnational popular cultures that had grown within the greater region. One of these powers was Japan. The wide success of Japanese cultural products in both east and Southeast Asia created new images of Japan. Japanese cultural commodities provided a sense of Asian-ness that made the products marketable among Asian consumers (Otmazgin 2008; Pang 2015). At the policy level, the Japanese government has used their 'Cool Japan Strategy' to nationalize its content industry in the global market (Choo 2012). The other soft power is Korea. 'Korean Wave' has developed into a cultural flow that brings social change to countries all over Asia (Kim 2011). Korean cultural industries benefit from the Korean government's systematic support for enhancing local industry synergies (Jin 2011). Important policies include the screen quota policy aiding film industry development and the e-sport cultural policy for the promotion of professional competition in the Korean online game industry (Jin 2010). The intra-Asian cultural flows that circulate beyond the convenient boundaries of Japanese and Korean popular cultures deserve academic attention. Responding to these flows, this chapter looks at the significance of creative industry policies of Hong Kong and Singapore within the asymmetric power relations that shaped Inter-Asian cultural flows. Iwabuchi once coined a term to describe these asymmetrical power relations as a reflection of "polymorphic vernacular modernities" among nations in Asia (Iwabuchi 2004). On the one hand, this penetration of Japanese and Korean popular culture indicates a form of Asian modernity that is based upon the imperialist desires of Japan to assert its cultural imagination over Asia. On the other hand, these emerging intra-regional cultural flows also complicate Japan's imperialist network given the recent political and economic power shift from Japan to China.

A review of Asia's cultural trade shows the shifting direction of intra-Asian cultural flows that now originate from a greater variety of vernacular locations within Asia. This new direction gives a new view on soft power competition among nations in east Asia. In contrast to Japan and Korea, China's cultural flow throughout Asia prioritizes trade between China and Hong Kong. In 2009, Hong Kong was ranked as Asia's number one destination for China, constituting 22 per cent of China's total cultural export. Japan, South Korea and Singapore altogether account for only 7 per cent of that export. Taiwan, which hosts the largest Mandopop music industry in the world, aims mostly at overseas ethnic Chinese markets including China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia. Thanks to the rise of Chinese markets, Southeast Asian countries have increased this trend of growth in intra-Asian cultural flows. The popularity of Thai television dramas and popular music in China and Japan also contributes to the growth of T-pop (Thai popular culture) as a regional cultural phenomenon in Asia.

This chapter studies Hong Kong and Singapore as two more 'vernacular locations' that expand the multi-directions of cultural flows inside Asia. It sees cultural industries as important sources of soft power and resources for public diplomacy when a country engages in regional politics. Responding to the argument that Asian regionalism reflects the contesting national identities that together form the region's collective identity (Otmazgin 2005), the process of Hong Kong and Singapore's integration into Asian regionalism is presented here. The chapter first provides a literature review of works studying the changing nature of cultural policy found in recent global trends in creative industry development. It then discusses the connection between national and global perspectives in cultural policy that UNESCO prioritizes within its structure of cultural diversity. Asia's regional cultural policy, as a response to this national–global encounter as a result of trade liberalization, is addressed. After highlighting key industry sectors, I analyze regionalization policy narratives represented in Hong Kong's film sector. I then discuss the same phenomenon in Singapore, focusing on the development of interactive gaming. My conclusion concentrates on the connection between these outward-looking cultural policies and the cultural diversity that is opened up for community actions.

## Literature review on internationalizing cultural policy

Literature in cultural policy research has debated whether policymaking was national or international in its origin. National-oriented cultural policy focuses on local cultural preservation, wherein policymakers defend the country's heritage and the diversity of its cultural expression. The original aim of cultural policy in this case seeks to build the political base of a national culture. Bonet and Negrier (2011) observe that national cultural policy functions as a stabilizing power encouraging the formation of homogeneous cultural identity in the nation-state. As cultural policy regulates the right of citizenship, multilevel governance is employed by the government to ensure the effective policy intervention of all identities, values and beliefs (McGuigan 2003). For instance, Bennett (2001) states that national cultural policy enables art to play a role for the 'social'. Because the social nowadays can be seen extensively intermingling aesthetic attitudes toward both low and high arts, the government can expand its cultural policing from high art to include a wider range of cultural contents in order to support the right of citizenship in its regulation (Vestheim 2007).

However, the shifting boundary between culture and economy illustrates the challenge of ensuring policy effectiveness in making cultural policy. One obvious example is the creative industry, whose programs prioritize economy in shaping local industry environments. Policy in creative industries aims to do more than impact the lives of citizens. Policymakers also expect to effect jobs and revenues. Furthermore, cultural policymakers prioritize corporation-friendly environments favorable to public–private partnerships. Such shifting boundaries become controversial as a structured inequality in favor of corporate interest arises in the regulatory process.

There are issues arising when creative industry policy enters the center of discourse in cultural industry development. Value of autonomy and community in the arts is one concern in the context of creative labors due to the limited freedom they maintain in the face of complete marketization (Pang 2015). Banks (2015) points out the marginalization of art in becoming heritage. The trend of commercialization is a controversial development as cultural industries repackage into creative industries product. Creative industry policy mainly aims to bring hugely valuable investment return to the wider creative economy (Throsby 2015). Cultural policy is designed to enhance output and employment for a creative industry. The widely adopted concentric circle model is an example of cultural policy interpreting the relationship between components of the cultural sector.

Altogether, creative industry policy in east Asia demonstrates a new imagination of globalization that differs from one created by the soft power of the United States (Watanabe and McConnell 2015). The attraction of Japanese popular culture for youth in the United States presents Japan's different model from Americanization (Allison 2015). The 'Cool Japan' policy achieves soft power influence through deodorization and reodorization of Japanese culture. The 'Cool Japan' strategy is able to exclude historical differences through popular culture products and create shared memories among fans of Japan in the United States and China (Yoshiko, 2015). This new form of globalism has become plural in particular when we see emerging popular culture from South Korea. Whether or not the 'Korean Wave' produces power behaviors as American soft power does worldwide, it is thought-provoking to observe the fact that in some countries American and Japanese cultures appear more attractive when they are repackaged into creative industry product via South Korea (Tsutomu 2015). The hybrid cultural mixing in East Asia sheds light on the type of popular cultural complexity as the nation-state engages in different strategies to participate in cross-border cultural trade. Similarly, China's active engagement in growing its domestic cultural market also illustrates a new form of soft power competition from China. Su (2010) identifies the internal political struggle inside the Chinese Communist Party when legalizing 'cultural industries' since the 1990s. The State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television (SAPPRFT) has played an influential role in creating a monopolistic film market that keeps foreign players' hands off China's film production, importation, exhibition and distribution (Vlassis 2015).

It is, then, challenging yet important, for policymakers to maintain the cultural rights of national and non-national minorities whenever corporate players – those looking for maximum profit in the market – lead the national development of culture in the policymaking process (Hesmondalgh 2005; Throsby 2009). In the export-oriented media industry, for example, the economic nature of the media industry can cause media policy to conflict with cultural policy (Erickson and Dewey 2011). Media policy bypasses the emphasis on heritage preservation to seek a greater emphasis on

commercial competition. The regulatory framework cultivates a national media culture that supports a competitive corporate environment. These corporate activities include such endeavors as foreign market entry and cross-border acquisition. The industry structure can be problematic, especially when the government becomes an enabler of media content (Flew 2010).

In this situation it is crucial that the government maintains balance between culture and economy in order to allow the continuity of empowerment to public initiatives and to fight against standardization in the commercial system of the media industry. Politically, cultural policy represents the various form of political strategy that a nation uses to engage in cross-cultural dialogue with its popular cultural resource (Lee 2011). East Asian pop cultures, for instance, are influential soft powers that contribute to public diplomacy. Because of the fragmentary reception of East Asian media programs such as those from Korea and Japan, consumers from Asian communities need to rely on their imagination rather than news reports in responding to local politics (Chua 2012). This form of public diplomacy merits ethical concern, as international political relationships can be formed through partial portrayals of nations as being either partner or enemy in soft power competition among nations (Li and Chitty 2009).

To local policymakers it is, therefore, important to clarify the level of cultural diversity that they promote in cultural policy at both national and international levels. Cultural products nowadays often face trade imbalances due to strong consumer preference for cultural products from the Hollywood-based multinational corporations (Grant 2011). This market preference reflects a widening gap in both media production and consumption that is expanding the global North–South divide. For instance, Latin America has become an underdeveloped area for media production but an overdeveloped one for media consumption (Miller and Yudices 2002). Many popular forms of cultural content in Asia resemble the production format used in the United States. Global television channels produce a standard mix of infotainment, where Hollywood feature films, North American television dramas and US-based television news shape a standardized audiovisual storytelling style that audiences consume all around the world.

In additions, governments also need to determine whether measures to curb corporate globalization should be implemented at the local level of cultural policy. Should Asian governments act as activist states in order to support local creative industries in the face of the existing global media power structure (Freeman 2003)? Unlike European cultural policy, which relies on creating a jurisdiction able to establish an organic political community with an EU identity (Sarikakis 2007), the idea of Asian citizenship remains a concept in progress, because it lacks political consensus. In such a regional environment, how can cultural policymakers create policies that encourage regional discourse, and, furthermore, encourage individual countries to participate in the integration process through national cultural policies? In such a process, will a cultural turn in Asian integration uncover many sub-regional differences, so that diverse cultural values in the region can be preserved through progressive policymaking? And, most importantly, how do Hong Kong and Singapore demonstrate a model of participation in the integration process through their various forms of creative industry policies?

The following sections engage in specific discussion about the hybrid natures of creative industry policies that Hong Kong and Singapore both refer to as facilitating and developing their two cities as key 'vernacular locations' within the larger structure of soft power relationships in intra-Asian cultural flows.

## Creative industries in Hong Kong and Singapore

### *Hong Kong*

Creative industry development in Hong Kong started in 2000 when the Hong Kong Special Administration Region (SAR) government recognized the need for an economic turn in its local cultural policy. In the policy, Hong Kong includes 11 categories in the mapping of its creative industry. These industry categories consist of: advertising; architecture; art, antiques and crafts; design; digital entertainment; film and video; music; performing arts; publishing; software and computing; and television and radio (Hui 2003). These 11 categories contributed to a total of 2.5 per cent of Hong Kong's GDP in 2003. The industry employed 105,060 people in the total workforce, creating a value-added of HK$29.9 billion. In 2010, the Hong Kong Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) refined the creative industry by combining some of the existing categories into nine, and added 'amusement services' and 'cultural education', as well as 'library, archive and museum services', to the classification system.

A historical review of the cultural and creative industry shows a policy change regarding the role that culture plays from the British Colonial government to the Hong Kong Special Administration Region government. This change indicates the level of cultural diversity that cultural policy generates when the focus shifts from culture to economy. At the local level, rhetoric on cultural heritage and tradition changes during the transition years of the two governments. During British colonial time, Hong Kong's cultural policy followed the non-interventionist approach that arts and culture served as ways to preserve Chinese content in order to maintain Hong Kong's plural cultural identities (Hong Kong Arts Development Council 2012). At that time, Hong Kong's cultural diversity was cultivated in a policy environment that encouraged Cantonese opera, Hong Kong film and Cantonese musical entertainment to grow roots with local support. As popular cultural consumption began to move away from Chinese content, local Hong Kong popular culture started to take form. Consequently, cultural policy administered by the Hong Kong SAR government maintains a different way of identity-building – one that leans closer towards a Hong Kong and China relationship as a way to build up the international competitive advantage of the city (Hong Kong Arts Development Council 2012).

To be specific, the creative industry initiative was articulated in the strategic direction of the 'one country, two systems' principle, which indicates a China-centered cultural regionalization in Asia's intra-regional cultural flows. The mindset of Hong Kong playing a progressive role to participate in China's modernization has been an articulated discourse in many creative industry policy documents. Prominent policies that carry out Hong Kong's mission of developing into 'Asia's World City', focusing on ways to strengthen Hong Kong's economic potential, can be found in the following documents: *Study on sustainable development for the 21st century* (1998)[1], *A study on creativity index* (2005)[2], *Baseline study on Hong Kong's creative industries* (Hui 2003), *Hong Kong arts and cultural indicators research report* (2005)[3] and *Study on the relationship between Hong Kong's cultural and creative industries and the Pearl River Delta* (2006)[4]. Among these documents, one regionalization narrative relates to the sub-regional concept of Pearl River Delta, which emphasizes Hong Kong–China integration in southern China. These documents explain different policy engagements to build Hong Kong's creative industry in national, regional and global contexts.

We see that the administrative responsibility for Hong Kong's creative industry is shared among the offices of the Home Affairs Bureau, the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and the Hong Kong Arts Development Council among other offices. The Hong Kong government has adapted to be an active facilitator in promoting Hong Kong as a creative content trading and service hub in the Asia-Pacific region (Create HK 2015). Create Hong Kong is the main office that foresees the overall development of creative industries. Its major policy initiatives include the CreateSmart Initiative, the Film Development Fund, the Hong Kong Design Center and the InnoCentre. The CreateSmart Initiative benefits from the HK$300 million budget to fund design-related creative projects. West Kowloon Cultural District is another project that receives an initial funding of HK$21 billion. Cyberport and Hong Kong Science and Technology Park support companies in technological innovation. The Film Development Fund is charged with growing small and medium-sized film companies. It is reported that film and TV industries contribute HK$7,041 million to GDP growth in Hong Kong's economy. This growth means a direct GDP output of 2.51 per cent in 2014 (Oxford Economics 2015). Overall, Hong Kong's creative industries have grown within the government's regionalization policy. Hong Kong's creative industries have achieved greater economic presence in transforming Hong Kong's economy to include art and culture. In 2008, the cultural and creative industries created a HK$63 billion value-added economy. In 2013, cultural and creative industries doubled in scale, with the total value added increasing to HK$1,403 billion (Census and Statistics Department 2012).

### *Singapore*

Similar to Hong Kong, the creative industry policy in Singapore began in around 2000 when the government recognized the potential contribution of creative industry to Singapore's economy. Unlike Hong Kong, which connects creative industry development to its pre-existing vibrant popular culture in art, music and popular culture, Singapore has established its creative industry through a well-planned top-down policy model. In 2001, the Economic Review Committee formalized the potential contribution that creative industry could make to the economy. The scope of creative clusters was outlined in the document *2002 Creative Industries Development Strategies*, which focuses on three cluster directions: arts and culture, design and media (Economic Review Committee 2002). In 2000, the creative industry contributed to 1.9 per cent of the GDP, accumulating a total of SG$2.98 billion value added (Heng *et al.* 2003). The industry then employed 47,000 persons. In 2005, as the creative industry grew, the art and cultural sector employed around 20,000 people while the design industry employed 33,503 persons. From 1996 to 2007, to be specific, the number of arts companies increased from 200 to more than 300. More importantly, the number of persons employed in the arts sector also increased from 16,000 in 1996 to 20,767 in 2006. In 2009, the creative industry grew to create 115,000 jobs, contributing to 3.6 per cent of the country's GDP. Interactive and digital media consequently became the fastest growing sub-sector, contributing SG$1.5 billion revenue to the economy and employing 11,000 workers in 2010 (Economic Development Board 2015).

A historical review of the creative industry policy development shows that Singapore's nation-building process has always shown a complex negotiation process when negotiating between economic goals and socio-cultural aims (Kong 2000). On the one hand, Singapore is a multicultural and multi-ethnic society. There is a need to integrate creative industry policy with critical socio-cultural agenda. It is important to understand

how an immigrant population, a multi-ethnic complexion and the historical secession from Malaysia constitute a particular type of national narrative in constructing art and museum exhibitions in today's Singapore (Chong 2011). On the other hand, it is also important to recognize the fact that economic goals have always been a crucial driver for Singapore's national policy. The nation-building politics of the soft authoritarian power has determined Singapore's development model as the country transforms itself from an industrial economy to an innovation-fueled information and communication economy (Ooi 2010).

The creative industry development has had three stages. The first stage appeared in the early 2000s as we saw the government framing major constituent sectors of the creative clusters. Documents that introduce the early government's policy framework include *Creative Industries Development Strategies* (2002), *Renaissance 2.0* (1995), *Economic Contributions and Singapore's Creative Industries* (2003) and *New Challenges, Fresh Goals: Toward a Dynamic World City* (2003). The second stage opened around 2005 with the creative industry beginning to form value chains under the government's plans. Government documents focused on outlining an ideal future for Singapore in 2015. The forecast of Singapore's growth in the three sectors are reflected in documents such as *Renaissance City Plan III*, *DSG-II Strategic Blueprint of the DesignSingapore Initiative 2009–2015* and *Intelligent Nation 2015*. Ultimately, the third stage shifts Singapore from Asia's Global City to the world's leading techno-nation after 2015. A global narrative becomes apparent as the government shifts away from regional focus to world leadership. Policy narrative at this stage starts to showcase Singapore's innovation in smart living, as documents such as Smart Nation Programme and Smart Nation Initiative feature immersive technology supported by big data and cloud computing.

The structure of the creative industry shows a multi-agent collaboration among government offices. In arts and culture, the Advisory Council for Culture and the Arts, the National Art Council and the National Heritage Board steer the development of the local art scene. The government focuses on Singapore being the art and cultural hub of Southeast Asia. Strategic direction can be seen in the continuous establishment of major performance halls and exhibition spaces that can also be linked to the promotion of cultural tourism. For instance, one of the largest performance halls in Southeast Asia, Esplanade, was built in 2002. The National Art Gallery, which has the largest southeast Asian and Singapore art collections in the world, was opened in 2015. Fusionopolis, Biopolis and Mediapolis were created near the science park for cluster engagement of innovative biotech and digital media research and development (Philips 2012). The info-communication sector aims to create an "intelligent island" through pervasive computing to enhance Singaporeans' lifestyle (Tan 2012). The effect of these policies is manifested in the industry linkage as global entertainment companies establish regional offices in Singapore and create efficient industry synergies by working with the government and local small and medium-sized companies in the video game industry (Chung 2015).

The creative industry development model of Singapore shows a particular creative industry structure that is 'precarious creative economy' (Kong 2011). This economic model indicates an alternative way of employment based on efficient government planning. The industry is, therefore, seen to have growing numbers of freelance artists participating in and contributing to the growth of the national economy administered by the government. This model, however, raises issues of labor autonomy and creative freedom in the gradually opening sociopolitical society of Singapore. The case of the Sticker Lady who violated government rules by posting stickers with political taglines on the streets

shows the growing demand for a realigning of government cultural control on creative freedom as creative industries open up in Singapore (Lee 2014).

## Regional industry integration as the outset of creative industry policy

This section examines the local industry value chain that Hong Kong and Singapore have developed under their regional creative industry policies. According to David Throsby, artists and art organizations are the central drivers to foster the dynamics of innovation in a creative industry (Throsby 2010). The review of Throsby's concentric circles model shows that both governments transform the core sectors of their industries to enable Hong Kong and Singapore to become two emerging 'vernacular locations' that create East Asian and Southeast Asian cultural contents for film and interactive games. The popular cultural works in Hong Kong and Singapore diversify the multi-directional intra-Asian cultural flows.

### *Film industry of Hong Kong*

In the case of Hong Kong, specifically, a Sinicized regionalization narrative is articulated in the cultural policy of Closer Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). Since the enactment of CEPA in 2004, Hong Kong's film industry has relied on the formation of a close political–economic link between Hong Kong and China. The relaxation of trade restrictions in the CEPA allows Hong Kong films to receive exemption from China's restricted import quota. In addition, the CEPA law stipulates that any Chinese-language film made by any production company in Hong Kong that owns more than 50 per cent of the film's copyright can be exempted from the import quota for foreign films entering China (Trade and Industry Department 2015).

CEPA has led Hong Kong's film industry to engage in all levels of integration with China. Co-production is standard for Hong Kong film producers when they consider the main market for their films, which is mainland China. Mainland talents often participate in the making of Hong Kong films. Collaboration involves a wider geographic area than the Pearl River Delta economic zone and includes locations and film facilities such as Beijing, Chongqing (western economic region) and Hong Kong. Economically, Hong Kong cinema's influence in China has grown from distribution to production. Seven out of the top ten most marketable films in China in 2010 and 2011 were Hong Kong co-productions (Hong Kong Film Development Council 2015a).

There are, however, circumstances which arise as a consequence of CEPA being a challenge to Hong Kong's local film industry. As the local industry's value chain shifts from local to regional, most film talents in Hong Kong relocate north to join co-production projects in Beijing and Shanghai. As mainstream commercial filmmaking declines, documentary film becomes a new genre that allows small-budget independent filmmakers to produce films that have local stories. *July* (2004), *All's Right in the World* (2007), *Hip Hop Storm* (2008), *KJ: Music and Life* (2008), *Dot-to-dot* (2015) and *The Metroplex* (2015) are examples of international award-winning films. These documentaries become new voices that avoid film censorship under CEPA as storytelling focuses on social and political matters in local society after 1997 (Aitken and Ingham 2014).

There are a total of 33 film projects financed by a total fund of HK$91 million from the Film Development Fund (Hong Kong Film Development Council 2015b). This

subsidy initiative allows independent filmmakers to thrive on experimental approaches. The market success of *The Way We Dance* (2013) and *The Midnight Afterwards* (2014) shows a gradual discovery of budget filmmaking strategy that connects to small-scale audiences in Hong Kong. Independent filmmaking has, therefore, become an emerging filmmaking trend based on a local industry that focuses on the promotion of regional cultural policy under CEPA.

### *Game industry of Singapore*

Singapore's regionalization narratives in this section are manifested in the video game sector. The Singapore government maintains three processes to mold the local game industry (Chung 2015). Industry synergy is molded through policies that encourage international corporations and regional talent to work with Singaporeans to form local industry value chains. An evaluation of the game industry performance from the 1990s to the present shows that game policy has shaped Singapore's current game industry structure and has transformed the city into a leading game development and distribution hub in Southeast Asia. In 2011 the Singapore government worked with Sony PlayStation to set up a game incubation center, Game Solution Center. The center assists with growing independent games in Singapore. Major players in Singapore's game industry consist of a combination of companies, mixing local studios with international game developers and publishers. These companies include Gumi Asia, Konami Singapore, Tecmo Koei, Ubisoft, Touch Dimensions, Lambdamu and Tyler Project. Games such as *Dice Soccer* (2011) and *Autumn Dynasty* (2012) were once on the list of most-downloaded and top-selling games on Apple's iOS platform (Media Development Authority 2015).

Kawasaki (2004) argues that Singapore's development of cultural policy has created cultural hegemony toward other Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries. As art and culture has just begun to become an important subject for most governments in Southeast Asia, the issue of soft power nationalism in gaming, while Singapore rapidly develops its creative industry and becomes a major creative hub in Southeast Asia, has arisen. The opening of the digital complex at Fusionopolis in 2008 and the subsequent establishments of digital cinema and computing research centers like the Data Storage Institute show Singapore's linkage to first world soft powers in achieving its creative supremacy in the region.

In Singapore's game development sector, transformation from 'authentic identity' to 'crossroads identity' is self-explanatory when we see the development of global game companies dominating the production and distribution segments of the value chain. Because of the commercial logic cultivated by government offices such as the Economic Development Board, the Media Development Authority and the Information Development Authority, national identity becomes a concept that closely works with the goal of "capitalizing our crossroads identity" and for "producing and marketing made-in-Singapore offerings" (National Art Council Singapore, 2010).

The market-oriented policy agenda cultivates a unique labor relation between foreign capitals and local game developers. Global game developers, including Ubisoft, function to provide global game development expertise to expedite Singapore's international standing in game development. Local game developers retain their independence as satellite studios to develop projects that do not run parallel with these global players. Local independent

game developers concentrate on application games or flash game development. Their games, therefore, become the limited representative of local contents that reflect local living experiences and cultures in Singapore. The government, however, complements the society's need for local content. In 2015 the Media Development Authority released a series of mobile application games to celebrate the nation's fiftieth anniversary. These games include *Kan Cheong! Kopitiam Saga*, *Building the Lion*, *My Singapore City*, *Rickshaw Rush* and *Satay Club*. These games are free-to-play application games that focus on themes of local histories and society features in the multiracial south-east Asian nation.

It is significant to then evaluate the effectiveness of creative industry policy in both cities in the aspect of labor dynamics under the regionalization trend of both cities. In the Hong Kong film industry, CEPA policy directs the local film industry to develop into independent filmmaking. As local film talents work on documentary production and excel in international film festivals, sub-regional filmmaking for a Cantonese film market is another effort devoted to balancing the gradual change of Hong Kong elements in films made under CEPA. In the Singapore game industry, labor productivity shows in the gradual growth of independent game studios set up by local Singaporeans. As the government provides measures to lead local industry to enter the global game scene in independent development, the effectiveness of creative industry policy is seen. These policy outcomes have contributed to a certain degree to the sustainability of film and game industry development. However, a comprehensive evaluation of the regionalization policy requires further examination of tensions and social changes arising in response to the direction of cultural development that is nested under the creative industry policy in both cities.

## Conclusion

This chapter uses the cases of the two locations of Hong Kong and Singapore to contribute to the debate on soft power expansion in the existing inter-Asian cultural flows. It argues that a comprehensive regional cultural policy in Asia needs to look into various locations and their soft power formation process in engaging in regional politics. It further examines how local cultures become mobile through effective cultural policy. Inter-Asian cultural flow is a far more complicated cultural network than Japanese and Korean popular cultures. While Japanese and Korean popular cultures currently circulate around Asia, serving as regional cultural flows to compete with the global corporation-generated popular cultural consumption in Asia, at a different level a set of geopolitical and sub-regional cultural discourses are also circulating within niche markets and trying to emerge as regional cultural flows that produce new production formulas, consumption patterns and technological innovations.

It is critically important to examine cultural policy that will bring back community action with an outward-looking soft power initiative. However, this chapter suggests that future policy initiative needs to incorporate public and ethical concerns to evaluate the impact of creative industry development as an effective resource to internal cultural politics. Many Asian governments are inspired by the UK model – one where labor politics plays a significant role in bringing out the success of creative industry in the UK. It is important, then, to examine the parallel process as Hong Kong and Singapore pursue economic success following the UK policy model in their regional competition.

Discussion on regional integration promoted by inter-Asian popular cultural flows needs to examine the influence of hybrid regional cultural policy on the vernacular local. What is the actual effect of the outward-looking policy trend in creative industry development on the various local social groups in Hong Kong? Similarly, as Singapore moves toward its crossroads identity to legitimatize its 'global' identity in cultural policy, how should the Singaporean public adjust their shifting identity to define 'the local' in order to respond to the government's continuous planning for efficient national development based on 'global identity'? As cultural diversity is seen at the regional cultural policy level, how does the policy facilitate integration among various minority groups and immigrant communities in the two locations? This regionalization narrative to a certain degree opens up more hybrid space for tensions, seen in popular cultural content in Hong Kong films and Singapore games, that need to resolve and eventually settle.

The cultural flows generated by both Hong Kong and Singapore as two vernacular locations pose further research; that is, the further discussion of the soft power of Hong Kong and Singapore and the influence of these soft powers upon their own people. As the governments try to facilitate nation-building through massive policy plans in creative industry development, it is also significant to realize the need to examine the power relationships between Hong Kong's or Singapore's soft power and the pan-Asian soft powers of Japan and Korea. It is interesting to see that a separate direction is being taken at the consumer level, where audiences in Hong Kong and Singapore have gradually turned away from their governments' versions of nation-building in films and games and have begun to enjoy the cultural influence of and celebrate popular culture from Japan, Korea and the West.

## Notes

1 See the government document *The Sustainable Development for the 21 Century Hong Kong*, viewed 12 August 2015, <www.epd.gov.hk/epd/sites/default/files/epd/english/boards/advisory_council/files/ace_paper9819.pdf>.
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# 11
# THE CULTURAL IMPERATIVE
## News production and soft power

*Saba Bebawi*

### Introduction

Joseph Nye articulates soft power as "a form of power … one way of getting desired outcomes" (Nye 2011, p. 82). It is within this framework that discourses surrounding media power have circulated, where the media play an instrumental role in identifying global issues and events that are presented to the public as framed, packaged news. This role grants them the power to set global political agendas and, more importantly, to define the parameters of public opinion.

Jürgen Habermas has provided a historical account of the public sphere, where he conceptualizes the power of deliberation within the public sphere through the role of national media in eighteenth-century Europe. A key point that Habermas makes is that media power "emerged [as] a new sort of influence" which was "used for purposes of manipulation" (Habermas 1992, p. 437). This form of media power, he elaborates, can be described as "the manipulative deployment of media power to procure mass loyalty, consumer demand, and 'compliance' with systematic imperatives" (Habermas 1992, p. 452). Media manipulation, Habermas argues, is exercised through the employment of discourses which "imply power structures that are not only hidden but systematically latent, that is, structurally concealed from their participants" (Habermas 1992, p. 478). The media's practice of soft power is best defined within this context as "the ability get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments" (Nye 2004, p. x).

Despite the rise of social media usage and online platforms, the ability of dominant media to frame social reality remains intact. Yet one fundamental aspect that plays a role in the construction of this practice of soft power is the cultural influence that affects the news-making process at various levels and which includes the culture of the media institution, the culture of journalism practice, and the culture of the audiences and society. All these different areas through which culture is exercised impact the formation of the media message and, in turn, how soft power is constructed and used by news media.

This chapter looks into how such cultural influences shape news production as a form of soft power. It will use examples from Arab media, where journalists are finding themselves working within the realm and limitations of cultural beliefs and expectations, in addition to traditional journalism practices that are reflected in the making of the media

message within the local public sphere. Arab journalism has traditionally been based on set formulas, which include set linguistic news expressions and the massaging of public opinion with the use of literary expressions that motivate and evoke emotions. As a result, this form of journalistic practice feeds and breeds social norms. The problem with this, accordingly, is that journalism fails to challenge, educate and liberalize social thought; instead, what it does is exercise soft power to construct social reality. This chapter will discuss how these cultural influences affect journalism practice, which in turn results in the practice of soft power that is crucial in driving public opinion. First, however, it is necessary to understand how media power is constructed in the creation of a social reality.

## Media power and social reality

Media power is defined by Nick Couldry as "the concentration in media institutions of the symbolic power of 'constructing reality'" (Couldry 2000, p. 4). Couldry relates this definition to John B. Thompson's (1995) various categorizations of power where the media is regarded as a form of 'symbolic power'. According to Thompson, symbolic power is practiced by cultural institutions such as "the Church, schools and universities, [and] the media industries", as they are a "[m]eans of information and communication" (Thompson 1995, p. 17). Thompson refers to symbolic power as the "capacity to intervene in the course of events, to influence the actions of others and indeed to create events, by means of the production and transmission of symbolic forms" (Thompson 1995, p. 17). Couldry argues that symbolic power "always requires, as its medium, symbolic forms (speech, writing, performance, images, and so on), and its exercise may or may not involve explicit ideological content" (Couldry 2003, p.38). He adds that "it suggests there are power implications involved in such symbolic forms themselves, given that the ability to produce symbolic forms is not evenly shared" (Couldry 2003, p. 38). Couldry, however, finds Thompson's definition of 'symbolic power' limited in some respects in that its definition fails to include the "wider impact that certain *concentrations* of symbolic power may have" (Couldry 2003, p. 39). Accordingly, in contesting Thompson's definition, he argues that:

> [a] *strong* concept of symbolic power, by contrast, would insist that some concentrations of symbolic power (for example, the concentration from which contemporary media institutions benefit) are so great that they dominate the whole social landscape; as a result, they seem so natural, that they are misrecognised … and their underlying arbitrariness becomes difficult to see.
>
> (Couldry 2003, p. 39)

Because of this 'misrecognition', the media's ability to construct 'social reality' becomes possible. Journalistic practice can ultimately frame events by creating messages through symbolic forms. Its power stems from that need for society to rely on the media as a source of information and knowledge. It allows them to construct the world around them and understand the events that take place and how they relate to each other. James Curran and Couldry stress this by arguing that "media power remains a very significant dimension of contemporary reality. In short, media power is *an emergent form of social power* in complex societies whose basic infrastructure depends increasingly on the fast circulation of information and images" (Couldry and Curran 2003, p. 4).

The media's ability to construct social reality is also addressed in the work of Oliver Boyd-Barrett, who states that the media "portray, reflect, filter and negotiate the 'real' world", such that the 'real' world, and … our ways of knowing that world, is influenced by the media and by widespread assumptions about the power of the media" (Boyd-Barrett 2002, p. 16). Here Boyd-Barrett argues that the method through which the media construct social reality is through a journalistic process of "selection, exclusion and inclusion". This process is how soft power is practiced, since it allows media organisations to provide a particular version of reality that in turn reflects and constructs social reality. What this means is that from this process of "selection, exclusion and inclusion", the media can *reduce* the boundaries of actual reality and set the parameters of social reality through which society's understanding of the world occurs.

Indeed, what journalistic practice creates is a space through which the *selected* discourses circulate. Couldry sees this mediated space as a "centralized" space, which can be considered as a basis of two myths: the first is the "myth of centre" and the second is "the myth of the mediated centre". The "myth of centre", according to Couldry, is that there is in fact no "social centre" where all society's diverse views and beliefs can be represented, therefore to regard the media as a representative and interpreter of that center is problematic. In turn, the "myth of the mediated centre" questions whether the media can act as "a highly centralized system of symbolic production whose 'natural' role is to represent or frame that centre" (Couldry 2003, p. 45). He argues in relation to this:

> The idea that society has a centre helps naturalize the idea that we have, or need, media that 'represent' that centre; media's claims for themselves that they are society's 'frame' help naturalize the idea, underlying countless media texts, that there is a social 'centre' to *be* re-presented to us.
>
> (Couldry 2003, p. 46)

This is an important point to consider when conceptualising media power and, in turn, its practice of soft power. Media power has the ability to create a social center which, although not actually representative, remains a central platform or space with real and significant social and political consequences.

## Soft power and the cultural imperative

So far the above articulation of media power assumes that it is defined by those who are in position to create a mediated social center, such as media organisations, news editors or advertisers. Manuel Castells(2009) states that whoever is in charge of that power "often decides what is valuable" since "*value is, in fact, an expression of power*" (Castells 2009, p. 28). Yet this social reality is also related to society's set of core values and beliefs, as it needs to reflect the cultural parameters of what society accepts and how it operates. In other words, journalistic practice often frames a particular news event through discourses that tap into general social beliefs, positions or views. In this instance, newsmakers know what their audience's ideological framework is and, in turn, the news story is told through that frame. This practice of soft power ensures that the media message is dictated through coercive means.

It is, therefore, necessary to take into account the cultural imperative when discussing the soft power that media organisations practice. Nye argues that: "With soft power, what the target thinks is particularly important, and the targets matter as much as the agents.

Attraction and persuasion are socially constructed. Soft power is a dance that requires partners" (Nye 2011, p. 84). Here Nye identifies the targets as the receivers of the media message and the agents as the constructors of the message who are practicing soft power. The significance of this argument is that conceptualising media power as a form of soft power assists in better understanding how media power functions. Media power becomes effective when the target audience is taken into account in the construction of the media message. On this, Couldry argues that dominant media practice not only enforces the creation of social reality, but also reflects the discourses which appeal to the majority of audiences. He defines "media rituals" as: "[a]ny actions organised around key media-related categories and boundaries, whose performance reinforces, indeed helps legitimate, the underlying 'value' expressed in the idea that the media is our access point to our social centre" (Couldry 2003, p. 2).

Accordingly, Couldry's argument centers on the idea that media power is regarded as its ability to encapsulate the discourses that reflect the majority of society's views, and which results in what he calls the 'naturalisation' of media power. What is significant in Couldry's argument in relation to this chapter is that the process of the media constructing social reality and exercising soft power is in essence a 'social process' where the news media act as a reproduction of the 'social practice' of its audience members. It is, therefore, necessary to stress that the media does not produce "something superimposed on social practice from the outside; instead it is endlessly reproduced through the details of social practice itself" (Couldry 2000, p. 5), which reflects society's "local patterns of belief" (Couldry 2000, p. 5). Through the practice of mirroring the discourses of society, the media makes these discourses 'natural' to its audience. Couldry elaborates on this here:

> These local patterns of belief and action have become so routine that, in practice, we run them together in a general conception of the media's 'effects' largely abstracted from those specific contexts of reproduction. As a result, the workings of the media's social authority tend to be hidden, and media power comes to seem natural.
>
> (Couldry 2000, p. 5)

In turn, media power constructs and re-constructs social reality, concealing its authority as a result of the naturalisation of the discourses it reproduces. Such practice of symbolic power is "reproduced as legitimate" (Couldry 2000, p. 3). It is, therefore, problematic to conceptualize media power, and soft power specifically, without taking into account the cultural influences that help shape it. Accordingly, I will go on to discuss how news is formed through the culture of journalism that relates to the organization and the newsroom, in addition to the social influences that lie at the heart of media power's ability to construct social reality.

## Cultural influences on news

When considering the culture of journalism, there are various factors that contribute to its make-up. At one level the culture of the organization itself, the culture of the newsroom and how news is produced, and the culture of the journalist which also plays a role due to the different cultural backgrounds of reporters. Here 'culture' not only refers to the ethnic background of the journalist but also to both the reporter's exposure to a particular political culture and their socialization within the field of journalism they are

operating in. These varying levels that contribute to the creation of a culture of journalism will be discussed in this section.

Various 'journalism cultures' have been identified in previous studies, where, despite there being "an all-encompassing consensus among journalists toward a common understanding and cultural identity of journalism", different "professional ideologies" are articulated through journalism cultures (Hanitzsch 2007, p. 368). The notion of a 'culture of journalism' has been defined by Barbie Zelizer as follows: "Unlike the institution, which focuses on journalism's role in the large-scale rendering of power in society, the culture of journalism targets how journalistic practices, routines and conventions take on meaning internally for and among journalists" (Zelizer 2005, p. 200).

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) suggest that the journalist's opinions and attitudes have an effect on the media messages that they produce. Despite this influence situated at the bottom of their "hierarchy of influence" on news production, they see that the journalists' "personal attitudes may translate into selections that undermine the political legitimacy of the covered person or event" (Shoemaker and Reese 1996, p. 264). Accordingly, they found that the inclusion of the journalist's personal attitude relates to the role that the reporter sees him- or herself undertaking:

> [w]hether journalists see their roles as interpreting what others do, disseminating information, or serving as an adversary of the powerful, these roles may determine how they define their jobs, the kinds of things they believe should be covered, and the ways in which they cover them.
>
> (Shoemaker and Reese 1996, p. 264)

At a global level, the varying cultures of journalism become even more visible. Mark Deuze (2002) conducted a study looking into the different news cultures within different national contexts. He defines national news culture:

> [a]s an intervening variable between people (cf. journalists, sources, or publics) and a given "objective" situation (cf. media events, organizations, infrastructures, and systems) through which citizens inform or are informed, can be seen as partly carried by the broadly defined and operationalized profile of media professionals within a given national context.
>
> (Deuze 2002, p. 134)

Deuze's articulation of news culture consists of various factors which include the journalists who work within that culture, the various kinds of storytelling, and their relation with sources and the public (Deuze 2002, p. 134). All these levels through which news culture is constituted affect the making of the news through a national context. Yet while it can be argued that journalists working in an international news environment might share a "set of characteristics" that constitute what Deuze regards as as "international news culture", there are differences that exist and which "can be attributed to national context, as an indicator of particularity" (Deuze 2002, p. 135).

The culture of journalism can be found in a particular region, nation, or even news organisation where overlaps exist. At a national level, it is essential to take into account the historic evolution of journalism practice in that specific place. The historic evolution can be shaped by varying factors which include social, political and economic influences. One significant influence that can be found in differing regions is that of language and

literary uses of language. In the Arab region, for example, traditional styles of reporting are entrenched in the Arab culture of journalism. William A. Rugh contextualises this:

> Historically, the Arab press has had a strong tie to Arab culture. Arab literature, including poetry, tales, and stories, predated mass media by more than a millennium and had developed a very rich tradition by the time the first newspapers appeared. The publishers of these papers, influenced to some extent by the example of the contemporary French newspapers which were heavily cultural in content, quite naturally regarded the Arab press as a proper vehicle for Arab literature
>
> (Rugh 2004, p. 7)

It is worth noting that that the literary use of the Arabic language in Arab journalism featured prominently up until today. Historically, Arabic was used strongly in Arab culture through continuous use of poetry and literary expression where, for example, tournaments would be held on the Arabian Peninsula for the strongest poetic expressions. It was therefore regarded as a tool of pride, equivalent to the sword. The Arabic language and its cultural usage include certain characteristics which Patai identifies as exaggeration, overemphasis, overassertion and repetition. Patai notes that "[i]t is almost inevitable that people who are used to expressing their thoughts in such (and much more complex) ready-made phraseology, to which must be added the frequent use of innumerable proverbs and sayings, should be led by their language into exaggeration and overemphasis" (Patai 2007, p. 53). This superlative form of expression has been used in Arab journalism, which leads not only to a distortion of fact-based reporting but emphasises how journalism can be used for emotive purposes. This use of literary expression in news media resonates strongly with the audiences that identify with it, and is a cultural imperative that is fundamental to the construction of soft power.

The culture of journalism which is exercised in the newsroom and which differs from one country to another is, therefore, an important consideration in understanding how soft power is practiced. Yet for mediated soft power to function fully, there is a need to consider not only how the media message is constructed, but also how it is received. It is important, therefore, to take into account social influences on the making of news.

One example, which illustrates the social complexities and pressures facing Arab journalists, is an investigative story that was conducted in collaboration with BBC Arabic entitled *Jordan's Secret* by the reporter Hanan Khandakji. The story uncovered many cases of negligence and daily abuse in private care homes for children with physical and mental disabilities in Jordan. This investigation was prominent at an international level after being aired on BBC Arabic, to the extent that the King of Jordan ordered an inquiry to be conducted within two weeks of the airing of the investigation. An investigation committee was set up and as a result eight private care homes faced allegations of abuse, three centres were closed down and several caseworkers faced criminal charges (Allen 2014). Yet the reporter Khandakji was subject to local social criticism of the story because it showed the veiled Muslim female workers at the homes abusing and hitting the children, thus portraying Arab Muslims in a negative frame to an international audience. Khandakji had to respond to these allegations by pointing out that she herself is veiled, and that the focus was on the abuses, not the workers.

One of the common perceptions when discussing the media's practice of soft power is that is an authoritative form of power that is usually exercised by the state. The Khandakji story reflects that it is not only the state authorities that restrict and pressure news

reporting; society also has its demands and cultural limitations, which in turn impact journalists and impede their work. Joseph Nye highlights that "the instruments of soft power are not fully under the control of governments. Although governments control policy, culture and values are embedded in civil societies" (Nye 2011, p. 83). The social influence and its cultural implications are detrimental to the construction of soft power.

The complex social structures and conditions that exist in different parts of the world mean that journalists find themselves needing to constantly be aware of social demands, limitations and expectations. In the Arab world, for example, there are discourses that are prevalent in Arab culture which can be seen to have an immediate impact on the formation of the news discourse. These discourses reflect the uniformity of belief systems and ideologies. An example of this is the domination of anti-western sentiment in Arab culture (Nydell 2014; Patai 2007). Such discourses are inherently part of the Arab culture, and journalists have had to take them into account when constructing a news report.

Social discourses are not the only influence that affects journalism practices. It is also necessary to take into account the overall historical social experience. To illustrate; Arab societies have collectively endured strenuous political and economic conditions that have had a significant impact on their beliefs, morale and behavior. Such conditions have recently led to an explosion that was witnessed through the 'Arab Spring' uprisings and which has led to a tumultuous environment in the region. Culturally, journalists understand these social parameters and they can be noted in Arab news journalism in the form of massaging public opinion through the use of literary expressions that motivate and evoke emotions. Accordingly, such journalistic practice feeds and breeds social norms, which is a method used by the media to produce specific reactions. Therefore, the social reflection of cultural identity enforces soft power.

## Cultural forces of discursive media power

I have argued elsewhere (Bebawi 2016) that various aspects that affect the formation of a media message, such as routines of news sourcing, the influence of the culture of journalism on reporting practices, and the nature of the media organisation itself and its relationship with its audiences can be labelled as *forces of discursive media power*, which contribute to the construction of particular forms of discursive output. These forces of discursive media power, amongst others, collectively contribute to the formation of social reality.

Simon Cottle (2003) has steered away from overarching and generalized articulations of news production, acknowledging the complex range of influences that play a role in shaping it. In his work he maps the various influences factors, arguing that there is a need to "consider the possibility of the complex interplay between these different factors and the dynamics that come into play within particular fields of production" (Cottle 2003, pp. 4–5). Other scholarly works have also looked into the different influences that affect the journalistic process of news-making. Rodney Benson (2004), for example, has examined the influences that shape mediated political discourse and provides a "recategorization of key influences" on the "journalistic field". Of interest to this chapter, Benson stresses the need for culture to be considered not only as an independent influence but one that is contextually acknowledged in relation to other influences which play a role in the formation of the media message, such as political and economic power. In line with this, Benson provides a classification of the influences that play a role in the formation of the political media message through "(a) commercial or economic, (b) political,

and (c) the inter-organizational field of journalism" (Benson 2004, p. 280). Accordingly, Benson argues for the importance of considering historical and cultural aspects to be factored into these three major influences in order to "explain the origin and solidity (or lack thereof) of the journalistic field's relation to political and economic power" (Benson 2004, p. 280). When considering other influences within the "interorganizational field of journalism", as he puts it, Benson discusses a range of factors shaping news discourses, stressing the complex and multilayered nature of the journalistic field. He argues that the field cannot be diminished into one or two forces of power, since there are a variety of factors that come into play that include "reporter–source relationship" and the "ideological allegiances" between cross-national journalistic fields which give way to various journalistic models, in addition to journalists' professional and individual values (Benson 2004, pp. 275–92).

The news media remains a central source of information for society, and, although we have witnessed the prominence of social media, which reflects society's interests and discourses, it can be argued that it has been used by mainstream media producers to gauge the discursive interest of the audiences. This has, in turn, been reflected in dominant news media (Bebawi 2014). It is important, however, to note that this argument does not assume that the audience is homogenous; rather, it acknowledges the differences that exist, and relates to the dominant positions society has and that can be understood through cultural parameters. Jenny Kitzinger makes a similar observation, stating that "[i]t is important to note that cultural representation and media coverage of any issue are not homogenous" (Kitzinger 1999, p. 13).

In general, and as discussed in this chapter, the cultural imperative needs to be taken into account as a vital component of the conceptualization of the soft power exercised by news media. Not only does it reflect society's ideological positions, views and beliefs, but it also reflects the cultural practice of the media institution and the creators of the media message itself. It is this fine balance between reflecting society's ideological positions and driving public opinion that the media practice as a form of soft power.

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# 12

# LEGAL DIPLOMACY AND THE POSSIBLE APPROACH OF CHINA

*Zhipeng He*

## Introduction

The general trend is that China is and will be constructing and improving rule of law continuously within the country. A series of high-level meetings and documents have published the Chinese government's goal of building the state under the rule of law. Anti-corruption initiatives and legislation will be the means employed to achieve this goal. The construction of the rule of law in China includes practical and theoretical aspects as well as action and expression. And expression of its policies will not only be good for China in realizing its soft and smart power in the international community, but it will also be good for China's developmental environment. In the context of globalization, the kind of discourse that should be used by China – so that foreign governments, experts and peoples across the world can understand and accept China – is an important consideration for Chinese academic circles and the Chinese government. In taking account of the opportunities and environment available to China in establishing itself in the international community, it is necessary to consider how best to interpret the Chinese concept, theory and practice of rule of law to the world.

Therefore, the theory and experience of public diplomacy, which is based on the theory and experience drawn from international politics, diplomacy, international law and international economics, should be employed by China in expressing itself. Attention should also be paid to the discussion on the idea and practice of law in China, that is not only helpful in exploration of China's rule of law, foreign affairs and social development model, but also in furthering development in China.

## The meaning of legal diplomacy

### *Defining legal diplomacy*

Legal diplomacy is a type of diplomatic activity that focuses on the content, mechanism and medium of law. It seeks to insert legal concepts such as rule of law into diplomatic

activities, to transform diplomatic issues into legal issues, to deal with foreign affairs by legal rules and procedures and to resolve diplomatic disputes through legal avenues. Legal diplomacy includes not only traditional diplomacy such as judicial assistance, negotiation and ratification of treaties, international litigation and so on, but also public diplomacy and people-to-people diplomacy that use law as content, mechanism and medium of diplomatic activities.

Stated simply, diplomacy facilitates peaceful transactions between states (Roberts 2009, p. 3). But looked at in detail, it is a complex concept with multiple meanings (Chen, Xiao and Zhao 2008, pp. 2–6). There are many ways to classify diplomacy. If level of participants is the basis of classification, diplomacy can be categorized as head of state (government) diplomacy, ambassador diplomacy, public diplomacy and civil (people-to-people) diplomacy. If the criterion for classification is the number of participating states, the categories may be said to be bilateral diplomacy, multilateral diplomacy, regional diplomacy and global diplomacy. When the means of managing issues is taken as the criterion, the categories would include meeting diplomacy and mediation diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy, economic diplomacy, political diplomacy, military diplomacy, etc. would be categories if the field of diplomacy is regarded as the criterion. Among the many perspectives of diplomacy, legal diplomacy is a new concept. In traditional thinking, diplomacy and law are two concepts with little interaction. They belong to different ways of dealing with relations among states. Traditional international relations focused on war and peace, and traditional diplomacy paid more attention to negotiations (Bernhardt 1987); diplomatic negotiations use state power as the backdrop for the display of diplomatic personnel's demeanor, style and skill. Although there are many differences between war and diplomacy, there is one similarity – power orientation. The stronger the state, the greater will be its say and potential decisiveness; powerless states can only passively accept the decisions of big powers; there is no real justice. In contrast, law is a rule-oriented ideal trying to achieve the goal of fairness in social relations. So law and diplomacy do not directly overlap.

In our times, law has entered into the field of diplomacy and the terms 'law of diplomacy' and 'law on diplomacy' have emerged. The modern diplomatic and legal system was established by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, that mainly establishes the level of diplomatic relations, the duties and powers of the embassy and the consulate, and the privileges and immunities of the diplomatic missions, embassies and related personnel. At the same time, outcomes of diplomatic negotiations can be formalized as law. Therefore, the relationship between law and diplomacy is deepening. Even so, the concept of legal diplomacy is still uncommon and not generally recognized (Verzijl 1969, p. 273). Formulations such as diplomacy of law are also very rare. However, with the development of thinking on global governance and the continuous development of the globalization of law, the connection between diplomacy and the law should not be limited to 'law on diplomacy' or 'diplomacy-based law', but it is necessary and possible to promote and develop 'diplomacy on law' and 'law-based diplomacy'.

## *Various forms of legal diplomacy*

As diplomacy has a tendency to show popularity (Bolewski 2007, pp. 51–72), legal diplomacy has a diversity of forms. In the era of globalization, the number of diplomacy participants increases to include not just governments and government agencies, but also

multinational enterprises, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and citizens who are involved in foreign affairs.

### *Law-based diplomacy*

This type of legal diplomacy means that in overall diplomatic affairs, or in specific fields of foreign affairs, actors use laws as the basic framework of reference, the premise of consideration or code of conduct. "That is, the concept of law and the concept of legal governance throughout the diplomatic activities, and [which is] good at transforming certain diplomatic issues into legal issues, legal procedures and behavior to deal with foreign affairs, the law of diplomatic disputes, a special way of diplomacy"(Zhang 2011, p. 345). In a state where the rule of law is highly esteemed and respected, it is very natural to provide guidelines based on legal rules and the rule of law concept. In the discussion about decision-making in foreign affairs some scholars analyzed the basic elements, such as decision-makers, decision objects, decision-making information, decision-making theory, decision-making methods and decision-making results (Zhang 2007, pp. 57–64). Although law is not explicitly included here, norms and practice of international law constitute important external information and even the external environment. In the era of globalization, new thinking, new ways and new working mechanisms of the law are increasingly needed to deal with political or diplomatic issues. In foreign affairs, treaties and conventions, diplomatic relations and consular relations are the basic contexts for diplomatic activities (Berridge, James and Brian 2001, pp. 143–5).

### *Law-formed diplomacy*

This type of diplomacy refers to the diplomatic activities that states engage in legal form. Treaties between states are established specifically to (a) determine rights and obligations of parties and the model of interaction; (b) maintain the relationship between parties by observing stipulated rules; (c) maintain trust of each other and check the performance of treaties; and (d) solve problems arising during the performance of the treaties.

Also included is arbitration or use of judicial means of dispute resolution; to resolve conflicts by using peaceful and relatively fair, transparent, open measures, giving both parties sufficient opportunity to explain the facts and reasons; to avoid escalation of the conflict, and to maintain a good relationship thereafter; to avoid armed conflicts or other malignant action. Legal negotiations, treaties, judicial assistance, international judiciary, international organizations and international conferences in the field of law are the most common forms of legal diplomacy. Some international agreements are more and more informal, 'governance' playing an increasingly greater and more active role as a means of diplomacy. "In the multilateralist view, an important function of diplomacy is the creation, drafting and amendment of a wide variety of international rules of a normative and regulatory kind, that provide structure in the international system" (Barston 2014, p. 3).

### *Law as the content of diplomacy*

The cooperation, or consultation and exchange, on legal issues in the process of diplomacy, 'legal diplomacy', political diplomacy, economic diplomacy, military diplomacy and so on, are parallel concepts. That is, the diplomatic activities in respect of law seek to achieve a specific political purpose or the strategic intent of a sovereign state. Diplomacy, the use of

legal resources to deal with problems of legal policy, including foreign inputs, vigorously promotes the construction of democracy and legal system in the state and the state of the law, and so on. This is the definition of 'legal diplomacy' from the traditional concept of 'diplomacy'. From the perspective of behavior, it can be divided as described below.

First, there are official legal diplomatic activities by national or regional governments, such as cooperation on judicial and internal affairs of states, in particular civil judicial assistance, criminal judicial assistance – including assistance in the proceedings to assist in the investigation and evidence collection – bilateral agreements on the extradition and repatriation of suspects, cross-border protection of refugees and other related activities. This is a traditional diplomatic level; basically, the state of the state's diplomatic activities.

Second, there are legal diplomatic actions that are taken by institutions supported by the government. These include the publishing of narratives on the law by government-supported media in order to influence the audience's notions of the state, to enhance the image of the state and to increase its appeal. Also included are government-supported departments such as academic research institutions and universities that organize international seminars on legal issues and arrange exchange visits with legal practitioners so as to form a legal image of the three-dimensional action system. These are aspects of public diplomacy that involve communication between national institutions, state-entrusted institutions and foreign audiences.

Third, on the level of civil diplomacy, legal practitioners and law researchers create opportunities to contact each other and to try to understand each other. They employ forms such as legal professionals' visits, transnational legal training and trans-cultural dialogue on law, which may form a transnational legal professional network. This form also enables knowledge and experience sharing. The dimensions and demonstrations of diplomacy are presented in Table 1.3.12.1 as follows.

## The background of China's legal diplomacy

In the structure and the process of global governance, the interconnection of sovereignty among states deepens increasingly. If we observe and analyze the existing cases

*Table 1.3.12.1* Dimensions and demonstrations of diplomacy

| *Actors Dimensions* | *State-to-state* | *State institutions to the people* | *People-to-people* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Basis | International law and domestic law as a pointer of diplomatic activities | The establishment of rule of law notions and the formation of the rule of law culture | Display of legal personality |
| Form | Application of law (legal assistance), dispute settlement | Treatment of foreigners in the form of law | Transnational litigation, signing contracts in accordance with law |
| Contents | To develop and modify the rules | Public knowledge of legal tradition and the culture | Legal cultural exchange, professional services |

*Source*: From author.

and practices in states from the east and west and analyze the factors of national soft power, it is not difficult to find out that a state advocating rule of law may have a higher reputation, and consequently a stronger soft power. Also, it is easy to see that the practice and expression of rule of law in the international community may achieve better social effects. At this point, a proper way to show China's legal position and perspective and make a high-level expression of the Chinese discourse is a very important way to shape China's image as a modern great state and enhance China's soft power, and thus consolidate China's hard power.

Today, all states exist in a deep, complex interdependence in the international system. There is not only a mutual dependence on resources, economy and environment, but also interdependence between domestic and international affairs. In this context, the situation in each state can be described by the concept of 'interconnection of sovereignty'. This is a two-way effect: first, in the era of globalization every sovereign state has been affected by other actors (State Science and Technology Commission 1997), including through the attention of other states, supervision of international organizations and proposals from and disclosure by non-governmental organizations; second, the pressure upon national decision-making brought by the behavior of enterprises. It is true that these behaviors are likely to make states change or adjust their own behavior and decision-making orientation.

Therefore, in the process of globalization, there is a wide and deep connection between national and international policy. On the one hand, the affairs of sovereign states are the concern of the international community, influenced by the international system. On the other hand, sovereign states also influence the processes of the international community constantly through the international system by information and interest networks. Hence, the domestic rule of law and the international rule of law compose a model of mutual influence and promotion in an interactive and continuous way (Zhao 2014).

For China, "with the deepening of economic globalization and China's reform and opening up, the economic system and the legal system is in the critical period of reform and reconstruction. … [I]nternational treaties and international organizations are expanding international law to every field of domestic legal system" (Yu 2004). For example, China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) not only means the formation of a number of economic and trade norms, but also means re-establishment of the world trade order (Cass, Williams and Barker 2003).

In the system of the rule of law in China, we need 'legal diplomacy' as a core concept. Therefore it is necessary to explore the connotation, extension and character of the concept.

## Demonstrating a great civilization: the target of China's legal diplomacy

China has become more and more positively involved in international affairs. Since 2006, China has expressed a highly cooperative and participatory attitude to the North Korean and Iranian nuclear issues and Sultanate of Darfur crisis. In these cases, China has not only shown a trend of consultation with other major powers, but expressed the attitude of upholding the international system (Ahmed 2008). In fact, since its reform and opening up, China has become more and more active in participating in international legal mechanisms; this can be fully reflected in the process of China's accession to the WTO.

However, the use of international law is still a problem that China must face and solve. In order to solve this problem, it is urgent for China to express a positive position on international law in the international community through Chinese discourse (Cai 2014) and provide a convincing agenda for the construction and development of the international legal system and global governance (Commission on Global Governance 1995; Rosenau 1999).

China's expression on rule of law to the world would include the government's official expression as well as scholars' professional expressions as expressions of subjects. From the dimension of objects of expression, it is not only for foreign publics, foreign governments and officials, but also for the public and professionals in China. From the dimension of content, legal expression of China should include the following aspects.

First, there should be an analysis of the idea of rule of law in China. China's idea on rule of law is composed of several parts that should all be regarded as contributing to Chinese theory on rule of law: the traditional 'Chinese legal system'; traditional Chinese culture at large; the western tradition on rule of law; orthodox Marx's Communist theory and its development in China. Thus it is quite clear that the Chinese idea is different from western ideas, and it is necessary to explain to the world China's unique understanding of rule of law. This can be subsumed under 'socialist rule of law with Chinese characteristics'; that will be a Chinese contribution to the international culture of the rule of law.

Second, the experiences gleaned and lessons learned in the process of constructing rule of law in China need consideration; China has accumulated a great deal of experience as well as lessons in the fields of human rights, democracy, economy and administration, anti-corruption and judicial reform. To demonstrate these practices to the international community is a very important part of the legal diplomacy of China.

Third, the macro estimates of the basic constellation of the international community, the basic stages of international relations, the development orientation of international affairs and the evaluation of international structure need to be considered. This is the legal diplomacy on international relations at the overall level, to provide a direction and a road map.

Fourth, the proposals and measures to design, construct or reform specific legal systems, organizations and institutions of international relations need consideration. This is at the middle level of various fields in international relations. China can show its own proposals and ideas in many international issue areas, especially arms control, environment protection, marine control, Arctic and Antarctic regions, outer space, internet communications, public health, cross-border trade, direct investment, financial markets, cultural exchanges and other aspects of the international system.

Fifth, the attitude to specific disputes and events that occur on the international stage need to be considered. That is, at the level of micro affairs, China expresses its views on settlement and processing. In the process of current international relations there will be a great number of global, regional and bilateral events. Some of these events need to be supported by China's vote in international decision-making mechanisms; some need China's favorable attitude and expectations; some are directly related to China. All these need China to form its own views and countermeasures.

In summary, in the contemporary context, rule of law includes measures within a state as well as arrangements beyond the borders of a state. As a state actively constructing and promoting rule of law, China must fully express its position in these two areas and demonstrate its efforts with facts and actions.

## China's rising international status and defects in legal diplomacy

For a period of time, China lacked discourse expression in some international situations due to a series of reasons related to history, ideas, knowledge and personnel (Rawnsley 2009, p. 282). This not only leads to suspicions by the international community about China, resulting in the theory of China's threat and its expansion into some states, but it also affects China's own interests. Therefore, although China has been a big player in the field of economics and trade (Moore 2002), from the perspective of modern politics and culture, it is not really a great soft power (Liang 2014).

### *The low level of legal diplomacy of China in the process of global governance*

Because of China's important resources, population, economy and history, its crucial role in today's international system has been widely recognized (Huang 2013). Chinese leaders, government officials and scholars have fully recognized the necessity and significance of participating in global governance, and put participation into practice in many situations. However, it is worth mentioning that China has the problem of insufficient participation and inadequate preparation in the lawmaking and amending process for many international rules. This situation can be deduced from conditions such as China lacking knowledge of international law, its political position being unclear and its interests not being quite determined. In many international affairs China is more willing to solve the problem by means of political negotiation. It has often failed to clarify its position and point of view; China's discourse in the process of global governance is still quite inadequate (Cai 2004; Pang and Wang 2013).

The expression of China has not really reached the level requisite for international communication of domestic governance. In this regard, China is still relatively weak because its capacity is still under development. Actively promoting legal diplomacy may make up for shortcomings and enhance the level of Chinese diplomacy in this area. For example, China has made great progress in the field of human rights. Of course, when we say that the level of human rights protection in China has been greatly improved, we do not really mean that the human rights protection in China has reached a completely satisfactory level; in fact, this is far from the case. At the same time, it is hard to say that any state has a perfect protective environment in respect of human rights. However, from the perspective of historical development we would say that the progress of human rights in China has been enormous. At this point, it is quite necessary for the Chinese government to keep the international community informed about China's human rights initiatives and achievements. Of course, some efforts have already been made known to the international public, such as through the annual Beijing Human Rights Forum. Also there is the white paper on the achievements of human rights in China and the publication of books on human rights in English (China Society for Human Rights Studies 2011; Chen and Ren 2012). These are all noteworthy, but they are not enough. China has not really found the proper channels of public diplomacy, and effectively used the appropriate media, to express China's active participation in global governance for human rights. China has also not found the appropriate method to gain public recognition and support in this area in international society. China's current efforts may not have more powerful effects than the deleterious effects of the annual human rights report on China of the US. They are

also less powerful than the seemingly neutral but, in my view, negative news that CNN and other media release. This situation has caused China to be misunderstood in the international community and invited a 'China threat theory' that does not permit China's role in the international community to appear in international discourse.

### *The consequences of the lack of legal diplomacy in China*

If China is not able to use legal diplomacy properly, the misunderstanding of governments and publics of many states towards China will be inevitable. Some may take the attitude that China is not a state with a high level of legal culture, one that is easy to talk to and get along with. The serious consequence of this situation is that the international community may regard China as very arrogant, and ignorant of and not respectful of international law.

China has been involved in disputes over the Diaoyu Islands with Japan and Huangyan Island with the Philippines, as well as in similar disputes with Vietnam. China's behavior has elicited increasing numbers of warnings of China's threat from many western states. Although some experts have clearly recognized that the Diaoyu Islands issue between China and Japan cannot be resolved through legal means and that it must rely on political means, the public's understanding may be very simple. When Japanese officials expressed, in the United Nations, their will to resolve disputes in accordance with international law, especially the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, China simply emphasized the international order after the Second World War; the necessity to safeguard the achievements of the victorious states. Also, when the Philippines relied on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to establish an arbitration tribunal so as to clarify the legal position of relevant waters in accordance with international law, China's expression of its position of non-acceptance and non-participation appeared to be rather pallid. In these cases the international public may think that China does not trust the rules of the international community and has little intention of compliance but would rather solve such problems by means of political power. As China is becoming stronger and stronger, in their view, China will be a threat to neighboring states as well as to the international community (Fishman 2005, pp. 1–19).

There is a view that development of the 'China threat' theory is connected to a large extent with certain western states' stereotypes of China, themselves connected with the intention of some western governments and media to foster ill will towards China. Such states do not want to see China's rapid development and they deliberately discredit China. But what seems to be equally undeniable is that China's own position in the legal diplomatic world is not clear; public diplomacy to shape the image is very poor, especially in international affairs for the international governance constellation and system. The inconsistency of position interpretation and the weakness of legal discourse coax the expansion of the 'China threat' meme. However, on 7 December 2014, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs was authorized to issue the 'Position Paper of the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Matter of Jurisdiction in the South China Sea Arbitration Initiated by the Republic of the Philippines', which elaborated on China's position that the arbitration tribunal should not have jurisdiction and motivation from a legal perspective. This was a historical step in pushing forward China's legal diplomacy in international affairs.

### *The reason for China's defects in legal diplomacy*

There are many reasons for China's insufficient legal expression in international affairs. From a historical perspective, China's relatively passive attitude and marginal position

in the international system is related to China's experience from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. During this period, the international system bestowed significant humiliation and loss on China (He 2013; He 2014; Horner 2009, p. 166). If we set history aside, there are still many contemporary reasons. The lack of awareness and understanding of the importance of communicating and expressing in legal terms is the foremost factor in the low-level legal diplomacy of China. At present, there are still some incorrect understandings in China's global vision and global conceptualization. Some people still have the idea of isolationism, failing to fully consider the impact of international affairs on domestic affairs, as well as domestic affairs leading to international reaction today. Sometimes they rigidly adhere to traditional thinking; some are also satisfied with the status quo in foreign relations; they just want to muddle along, doing their work with complacent and conservative ideas. It is just such a mentality that has resulted in global behavior not having been fully established.

Sometimes when China's foreign affairs seem tough, the main problem is not the Chinese government intending to appear arrogant or biased, but China's inadequate understanding of international norms and the models to deal with international affairs. Similarly, sometimes China seems to be lacking in views on international affairs or failing to explain its position in a legal way, not because of cowardice, but because of China's lack of understanding of the relevant institutions. Hence, on the many occasions on which China was not able to express its views well, it was not because it dare not speak, or would not speak, but rather because it did not know what to say and how to speak. This situation of lack of adequate information and interest-orientation directly weakens China's self-confidence in legal discourse and legal diplomacy.

Also, the low degree of Chinese legal expression in terms of clarity and determinacy is related to the lack of professionalism, and unclearness of strategic targets in international issues. So far, there are some departments of the Chinese government that continue to treat overseas participation in relevant meetings or negotiations as a staff benefit of tourism. Viewed as welfare, it is necessary to consider a fair distribution, not just repeated distribution to a certain person or a group of persons. If they cannot participate repeatedly it is not reasonable to expect participants to garner adequate information and knowledge and develop a clear understanding of China's position over time. Furthermore, rotational systems also make negotiators lose interest in and confidence about follow-up. So a very regrettable phenomenon is that when China's delegates take part in international meetings and negotiations, they have nothing to say at meetings or the negotiating table respectively. Even when they occasionally speak, their speeches are on high principles; the discourse is of the 'Tai Chi' type in which concrete directions are often unknown. And when the meeting ends, many members of the Chinese delegation are full of vitality, going shopping or relaxing near the meeting site. This situation illustrates that China is still a developing state. Going abroad is often regarded as a rare opportunity. It also shows that many persons who are responsible for international negotiations and the formulation of international rules pay scant attention to the influence they can wield for China (Deng 2014, pp. 103–4). If this situation does not change, it will be exceedingly difficult for China to improve its level of discourse and participation in international governance in law.

The deficiency of legal diplomacy in China, a deficiency that signifies a weakness of China's international discourse in law, reflects the lack of awareness of and ability to engage effectively in traditional and public diplomacy. The lack of participation, and the expressions resulting in misunderstandings, may be attributed to the weakness of China's

public diplomacy. The consequence has been that China has met many obstacles, doubts and hostility in international affairs that might have been avoided.

## Conclusion: enhancing China's legal diplomacy

Based on the preceding discussion, we have a clear understanding of the situation and the position of China in the process of global governance, and found that there are some problems with the legal diplomacy of China in the framework of the international rule of law. In view of this situation, it is necessary for China to improve its capability of law and public diplomacy. It is necessary for China to face the challenges of the new century, to participate actively in international rule of law and to express itself in a good way about its endeavors in enhancing domestic rule of law. China should learn from the experiences of the European Union (Madsen 2010) and the US (McKee 2011) on legal diplomacy to show its confidence and awareness of rule of law to the world. At the domestic level of the rule of law, China should not only have the courage to express its achievements, but also to highlight existing problems and shortcomings. Just as Deng Xiaoping mentioned more than half a century ago, "[i]t is impossible for us to make a serious self-criticism without a disclosure in newspapers. If you are afraid of being used by the enemy that is to bind your hands and feet" (Deng 2014, p. 172). At the same time, it is necessary for China to take a positive attitude to global governance.

> Contemporary international relations not only cover the traditional national and state relations, but also increasingly include transnational and global issues, the accumulation of human interdependence. The way of thinking when dealing with global problems has been changed from zero-sum game to cooperation and win-win.
>
> (Yang 2005, p. 82)

The key for China to improve its legal diplomacy capabilities is to form an effective expression mechanism, especially through personnel training, theory construction and practical performance, to enhance the expression of legal ideas and positions. Much remains to be done in academic and practical aspects of legal knowledge and legal thinking, but efforts must be made for China to enhance itself so as to be a welcome global partner to states and peoples around the world.

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# 13

# THE SOFT POWER OF ELEPHANTS

*John Simons*

In 1984 a young Sri Lankan diplomat was facing a tricky problem. All three of the US TV networks had asked for visas to send teams to Colombo in anticipation of violence on the anniversary of a major civil war clash the previous year. A group of American journalists had arrived in Colombo and were asking to go north to the Jaffna peninsula. The problem was that the Tamil Tiger separatist movement was, at that time, beginning seriously to wage the war that would disrupt Sri Lankan society for the next 20 years or more. The last thing that Sri Lanka needed, dependent as it was on the tourist dollar and its reputation as the peaceful Buddhist isle of Serendip, was potentially hostile and, at the very least, embarrassing coverage of a nasty civil war in the making. But Sri Lanka was a democracy and a free country and simply forbidding travel would be as bad in the terms of news reports as allowing the journalists to see the problem at first hand – and this was before issues of their personal security were taken into account. 'Journalists Killed in Sri Lanka Terror Attack' was not something that our young diplomat wanted his political bosses to see on US TV or to read in the foreign press. So he temporized while he thought up a plan.

What he came up with was to ask the journalists to be patient while transport and security arrangements were made. He asked the network managers what would happen if there was no violence: would their camera crews find their way to the beach at the network's expense? In the meantime, he asked if perhaps they would like to visit the elephant orphanage at Pinnawala on the road between Colombo and Kandy. The orphanage is an important Sri Lankan institution. It was founded in 1975 to deal with the problem of elephants orphaned by accidents or by clashes with farmers anxious to protect their livelihoods against what they see as significant agricultural pests.[1] The orphanage thus contributes to elephant conservation, to education about elephants (it is used – together with compensation schemes – to help farmers better understand how they might learn to live with elephants) and, of course, it is a major contributor to the tourist economy. There can be few visitors to Sri Lanka now who do not include it on their itinerary. Finally, it acts as a symbol of Sri Lankan culture, where both the dominant Buddhist and the minority

Hindu religions place elephants in a special position. For example, in the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy there is a separate museum dedicated to telling the story and displaying the relics of Rajah, an elephant who lived in the temple for many years and who carried the holy tooth of the Lord Buddha in the annual procession. So in the context of Sri Lanka the elephant orphanage not only displayed the humanitarian and spiritual side of the local culture, it also, more profoundly, was intimately connected with the deep history and cultural development of a very ancient society.

The journalists went to the elephant orphanage and, predictably enough, they were entranced by the whole experience, from fully grown elephants taking their sedate bath in the river to babies being fed milk from oversized bottles. The time had passed quickly and now they had to go back to the United States without their visit to Jaffna, which was not on the cards. There was no violence, so they were taken to Pinnawala by arrangement of the Director of Information. But what would be the outcome? The three major US TV networks carried warm and glowing stories about baby elephants being cared for, about the humane society in what was still perceived as the developing world, and not a word about war, terrorism or inter-communal oppression and violence. The visit to the elephant orphanage had, in practice, proved to be a projection of Sri Lankan soft power which replaced the alternative vision of the exercise of hard power as the Sri Lankan armed forces began to engage in open conflict with the separatist Tamil army and its sometimes more, sometimes less, explicit supporters from the regional superpower India.

Australians don't necessarily think very much of Thailand beyond the less salubrious bars of Bangkok and the beaches of Phuket, or memories of the death marches inflicted on Australian prisoners of war by the Japanese during the Second World War. But when they visit Sydney's Taronga Zoo and, specifically, its elephant enclosure with its multi-million-dollar views of the harbour bridge and the city skyline, they are encouraged to think differently of another Asian neighbour. Because the elephants they see are Thai elephants and the fact that Taronga Zoo is able to maintain an elephant breeding programme is due to the regular gifts of elephants from the King and people of Thailand. The 13th of March has, since 1998, been designated 'Thai Elephant Day' and the herd which arrived in 2006 has been the basis of the elephant breeding programme. In Thailand, as in Sri Lanka, elephants form a very real part of society as both wild and working animals. And, again as in Sri Lanka, the fundamentally Buddhist character of Thai culture also sets out a special place for elephants. So the gift of elephants offers a very specific and apt projection of Thai soft power to an important trading partner and a reminder that while historically the Kings of Thailand are said to have given gifts of expensive-to-maintain white elephants to those they wished to punish, the modern King offers elephants, a symbol of his realm, to his friends for wholly beneficent purposes.[2]

In Europe there is a long history of elephant gifts – Adul Abbas, for example, was an elephant given to Charlemagne by the fabled caliph of *One Thousand and One Nights*, Haroun al Rashid. The *Chronica Maiora* of Matthew Paris (composed between 1240 and 1259) has a wonderful illustration of an elephant which was owned by the city of Cremona and which had a band of musicians in its howdah. This elephant was mobilized to welcome Richard Earl of Cornwall as he passed through Italy on his way home from the Crusades and is an impressive projection of civic soft power. Paris also speaks of other elephants in his chronicle – there was the elephant given to Frederick II by 'the Sultan of Babylon' in 1229 and, nearer to home, the elephant which was given to Henry III by King Louis IX of France in 1254 (King Louis having been given it by the Emirs of Egypt as a peace offering).[3] Hanno was a white elephant given to Pope Leo X by King

Manuel I of Portugal.[4] As late as 1860 an elephant, which was called Prince Albert, arrived as a gift to Queen Victoria from a loyal subject in India and was promptly packed off to London Zoo.[5] The point is that elephants make an impressive gift and an impressive statement and offer the most obvious example of animals given as gifts to project soft power throughout history. This chapter will consider other such examples and show how, in various ways, the bodies of animals can form the medium for the projection of national cultures, of the magnanimity of rulers, and of the simple process by which a diplomatic or politically motivated gift can be used as a term in the grammar of a far more elaborate language by which soft power, a force of attraction, is offered as the alternative to the harsher manifestations of national character through economic muscle or military posturing. In addition, for countries like Sri Lanka or Thailand they offer the only real option in any dealings with much richer or much more powerful foreign countries. Where soft power is the only resort animals provide a ready and easy way for its projection and exchange.

This chapter looks at soft power through the lens of the use of animals to project national and other attractions. Since the 1990s there has been an increasing focus on issues relating to animals in cultural studies and history in particular. This has been recognized as the 'animal turn' – a depressing name as it reminds us that some academic fields are incapable of the vaguest forays into originality without finding a label or identifying a movement. This tendency was started by a relatively small number of scholars – who were interested in advocating for animals by looking at social phenomena by addressing the impact of historical forces or cultural representations on the bodies of animals – and not by people who had any interest in movements or labels.[6] However, what has emerged is also an increasing number of studies in which established fields are considered through an engagement with animals. This chapter is such a consideration and such an engagement and, for this reason, it will be largely a narrative account of the ways animals have figured in the display and projection of soft power and not a deep analysis of either political science or the sociology of intercultural exchange.

I said above that for small countries soft power may be the only resort and, in such cases, animals may offer a valuable resource. This can go wrong. For example, in 2010 Tourism Australia decided to promote Australia in the United States by the display of a kangaroo in Los Angeles. Video footage shows a very distressed animal swaying to and fro and crouching down in a display of fear. At the very worst this was the onset of myopathy, which can lead to death often as much as a month in the future. There was an outcry from Australia and there was little in the way of a convincing defence from Tourism Australia beyond a claim that the American Humane Society had approved and supervised the display. This didn't help beyond stimulating the common sense response that it was unlikely that inspectors from the American Humane Society, well-meaning though they might be, would know much about kangaroos. So an attempt to display Australian soft power failed rather grimly.[7]

A country which has a good deal of hard power but which has been relatively successful in projecting its attractiveness via soft power is, of course, the People's Republic of China (PRC). In the 1970s the post-Mao *rapprochement* with the rest of the world was led by table tennis teams but very soon it was realized that the most powerful weapon in the Chinese soft power arsenal was the panda.[8] Chinese politicians may have noted that in 1966 the British government had essayed some panda-led diplomacy with the Soviet Union when they sent their female panda (Chi Chi) to mate with the male panda (An An) in Moscow Zoo. This didn't work (the pandas were clearly cold warriors and frustrated

their masters' vain hope that they might begin to defrost the political climate) but, for that time, it was a relatively rare example of a NATO power attempting to find common ground with the Soviet Union and pandas appear to have offered the ideal medium for this projection. Especially since in 1968 and 1969 An An paid a reciprocal visit to Chi Chi in London. Again the attempts to cajole the pair into breeding were unsuccessful but the message that it was possible for Cold War enemies to collaborate was a valuable one and an instructive example for anyone who cared to learn from it of the potential of animals to conduct negotiations within a framework of soft power.[9]

The People's Republic of China has a monopoly on the world's panda supply and is, therefore, capable of using pandas in a number of ways. It can demonstrate its commitment to the cause of nature conservation by panda breeding programmes and the development of protected habitat and ranges. This is especially important as the Maoist 'Great Leap Forward' was radically destructive of habitat – people were made so hungry by the famine caused by the catastrophe created as Mao tried out his theories on human beings that they even killed and ate pandas – and has been characterised as 'Mao's War on Nature.'[10] The PRC can use the panda as a logo for other forays into the soft power game such as the Beijing Olympics of 2012 where a giant panda known as Jing Jing was one of the Fuwa or mascots. Olympic Games are, of course, wonderful vehicles for soft power projections. The ill-fated 1980 Moscow Summer Games had a friendly bear called Mischa as its mascot while the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics had, *inter alia*, a polar bear. The mascots of the 2016 Olympics hosted by Brazil were curious hybrids of various jungle animals – the Brazilians are here projecting an attraction based on the very jungles that are progressively being destroyed by chronic central and provincial government failure (whether driven by incompetence, lack of capability or corruption scarcely matters) to regulate logging. The PRC can develop a tourist industry based primarily on the desire to see pandas but which also offers foreign visitors the opportunity to see other positive aspects of modern China, in much the same way as the American journalists were taken to the Pinnawala elephant orphanage. Pandas are thus used both as a soft power projection and as a source of foreign currency through the tourist dollar – sometimes simultaneously – through long-term hiring of animals to zoos in various overseas countries.

Currently, for example, there is a pair of pandas – Wang Wang and Funi – in Adelaide Zoo in south Australia. These are there for ten years on the basis of a very substantial leasing payment – one million Australian dollars per year. Visitors to the zoo can interact with the pandas in many ways including, at a cost of AU$495, going into their cage and helping to feed them their breakfast. What is very clear from all the publicity and infrastructure surrounding this display is not the commercial nature of the deal between China and the Adelaide Zoo but rather the attractiveness of China. Indeed, the special enclosure that has been built to house these animals at a cost of eight million dollars (plus AU$18.9 million for general improvements to the zoo on the back of the pandas) is described as providing visitors with "an immersive experience of the Chinese Highlands". The Adelaide pandas represent, very clearly, China at its best – a home of rare and cuddly animals which are being looked after to the best of everyone's ability. As such they offer a very explicit example of the appropriation of the animal body and experience to project soft power.[11] Other examples of such collaborations include the following pairs: Conservation Center for the Giant Panda in Wolong (CCGPW) and the San Diego Zoological Society; Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding (CRBGPB) and Zoo Atlanta; CCGPW and the National Zoo in Washington DC; CRBGPB and Memphis Zoo; and CCGPW and the Schönbrunn Zoo in Vienna. Of course, since 1966

the globally recognizable logo of the World Wildlife Fund (now the World Wildlife Fund for Nature) has been a stylised panda and this has also done the Chinese panda-based soft power projection no harm whatsoever.[12]

But what is the dark side of the use of animals in this way? I would argue that we find this in the use of orangutans as a soft power projection of Indonesia and almost every use of wild animals to present positive images of the various countries of eastern and southern Africa.

In the case of the Indonesian orangutans the minimal efforts made by successive Indonesian governments to create protected habitats or to control logging and palm oil plantations have now been supplemented by international charities who are being enabled to buy (no land grants here even to charities) acreage of forest to create reservations for the fast-declining orangutan population. This is probably one of the least attractive wildlife narratives in the world and any reading of the unfolding story demonstrates a catalogue of neglect and failure at every level of government. Nevertheless, one of the Indonesian soft power projections depends entirely on the presentation of Indonesia as a place of natural wonders where rare animals (but why are they rare and getting rarer, one might ask?) can be experienced and enjoyed in their true habitat. In other words, the vehicle of soft power projection is located in the very worst aspects of Indonesian ecological and conservation practice and the rarity of the landscapes and animals, which is presented as part of the attraction, is actually the result of those things which make Indonesia such a bad global citizen.

The case of the use of wild animals to project the attractiveness of African countries offers a differently nuanced version of the same kind of bad soft power. If the Indonesian use of nature and animals grows out of an opportunistic exploitation of the tourist dollar, the African situation is more complex. In the first place the iconic role of the big cats, elephants, giraffes, rhinos and hippos that constitute the pantheon of the sub-Saharan soft power menagerie came into being during the relatively short time that African countries were colonized by Europeans.[13] Although Africa has been the source of the big wild animals needed for power projections since the days of the Pharoahs and the Roman Emperors these animals did not play any significant role (except as occasional dangers or as food) in African society. When the Europeans arrived, the practice of big game hunting for sport or science (and it is interesting just how closely these two seemingly different things could go together on occasion) began on a large scale. The elevation of large wild animals to iconic status was entirely a function of a display of hard power by which the mass slaughter of the fauna not only demonstrated to the colonized subjects the capabilities (for violence), skills and bravery (it takes a lot of courage to pick off a lion at long range with a high-powered rifle) of the hunters but also reminded them in a none-too-subtle way what might happen to them if they decided to turn rebellious (which would be interpreted as going feral).[14]

In Australia – where the lack of big fierce animals meant that a serious hunting culture was never established – this reminder was made in the most explicit terms of all through the urban myth that Indigenous Australians had, until 1967, legal status only under a 'Flora and Fauna Act'.[15] This act did not in fact exist, although many Australians believe it did and some older Indigenous people believe they grew up under it. What is certainly true is that until the 1967 referendum gave them citizenship Indigenous Australians had no more civil rights than the fauna and, in the nineteenth century, there is no doubt that there were expeditions to 'hunt' Indigenous people and a sympathetic colonial administrator, Royal Commissioner Archibald Meston, recorded that they were like "hunted wild beasts."[16] Human beings (Kalahari Bushmen) had been hunted by the Dutch in southern

Africa since the 1650s and, incredibly, it appears that the last hunting permit to shoot and kill a Bushman was issued in South Africa as late as 1937. In Australia this human hunting was less explicitly organized and was most often the direct action of armed mobs of colonists seeking to drive Indigenous people away from their county. Nevertheless, activities which were essentially hunts did happen, especially in Tasmania. Indigenous art is now an important aspect of the Australian soft power projection in its iconography – all manner of Australian organisations have an Indigenous-styled logo – and as an attractor of the tourist dollar. According to the Australian Council for the Arts' annual report for 2015 (*Arts Nation*), 10 per cent of all tourists now participate in some kind of Indigenous art-related activity during their visit to Australia.

Botswana Tourism makes much of the De Graaf Grassland Bushman Lodge where guests can meet "our" San people (Bushmen). Somewhat ingenuously, the website adds that 'this gives the San people a feeling of appreciation as their culture is on the verge of extinction'. So the Bushmen (who are constantly subjected to persistent government pressure and persecution to force them to move away from their traditional Kalahari territory in order to tidy it up for tourists – this is probably the sole reason why the San people's culture is on the verge of extinction) are explicitly presented in Botswana Tourism's publicity (and tourism agencies are, perhaps, the most explicit windows onto any country's soft power projection) as one of the main attractions of Botswana. In both the Australian and the Botswanan case it seems that two things are happening. First, a soft power projection is being used to conceal a national disgrace. Second, and more subtly perhaps, an ethnic minority group's culture is being given a positive spin through soft power projections only after any threat that that group might pose to the majority interest has been thoroughly neutralized.

Once the colonists left, big game hunting has continued to be an important part of the tourism offer of nations like Kenya and Zimbabwe while, at the same time, both countries make much of their commitments to wildlife conservation and large-scale game reserves – where the tourist dollar is also attracted through safaris and wildlife tourism where the only shooting is done with cameras. A public commitment to conservation, real or imagined, is easy to understand, especially in a context where a none-too-democratic African country with limited hard power is attempting to project its attractiveness. The continued opportunity offered to wealthy tourists to kill the very animals that are supposed to be the subject of conservation is harder to explain without recourse to colonial history. At the time of writing, a global scandal is raging over the American dentist Dr Walter Palmer who paid, allegedly, US$50,000 to kill a lion in Zimbabwe (quite legitimately, it appears) but strayed over the legal line when he mistakenly killed a lion in an area which was protected. And not any lion. He killed Cecil. A lion with a name. Cecil lived on a game reserve and was part of a scientific study by Oxford University itself. So this was a big mistake by all concerned. The Zimbabwean government is reacting to this crisis in an interesting way: it is making much of the prosecution of the professional hunter who led Dr Palmer to the place where the lion was killed for failing to prevent an illegal hunt.

This opens up several layers of complexity: on the one hand the Zimbabwean government makes tourist dollars by allowing a legitimate (if arguably deeply immoral) business of the killing of otherwise endangered animals for large sums of money. On the other hand, it is able to turn abuse of this system to its advantage by using its legal processes to show that it will not tolerate crimes against protected animals. And this is very helpful to a country which is widely seen to have institutionalized governmental neglect of the rule of law. A third dimension is that the soft power projection of Zimbabwe as a country that

conserves and protects the wild animals who live within its borders is not only maintained but even reinforced by an incident which undermines the whole fiction. And, of course, the existence of this hunting/conservation dichotomy is only made possible in the first place by the appropriation of a colonial manifestation of hard power and its conversion into a soft power projection.[17]

In this short piece I have suggested that the bodies and lives of animals are easily appropriated as the bearers of the metaphors of soft power projections. Many countries have national emblems which associate them with a particular animal. Some of these are protected (for example, the national animal of Afghanistan and Pakistan is the snow leopard, and the okapi is the national animal of the Democratic Republic of Congo). Others are of more ambiguous status – in Australia the national animals are the emu and the kangaroo, and it is not uncommon to find meat from these creatures on the plate at what are known as 'coat of arms' dinners. Others are clearly totemic – the Russian bear, the Albanian eagle (in Albanian the country is called Shqipëri, which translates as something like 'Land of Eagles'), the Ethiopian lion and the Indian Bengal tiger – all, one assumes, encourage the spectator to think that the country and its people have the qualities (strength, wisdom, fierceness) of the animals which have been adopted. Any proposition of the connection between animals and soft power projections is not hard to sustain into argument when we consider examples like the elephants given as gifts, pandas travelling inter-continentally and trans-hemispherically to live in zoos in the pursuit of breeding and conservation projects or kangaroos naïvely put on distressing public display to suggest that a country is a good place to visit.

More interesting is the dark side of the soft power projection and the impact that this has on animals. The more Indonesia is able to deploy the gentle faces of orangutans in its tourism posters the less it actually has to do to conserve them, to combat illegal logging or to control the palm oil plantations which are destroying their habitat. The more countries like Kenya and Zimbabwe present the great game reserves and the big wild animals as projections of their attractiveness the less they have to do to control poaching for sport or for the collection of Chinese medicines. And, at the human level, the more Botswana presents the fragile culture of 'our' San people as an aspect of its attractiveness the more it can prosecute campaigns of persecution and eviction against those very people.

A similar point could be made about gorilla tourism in the Congo, Uganda and especially Rwanda, or okapi-centred wildlife tours into the Democratic Republic of Congo, where game reserves have been subject to the systematic depredation of militias, hunters, miners and all manner of opportunists with significant loss of life among the fragile animal populations. In these cases there seems to be a direct reverse or negative correlation between the propensity of a country to deploy a specific animal in its soft power projection and its desire (or, to be fair, in cases like the Congo where government resources are thinly stretched at the best of times and the poachers are better-armed than the soldiers sent to protect the reserves, its capability) to protect, develop and care for the animals concerned. This may be a fault line in soft power between richer and poorer countries or it may be the malevolent prodigy of the origin of these projections in oppressive colonial practices (along the argumentative lines that two wrongs don't make a right).

Contemplating animals in their symbolic interactions with human beings is a rewarding thing to do. One learns a great deal about animals and even more, much of it not very pleasant, about human beings. When one looks at animals in the context of soft power projections what stands out is a dichotomy between good and bad soft power. But also a distinction appears to emerge which draws uncomfortable attention to the difference

between a soft power projection as a classic attempt to deploy the attractiveness of a country or culture and something which looks more like a propagandistic attempt to conceal an unfortunate truth.

## Notes

1 The elephant orphanage is now a major Sri Lankan institution attracting not only thousands of tourists but also a multi-national army of mainly young volunteers who pay for the privilege of working there.
2 Unfortunately, the recent history of the Taronga elephant herd has not been a happy one and problems in managing the elephants have led to a decision to split it up, with some animals being moved to the more open plan zoo at Dubbo. This has drawn some negative criticism based on the importance of family groups to elephants, but the zoo argues that it is replicating herd dynamics and optimizing the conservation project.
3 Cassidy, R and Clasby, M 2012, 'Matthew Paris and Henry III's Elephant', viewed 16 April 2016, <www.finerollshenry3.org.uk>. For more on Henry's elephant and other animal gifts which came to the Kings and Queens of England during the Middle Ages see Hahn, D 2003, *The tower menagerie*, Simon & Schuster, London.
4 Bedini, S 1997, *The Pope's elephant*, Carcanet, Manchester. Manuel found that projecting soft power using animals worked well so he later sent a rhinoceros. Leo X was a Medici Pope and his family were of sufficient power to be courted in other ways with animal gifts. Most famous was their giraffe, given to Lorenzo de Medici by al-Ashraf Qaitbay, Sultan of Egypt, in 1486. See Belozerskaya, M 2006, *The Medici giraffe*, Little, Brown and Co., New York.
5 See Simons, J 2008, *Rossetti's wombat*, Middlesex University Press, London.
6 Simons, J 2002, *Animal rights and the politics of literary representation*, Palgrave, London, was one of the first books in this field.
7 See Simons, J 2012, *Kangaroo*, Reaktion, London, for an analysis of this episode.
8 This, and many other matters relating to pandas in the People's Republic of China, is considered in depth in Nichols, H 2010, *The way of the panda*, Profile Books, London.
9 Op. cit., pp. 118–137.
10 Shapiro, J 2001, *Mao's war on nature: politics and the environment in revolutionary China*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
11 The economic traffic is not all one way and the state of South Australia expects to earn an extra AU$192 million dollars a year in panda tourism-related expenditure during Wang Wang and Funi's stay.
12 See Nichols, op. cit., pp. 98, 101 and 116–17.
13 In many cases (Uganda, for example) European colonization lasted less than a century. The destruction of traditional African society and the post-colonial woes which continue to beset the continent are more readily to be found in the activities of Arab slave traders and their African allies over many more years than the European colonial presence and, indeed, in some cases (the various British interventions in the Sudan are an example) that presence was motivated by a desire to stamp out a slave trade which, shamefully, still continues.
14 See Mackenzie, JM 1988, *Empire of nature*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, Kete, K (ed.) 2011, *A cultural history of animals in the age of empire*, Berg, Oxford and Kalof, L 2007, *Looking at animals in human history*, Reaktion, London).
15 Although there is hunting in Australia (especially kangaroo hunting), the settler population had to introduce foxes (with disastrous consequences for future generations) to give themselves something to chase.
16 See Taylor, C 2003, 'Constructing aboriginality: Archibald Meston's literary journalism 1870–1924', *Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature*, vol. 2, pp. 121–39 and Taylor, C 2004, 'Prologue to protectorship: Archibald Meston's public life in far North Queensland, 1882–1888', *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland*, vol. 18, no. 11, pp. 478–91.
17 For a survey of lion conservation and lion hunting in modern Africa see Jackson, D 2010, *Lion*, Reaktion, London.

## SECTION IV

# The technological turn

# 14

# TECHNOLOGIES OF INFLUENCE

## The materiality of soft power in public diplomacy (section overview)

*Craig Hayden**

### Introduction

This chapter explores how information and communication technology platforms present implications for the soft power concept. The relationship between such technologies and soft power is particularly relevant given recent developments within US public diplomacy practice and strategy, which may offer broader insights into the potential "mediatization" of soft power (Pamment 2014). Soft power, in other words, may be increasingly defined by the media technologies and practices associated with these technologies. Such practices may also reveal a *disconnect* between what soft power proposes about available routes for international influence and the realities of how international actors deploy communication technologies to cultivate such influence. The growth of digital media platforms for engagement among public diplomacy practitioners illustrates a pivotal moment to consider soft power as a prescriptive concept for statecraft. Is there some aspect about the presence of the technology itself – its *materiality* – that prompts a reconsideration of soft power's basic elements?

Public diplomacy – the practice by which nation-states engage foreign publics in order to achieve policy objectives – provides a logical starting point for reconsidering soft power (Chitty 2015). Changes in public diplomacy practice, such as in new forms of online engagement to counter extremism or connect students with educational opportunities, track with conceptual debates within public diplomacy studies on the rise of the so-called "new public diplomacy", that posits a change from a transmission-oriented practice of persuading audiences through one-way communication (Melissen 2011). There is also renewed attention within academia and amongst policymakers to the centrality of *narrative* to achieving foreign policy objectives, that suggests the importance of communication more generally to how publics and policymakers reason about foreign policy issues (Miskimmon *et al*. 2013). A contemporary fixation on strategic narratives and the need to control the communication

* The views expressed by the author are his own and not necessarily those of the US government.

media that frame how audiences perceive international actors suggests a resurgent role for soft power in the practice of statecraft, empowered in part by the perceived necessity of technologies that facilitate narrative dissemination, control and audience engagement.

The growing number of countries turning to digital engagement platforms in order to conduct diplomacy and manage their international affairs invites the possibility of a "technological turn" in thinking about soft power (Bjola and Holmes 2015; Zaharna *et al*. 2013; Manor 2016). This is already evident in concepts like 'digital diplomacy', which describes the increasing scope of diplomatic activity that leverages technology – such as the use of social media to extend the reach of public diplomacy, in addition to augmenting more "traditional" forms of diplomatic engagement (Bjola and Holmes 2015). Digital diplomacy invites reconsideration of what may be changing in the institutions of diplomatic practice, such as a more informed foreign policy through data analytics and the provision of more efficient consular services (Hocking *et al*. 2012; Hocking and Melissen 2015). Digital diplomacy is not directly synonymous with public diplomacy, but it remains strongly associated with the idea that digital engagement technologies enable new modes of outreach to publics and other international actors. The rise of so-called 'digital diplomacy' should direct more attention to the intersection of technology and diplomacy, and the paradigmatic views about international relations that sustain the requirements of diplomacy. Studying public diplomacy, likewise, can reveal the tacit understanding and knowledge of soft power that underscores strategies of influence within public diplomacy practice, and potentially reveal where technology may be shaping the role of soft power in statecraft (Hayden 2013).

The core issue considered here is whether the soft power concept has transformed in the context of public diplomacy efforts that leverage digital engagement platforms. Soft power is already a loosely defined analytical concept that has described both the *capacity* of nation-states to influence and the *practices* that cultivate a capacity to influence. But does our understanding of soft power need to adjust to a new context: a preponderance of digital media flows, social media connections, and international actors that take advantage of these technologies? This question is addressed here at two levels. First, it is explored at the *conceptual* level. Does the rise of digital engagement reinforce or potentially transform the definitional elements of soft power, which are based on the ability of international actors to leverage 'resources' such as culture or perceived policy legitimacy to achieve foreign policy ends? Second, does the *practice* of public diplomacy, enabled by digital platforms, invite new opportunities for actors to leverage soft power and expand its potential as an alternative to other forms of power?

The chapter begins by addressing the question of whether soft power as an 'analytical concept' merits revision in the wake of both conceptual criticism and the increased importance of information technology to strategies of statecraft (Nye 2004, 2010, 2011). The chapter then makes the case for a 'practice'-oriented approach to thinking about soft power, through a focus on how perceptions about the technology in the service of public diplomacy may reveal implications for how soft power may be available to practitioners. Finally, the chapter examines how the soft power concept is manifest in contemporary public diplomacy strategy and programs, in particular through US efforts. The chapter concludes with a reconsideration of how soft power may be influenced in the context of technology.

The significance of soft power, as an analytical construct that informs strategies of statecraft, becomes evident in the implicit and explicit logics behind what states do to persuade and influence foreign publics (Rawnsley 2012; Hayden 2012). It provides a justificatory framework for policymakers to reason about how communication and culture

factor into their strategies. Soft power is also inevitably tied to communication and, by extension, the technologies of influence that states wield to transmit information, convey symbolism and mount campaigns of strategic public argument. Therefore, it is important to understand how the resources of soft power are deployed instrumentally to potential foreign audiences. For example, cultural expression is not *prima facie* attractive to public diplomacy audiences, just as foreign policies are not intrinsically legitimate for consumers of international broadcasting. The vehicles deployed to cultivate soft power merit further scrutiny and, in this case, how the media technologies of public diplomacy exert their own form of influence.

Public diplomacy is an instructive site for the study of soft power, because the practice of public diplomacy is often premised on the belief that it can foster influence through exposure to culture, information and relation-building. Public diplomacy, in other words, is predicated on the notion that foreign publics can be pivotal to a desired foreign policy outcome (Cull 2008). Public diplomacy is composed of activities such as educational exchange and international broadcasting, all of which rely on some form of communication media (even interpersonal communication) that creates the opportunities for influence of some kind. To understand soft power, in other words, requires attention to its platforms, and how these platforms may themselves shape thinking about the possibilities of soft power. To address soft power as a reflection of popular culture takes away from the agency of the actor 'wielding' soft power – and becomes a structural argument about soft power endowments.

Rather than suggest that technology *causes* fundamental change in the strategic frameworks and institutional norms that shape public diplomacy or soft power, this chapter offers that technologies like social media serve a catalytic role in institutional change, and, in the process, reveal developments in the practical understanding of soft power – how it is effectively translated into a logic of practice. The chapter draws on theoretical perspectives in media and science and technology studies in order to assess how 'traditional' dimensions of public diplomacy practice – the tension between messaging and mutual understanding – are refracted in the context of digital platforms. Despite the introduction of new technologies for engagement, US public diplomacy in practice reflects the continuity of tensions between messaging and mutual understanding. This chapter considers whether the material context of technological *affordance* – the conditions of possibility offered by communication technology – have transformed public diplomacy's primary strategic justification: soft power.

## Parsing the definitional issues in soft power

The question of a 'technological turn' for understanding soft power implies a *direction* – that change being wrought by technology is pushing the concept towards a new definition. It also implies a shift in theoretical perspective. What soft power describes in the context of international relations is already elaborated in social theories and methodologies that elaborate influence, such as social network analysis and network theory (Arsenault 2011). At a basic level, how technology has impacted other theories of power and influence should inform a discussion of soft power and technology, and this is well-documented in the works of Manuel Castells and Peter van Ham (Castells 2009; van Ham 2010).

It is also important to recognize that although soft power was not originally conceived as a *theory*, it does raise provocative theoretical questions about power – especially given increased scholarly and practitioner attention to the significance of communication in

managing international relations and foreign policy objectives (Nye 2010). Governments continue to grapple with information technology in the service of their foreign policy objectives, to forge more linkages to diplomatic networks via Twitter, or to wage narrative war against religious extremists like ISIL.

What is also evident in public discourse surrounding these efforts is whether or not such efforts make a difference in the prosecution of state interests. The US is routinely criticized for its counter-ISIL strategy on social media. Yet the tone of these critiques is typically not whether or not states *should* be concerned with the implications of technology for influence, but *how* states should engage. Debates over the impact of social media campaigns to diminish the capabilities of organizations like ISIL reflect a broader fixation on the importance of narrative and, more generally, communication in delivering foreign policy objectives. There is clearly a concern among international actors that the technologies of communication matter in the formulation of international strategy and foreign policy, which has sparked renewed interest in public diplomacy, branding and countering violent extremism through digital engagement. It is also evident that political and economic concerns over the global communication infrastructure are equally crucial as governments concern themselves with regulations over cyber-security, internet governance and the implications of mass surveillance (Powers and Jablonski 2015; DeNardis 2014).

What does the attention to communication technology mean for soft power? At the very least, it suggests that the material technologies of communication are increasingly important as instruments of statecraft, and that this suggests a renewed priority for soft power in the calculus of foreign policy. To address this question, however, requires further attention to conceptual arguments that define soft power, which can be problematic given some of the ambiguities associated with term. Should we understand soft power as a *resource* for international actors, or as a contextual description of world politics to analytically account for how states achieve objectives without coercion or through strictly material means?

To diagnose any conceptual amendments requires some definitional clarity. Even so, soft power remains a floating signifier for international influence, allowing a wide range of perspectives and latitude to 'read into' its definition. It is alternatively a shorthand for persuasion, culture and even diplomacy. Soft power encapsulates a range of capacities that enable actors to achieve objectives, as much as it is a characterization of the international system that endows advantages to particular actors. Or, as Melissa Nisbett argues in her critique of the term, "soft power can therefore reside both in the realm of the imagination, as well as within some kind of operationalized action" (Nisbett 2016). It is both a description of how states leverage culture, ideas, and values through institutions and shared understandings and the kinds of non-coercive activities actors use to "get what they want" (Nye 1990, p. 166).

Rather than framing soft power as a characteristic of how the international system works, Nye describes soft power as an agent-centric logic of influence, where actors (most often states) convert soft power *resources* through soft power *behaviors* to achieve objectives (Nye 2004). Actors leverage, actively or passively, the resources of culture, values and the legitimacy of foreign policies to cultivate attraction, shape agendas, or persuade. This description of soft power does not seem fundamentally altered by the intervening presence of information and communication technology. Indeed, resources and behaviors seem dependent on the communication of soft power 'resources' to target populations through cultural flows, the framing and agenda-setting power of news, and

potentially the instruments of public diplomacy. Soft power has, at some level, always been about communication and the technologies that sustain it.

While soft power provides an intuitive logic to describe how actors achieve objectives through non-coercive means, the expansiveness of the definition has potentially limited its explanatory power. Is all non-coercive and non-material power soft power? When states 'get what they want' through diplomacy, public diplomacy, or other forms of engagement, can this be attributed to soft power? The analytical problems with soft power are well-documented, in part because it is difficult to distinguish empirically the role that soft power plays in particular outcomes or foreign policy changes (Goldsmith and Horiuchi 2012; Kroenig *et al*. 2010). This is especially true if the goal of scholarship is to elaborate how something like soft power can be demonstrated as *causally* significant for behavior in international relations. For this reason, Nye has argued that soft power cannot be disentangled from a broader conception of power – what he terms "smart power" – that defines how actors translate resources and actions into successful outcomes (Nye 2011). Soft power, as part of a smart power calculus, is simply part of what states do to achieve their strategic ends.

What is more readily apparent, however, is that soft power can be used in constitutive explanations for international politics in ways that account for why the international system hangs together, and how international actors leverage what Nye and Robert Keohane have argued as the "patterns of interdependence" that cut across international boundaries (Keohane and Nye 1998, p. 82). Soft power, in other words, provides a terministic screen through which to understand institutions, practices and norms that bind the behaviors of states and international actors (Hayden 2007). Soft power is the ability to act upon and manage this shared sense of legitimacy and cultural value. In this sense, soft power is a systemic argument about what constitutes influence in the international system, that is readily evident in Nye's recounting of Stephen Lukes' "third dimension" of power – the ability to shape the preferences of a foreign public or government (Nye 2011).

Such preferences are encoded into the institutions and organizations that support the status quo, or at least, those actors whose interests are maintained by the status quo (Keohane and Nye 2011; Ikenberry 2006). According to Nye, they can also be instrumental to the rhetorical entrepreneur.

The ability to "co-opt" the symbolic, cultural and ideational aspects that underscore international relations are, for Nye, the ability to effectively translate or convert available resources into soft power outcomes (Nye 2011). This basic statement about how the international system works underscores why controlling strategic narratives that frame state action is so important. At the same time, the context of complex interdependence limits the primacy of traditional material power and force and raises the value of other resources or assets, suggesting that institutional regimes and other forms of multilateral cooperation are themselves tied to the resources of culture and ideas identified by Nye (Nye 1990, p. 156).

The co-optive nature of soft power, therefore, is the ability of an international actor to manage a scenario so that other countries develop preferences or define their interests in ways consistent with its own. This power tends to arise from such resources as cultural and ideological attraction as well as rules and institutions of international regimes (Nye 1990, p. 168). Nye's arguments have evolved over time, but the emphasis on the power of preference-setting remains prevalent, particular through the notion of 'attraction' – a key behavior in Nye's formulation.

This *systemic* register for soft power is similar to Peter van Ham's notion of 'social power' – which describes the ability of an actor to "to produce, shape, and influence the motives, attitudes, roles, and interests"(van Ham 2010, p. 47). Social power describes the field of power defined by symbolic resources, information, credibility and authenticity. It is a form of discursive influence that further justifies claims made by advocates of strategic narratives and network power (Miskimmon *et al*. 2013; Castells 2009; Grewal 2008).

Put differently, whether one calls it social power or soft power, the ability to shape and control (increasingly mediated) representation is vital to state interests because it shapes the context for perceptions of legitimacy, conveys or amplifies values and culture, and builds meaningful connections. Soft power becomes palpable in the ability of actors to translate endowments of culture and idea, where the credibility or legitimacy of an actor opens up routes to influence. This logic justifies the use of practices like cultural or educational diplomacy, which bet on the wages of mutual understanding to facilitate cooperation in the longer term. Soft power in this case is *acted upon* when amplified by practices of public diplomacy and nation-branding.

A system-level understanding of soft power, likewise, works well to explain the 'sticky power' of liberal institutions in the aftermath of the Cold War to benefit US foreign policy ambitions (Mead 2009). Soft power, in this sense, emanates from the institutions of world order and the normative frameworks, rules and practices that define them (van Ham 2010). Whether one calls this a constitutive or discursive form of power, it becomes apparent when it justifies or enables actions, though often only in historical reconstructions of case studies or kinds of retrospective analysis that aim to isolate the role of soft power.

But this description of the soft power concept also fuels its critics, who argue that soft power is really a luxury of the materially powerful, or simply derived from the *American experience* in the sense that world order reflects embedded American values and interests and provides the US with a certain degree of agency (Layne 2010; Mead 2009; Kroenig *et al*. 2010). These critiques can be distilled into a singular question on how to identify what soft power can enable for international actors, that cannot be otherwise explained by other material or economic-based incentives.

## A framework for soft power practice and technology

At its core, soft power was intended to describe an agent-centric logic, where actors (presumably states) convert soft power *resources* through soft power *behaviors* to achieve objectives. But, as argued here, soft power also represents the capacity of actors to amplify, leverage or otherwise promote *representations* that sustain their role and legitimacy in international relations. It is both *agent-centric* and *systemic*. Soft power may be a concept to describe what actors do to get what they want, but it also rests on a sociological edifice – the power of social ties, institutions and practices to sustain authority or credibility. In other words, soft power is as much a *capacity* for agents as it is a shared resource, a quality of relations among actors to be manipulated, cultivated or managed.

The alternative proposed here is to examine the impact of technology on the soft power concept through how states act upon its premises as a template for strategy and practice. Rather than try to isolate soft power within an abstract power typology – something that Nye has argued is difficult to do – it may be more instructive to assess how aspects of soft power's prescription for influence are encoded into how international actors formulate and practice influence through strategic communication and public

diplomacy efforts. Such an approach builds on the work of Stefano Guzzini, who argued that 'power' acquires meaning through how it is acted upon and anticipated (Guzzini 2005). Building on insights from practice theory approaches to the study of diplomacy and international politics, it may be instructive to examine what he identifies as the performative dimension of soft power to better understand its organic development – through how states seize upon different aspects of soft power as required for strategic ends and how international influence invites specific modes of public diplomacy and attendant technologies (Hayden 2015).

This perspective on soft power calls for the contribution of scholarship that examines the cultural and social consequences of communication technology from a 'practice'-oriented perspective, building on precedents already established in diplomatic studies (Archetti 2012; Neumann 2002). Media Studies and Science and Technology Studies (STS) scholars respectively provide a point of departure to consider how the affordances of technology invite particular interpretations, perspectives and usages – in ways that are not reducible to the specific material aspects of the technology – and illustrate how these characteristics amplify or diminish cultural and social practices (Couldry and Hepp 2013; Gillespie 2010; Gillespie *et al*. 2014). The incorporation of specific technologies like social media for public diplomacy enable a focused question about the practice of soft power, or what media scholar Leah Lievrouw describes as how it may be "remediated" and "reformed" (Lievrouw 2014, p. 47).

In this context, applying the concept of 'affordance' means analysis of how technologies of communication may be pivotal in strategic shifts in how soft power is put to use or emphasized in strategic discourse. This term refers to how the meaning of a technology is both a product of its functional capacity and the socially constructed way it may be put to use (Graves 2007). Practices like social media engagement of foreign publics point to the social construction of technology, where institutional change is driven by *mediatization* – how logics associated with media transform practice and strategy (Landerer 2013). Hypothetically, this would mean that the soft power strategies that underscore US public diplomacy would be informed more directly by the cultural and social connotations of the technology taken from outside the context of diplomacy. As public diplomacy scholar Ellen de Huijgh claims, changes in diplomacy and public diplomacy are inevitably tied to wider transformations in society writ large (Huijgh 2011, p. 63). This same argument is applicable to soft power.

To illustrate this point, it is necessary to explain the competing strategic imperatives that have justified US public diplomacy. Historically, US public diplomacy reflects a diverse arrangement of practices, from the international broadcasting of the Voice of America to longstanding educational exchange offerings like the Fulbright Program. While these modes of practice can both be lumped into the concept of 'public diplomacy', they reflect very different logics of influence. Broadcasting is typically associated with transmission of information and persuasion-oriented strategies for public diplomacy, whereas educational exchange represents public diplomacy as a means to cultivate mutual understanding and long-term relationships between publics (Malone 1988). However, arguments about a 'new public diplomacy' and the emergent focus on 'mutuality' and relational approaches to network-building among public diplomacy scholars suggest that the context for public diplomacy has changed, in large part due to the ubiquity of information and communication technologies which have transformed how publics consume information, establish meaningful relationships and wield agency in ways that matter for foreign policymakers (Zaharna *et al*. 2013; Vanc 2012; Vanc and Fitzpatrick 2016).

## The continued primacy of message dispersion

The integration of new digital platforms of US engagement with foreign publics has progressed steadily since early experiments with social networking platforms in the past decade for exchange program alumni and recruitment (Cull 2013). The United States has been recognized as a leader in adopting social media and other digital modes of communication (Hanson 2012). Now, the Department of State coordinates social media and web presence for nearly all of its missions abroad, and actively communicates with publics on policy priorities through widely recognized media such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, as well as regional-specific platforms like the Russian language Vkontake and China's Sina Weibo. Likewise, US international broadcasting maintains a robust online presence for every country and language it targets. The Broadcasting Board of Governors also promotes circumvention technologies that allow audiences living behind censoring and surveilling firewalls to have unrestricted access to any available online information.

The US turn to digital engagement has not evolved without criticism. From halting efforts to distribute e-reader devices to questions over the practice of purchasing 'likes' on Facebook, US public diplomacy has faced internal scrutiny from government oversight offices as well as in the public sphere (Anon. 2013). The efforts of the Digital Outreach Team of the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications to combat ISIL have received considerable negative press for its social media-driven campaigns to disrupt ISIL's extensive recruitment efforts and virtual media production network (Bole and Kallmyer 2016). Likewise, calls for reforming the Broadcasting Board of Governors are often justified in comparison to Russia's dedication of resources to its RT, *Sputnik News*, and the extensive social media coordination that amplifies Russia's foreign policy voice.

As R. S. Zaharna noted years earlier, however, much of the post-9/11 public diplomacy strategy in the United States remains grounded in a logic of monological information transmission (See also Cowan and Arsenault 2008; Zaharna 2005), where the strategic role of public diplomacy is as a component in an 'information battle' rather than a 'network war'. Despite the rise of a 'connective mindshift' in prescriptive scholarship on public diplomacy, the information and persuasion aspects of US public diplomacy (and its public critics) tend to emphasize the quantitative dimension of reach and exposure. The role of the audience as an active and discerning subject remains underspecified in the rapid growth of social media-driven campaigns. There is still an overriding emphasis on message dispersion, which serves as a proxy for impact and power. Critical perspectives, likewise, fault US public diplomacy for not being more aggressive in countering narratives and misrepresentation abroad, despite the recognized limitations of strategic communication in an era of increased suspicion of government-sponsored communication.

Charles Causey and Philip Howard argue that the "decentralized nature of … new participatory and communicative networks means that public diplomacy now requires productive engagement with individuals within these networks" (Causey and Howard 2013). By 2010, the *New York Times* reported that the requirements of "21st-century statecraft" could not be "mere corporate rebranding – swapping tweets for broadcasts" (Lichtenstein 2010). Technology would be required to "amplify traditional diplomatic efforts, develop tech-based policy solutions and encourage cyberactivism." As Gillespie and McAvoy, however, note in "Digital networks and transformations in the international news ecology: A critique of agent-centred approaches to soft power" (Ch.15), the ability of governments to adapt quickly to the changing communication ecology for soft power may be slow, and, as Ithiel de Sola Pool noted years ago, older practices inhere in

new technologies (Pool 1983). This concern is apparent in Causey and Howard's question of whether new "diplomatic efforts to increase their online and social media presences reflect genuine efforts to engage in a new form of public diplomacy," or represent "efforts merely traditional statecraft wrapped in a new online packaging" (Causey and Howard 2013).

As a matter of soft power, the idea that *exposure* equals power is implicit in critiques that the US should address the scale of Russian propaganda efforts and its extensive use of social media bots and centralized message control. The US response to the Russian involvement in the Ukrainian civil war and the annexation of Crimea suggests a strategy driven by propagation across social networks and media ecologies, rather than focused, network-level influence. Efforts to promote a #unitedforUkraine Twitter hashtag did yield considerable volume of hashtag usage, but it is less clear whether this counter-narrative strategy served a specific strategic purpose.

The use of social media as a message amplifier indicates that the technology's initial integration into public diplomacy practice did not translate into a fundamental challenge to the workings of soft power. Rather, it reinforced an interpretation of soft power where the *message* of communication is more strategically significant; social media reflects a new terrain of audience engagement but not necessarily a change in how audiences are persuaded or how they organize to effect change. Persuasion follows exposure, without much more elaboration of 'how'.

Efforts to 'control the narrative' via new modes of digital engagement do not necessarily go further into how networks structure interpretation and constrain the flow of information and media representation – something that could potentially challenge a straightforward translation of the soft power concept. A conception of audience as both an aspect of network structure and as discerning subject or interpretant with political agency seems to feature less in public diplomacy strategies that aim to counter narratives through dispersion and volume. In this case, the message trumps the audience and the relations built around the acts of sharing. The rush to get on social media and to be in 'conversations that matter' suggests a conception of influence that is derived from the technology itself as a strategy, or, put differently, where the technology 'stands in' as a strategy for influence (Hayden 2013).

## Digital technology as soft power resource

While the use of digital engagement platforms for US public diplomacy may still reflect a 'transmission' approach to communication and a less-developed vision for its target audience, it is also clear that technology serves an equally significant role as a symbolic element in the cultural footprint of US public diplomacy. Soft power is argued to be derived from cultural and ideational resources, which programs like public diplomacy can amplify and increase awareness of among foreign publics. But can the technology itself carry this rhetorical burden?

Digital platforms like social media implicate a soft power strategy – not because they offer a unique route to persuasion or relation-building *per se*, but because they *embody* the cultural qualities, values and ideas of the United States. The platforms, in other words, serve as the message; a signifier for US values such as transparency and democratic participation, information sharing, collaboration and innovation. US engagement via social media functions as a *de facto* set of arguments and as a kind of soft power promotion, regardless of the delivered message content – the technology carries its own

rhetorical appeal, representing the values the US may be trying to project or to be seen as embodying through its outreach.

This is not always the case, as US foreign policy at times works at cross-purposes with the rhetorical value of its digital engagement. For example, public controversies over the issue of mass surveillance and the entanglement of large US internet firms like Google in debates over global internet governance suggests that the connection between technology and the United States leaves a complicated cultural footprint. But, as public diplomacy scholar Ali Fisher has observed, a public diplomacy that embraces an 'open source' ethos could be a more effective policy that reflects the cultural currency of the technology among the audiences to American public diplomacy (Fisher 2008). The technology of public diplomacy, in this sense, plays an important performative role in the aesthetics of representation of US soft power, and could work to cultivate an increasingly important "affective investment" in media representations of the United States (Solomon 2014; Graham 2014).

Both the continued strategic salience of message-oriented soft power practice and the rising currency of the technology itself as a carrier of symbolic persuasion are arguably only two of many possibilities to articulate a technological turn in soft power. The subsequent chapters in this section build on the question of technology and a 'technological turn' in our understanding of soft power in two additional registers. Marie Gillespie and Eva Nieto McAvoy (Ch. 15) unpack the logics of influence that animates UK soft power policy, by examining pivotal and revealing examples of soft power strategy. Matthew O. Adeiza and Philip Howard's chapter, "Social media and soft power politics in Africa: Lessons from Nigeria's #BringBackOurGirls and Kenya's #SomeoneTellCNN" (Ch. 16), examines the potential emergence of a new variant of the soft power concept – social media soft power. By approaching the question of soft power at the level of strategic discourse and practical application, these chapters elaborate on the emerging implications of technology that may force a reckoning about the assumptions of the soft power concept.

Gillespie and McAvoy, in their chapter, take a similar approach to the one advocated in this chapter by interrogating the rhetoric of soft power across strategic documents that support UK public diplomacy efforts and the requirements of strategic influence. In their analysis, they note the ambiguous construction of 'audience' as it figures in both Nye's soft power concept and its usage in the UK soft power policy discourse and how this may constrain soft power strategy by its lack of accounting for how audiences consume media.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, they identify a tension between the 'network' and 'transmission' models of engagement and point to the need for an active audience perspective. They note that the persistent nature of the 'transmission' model of thinking about communication in soft power may be related to soft power's own conceptual lack of specificity, and how this may trap governments from adaptation. They offer that recognition of technology's potential to open up new opportunities for soft power cultivation "erodes hard-edged distinction between the agents and subjects of soft power in favour of a multiplicity of actors in diverse sets of relationships" and paves the way for conceptual revision. Specifically, they advocate that soft power may be better understood as a communicative process that operates at different levels, including persuasion, representational force and empowerment – processes that do not lend themselves to established methods of measuring public diplomacy outputs or traditional audience and opinion research.

Gillespie and McAvoy's analysis illustrates the tensions in how an international actor works to discursively reconstruct soft power as a template for statecraft that builds on the value of establishing networks that foster mutual understanding and connection in a non-hierarchical way, yet still relies on very linear and instrumental optics through which to quantify impact. They propose an alternative, a "Cultural Value Model" that captures more richly defined qualitative data on how cultural content is perceived in ways that account for the complex cultural and communication environments fostered by social media connections.

While soft power may be attractive in the sense that it makes available a set of ideational resources to forward strategic goals, the proposed practical solutions the authors observe in official documents reflect a limited sense of an empowered, active audience. In this case, while the strategic rhetoric of soft power may align with a new view of soft power as reflected in interconnections forged through technology, the accounting of soft power limits its conceptual value – foreclosing opportunities for engagement that transcend simplistic views of soft power's audience – and is illustrative of the constraining, structural power of policy discourse to limit adaptation.

Adeiza and Howard (Ch. 16) take a different approach to the consequences of technology on soft power. Their proposed variant, "social media soft power", attempts to account for how social media enables new forms of power through the cultivation of "concerted international attention and buy-in into an issue or sympathy towards a cause generated by the savvy use of social media either by state or non-state actors."

Importantly, the authors expand the definition of soft power to include non-state actors, in ways that connect to established literatures on advocacy, civil society and network power. They illustrate, in their case studies of two episodes of social media advocacy in sub-Saharan Africa, the agenda-setting power of social media to focus international attention and to reframe news flows through coordinated, non-governmental communicative action.

Specifically, they observe how the #BringBackOurGirls Twitter hashtag took shape as a global social media phenomenon, not only drawing the attention of world leaders (who in turn promoted the hashtag) but also creating external pressure on the Nigerian president's bid for re-election. The social media campaign was catalytic, drawing in scrutiny from international media outlets in ways that negatively framed the Nigerian president's attention to the kidnapping of the girls kidnapped by Boko Haram. It reflects soft power because the activists who launched the Twitter campaign had no other form of material power to coerce or otherwise cultivate significant media attention.

The authors also acknowledge how the #SomeoneTellCNN campaign had an impact on the nature of coverage about Kenya in the wake of negative framing about Kenyan security concerns in advance of a US presidential visit. Here, soft power manifests in news coverage, providing evidence that social media can exert pressure on narrative choices that frame perceptions about a country.

In both cases discussed by Adeiza and Howard, we find empirical evidence for influence as a result of a concerted, social media-driven advocacy campaign – through cultivated attention that, in turn, created real outcomes (political transition and media framing). While both of these stories illustrate the enabling capacity of social media to effect change as a property of the technology on contentious politics, do these cases illustrate soft power?

## Conclusion

The soft power concept remains a popular term, regardless of its analytical ambiguities. It is measured in popular indices, and, as argued here, is visible as arguments that justify international actors in their attempts to leverage communication to achieve their strategic ambitions. It is also clear that the growth of social media and internet-based platforms of connection and engagement provide further justification for communication as a tool of statecraft and international politics (Seib 2012). Despite the tumultuous aftermath of an internet-fueled Arab Spring, communication platforms remain a fixation of international actors, with authoritarian regimes aggressively seeking the means to control and manage flows of information. Whether or not soft power yields measurable impacts on international relations – nation-states and non-state actors certainly anticipate the necessity of soft power. This is perhaps most obvious in the increasingly contentious politics of internet governance and the physical architecture of soft power in years to come (DeNardis 2014). Likewise, while public diplomacy begins to incorporate technological platforms to extend its traditional obligations, cognate fields like nation-branding have arisen as countries see the necessity to manage their representation in global communication flows. The practical manifestations of soft power have, if anything, grown considerably.

But is the soft power concept sufficient to capture or explain the tectonic shifts that structure world politics, raise the significance of foreign publics, and account for the increased agency of non-state actors to shape narratives and impact global norms? As indicated earlier, soft power suggests both a template for how nation-states can leverage their cultural and ideational assets through activities like public diplomacy as much as a systemic quality of international relations. It is a *resource*, a *capacity*, and a *process*, in ways that share conceptual territory with terms like "network power" and, perhaps, "hegemony" (Castells 2009; Zahran 2010).

It may be an opportune moment to separate the levels of analysis implicated in the term, between a systemic view of power transformed by technology and an 'operational' and instrumental concept more readily amenable to public diplomacy. One possible solution comes from J. P. Singh, who builds on the work of Manuel Castells and James Rosenau to suggest that the pervasive growth of information technology has begun to "foster interactions that change the identity of the actors and the meanings of issues in global politics" through what he calls "meta-power" (Singh 2013). For Singh, meta-power is a systemic property of a highly connected world defined by overlapping networks of human interaction that changes the meaning of politics itself, and that arises out of the affordances of information technology. It is a *process*, not a resource or instrumental concept, that illustrates how international actors vie to define and represent the norms of the system itself – human rights, commerce, security, etc. Singh argues that "*meta-power* is antecedent to instrumental notions of power: before actors do what they do, *meta-power* specifies the meaning of their collectively understood identity and interests" (Singh 2013, p. 7). The concept is similar to Barnett and Duvall's notion of "productive" power which describes a capacity to shape interests through discourse, but Singh's vision is specifically grounded in communication and technology (Barnett and Duvall 2005). *Meta-power* alerts us to the cumulative effects of human interaction on the fundamental discourses that structure politics, identity and culture. It is not necessarily *available* to international actors so much as it is a terrain to navigate or exploit.

Soft power, in contrast for Singh, is a purposive effort at persuasion (not a structural endowment or characteristic of the international system), that does not operate on the preferences or identities of other actors or publics but reflects diplomatic efforts to appeal to foreign publics to accept goals and build legitimacy around *predefined* identities through media, entertainment and other dimensions of public diplomacy.

Singh's notion of meta-power provides an ontological argument about how perceptions of identity and power are grounded in the connective technologies that enable new configurations of publics. Technology, in this sense, complicates the playing field for an instrumental view of soft power, because the resources of soft power (culture, ideas and policy legitimacy) are themselves subject to greater contestation in information flows. This does not invalidate soft power, but rather refocuses the term back to what Nye intended – as an argument for how international actors might leverage a resource such as culture or values. The rising importance of a technology-fueled meta-power sets the stage for the need (and difficulty) of soft power because meta-politics is ultimately a process by which the politics of issue identity takes precedence in shaping the norms, narratives and discourses that structure world politics. Singh sees a conflict between the emancipatory capacities of ubiquitous communication technologies for global public spheres, and the traditional monopolies on identity enjoyed by "deep hierarches" and "authoritarianism" (Singh 2013, p. 26).

Nye provides some clues to how this might unfold in practice. In 2008, Nye suggested that public diplomacy would need to adapt to the realities of ubiquitous information flows and the propagation of narratives that serve to frame a country's foreign policies. This "paradox of plenty" makes it harder for international actors to be heard amidst the plurality of voices seeking to shape global narratives, let alone engender attitude or behavioral change (Nye 2008, p. 99). The necessity of soft power is matched by the increasing difficulty of managing it.

As the authors in this volume indicate, soft power as a term connoting persuasion may be evolving in the sense that it elevates particular practices over others in the context of technology. Adeiza and Howard (Ch. 16) see the salience of soft power in the capacity of actors to shape the agenda in news flows. Implicitly, they present the argument that soft power is as much about attention as it is about persuasion. This is a logic that is derived from the affordance of the media itself. Likewise, Gillespie and McAvoy (Ch. 15) see soft power as enhanced if states can act upon benefits of communication that are empowering rather than dominating (the representational force described by Janice Bially Mattern) (Mattern 2005). For them, technology points the development of soft power toward facilitation and invitational perspectives on engagement, rather than outright persuasion.

As Langdon Winner argued decades ago, technological artefacts do have a politics – but what sort of politics related to soft power is encoded into the technologies of engagement used in public diplomacy today (Winner 1988)? The answer is not a deterministic one. The persistence of 'transmission'-oriented perspectives on public diplomacy and, by extension, soft power may also reflect another insight from practice-oriented understanding of technology: new technologies may remain defined by earlier logics of influence and power (Pool 1983). At the same time, in the absence of a coherent theoretical framework for international influence in soft power, the affordances of technologies like social media – to connect, to empower and to surveil – provide *de facto* strategic arguments that shape the practice of soft power.

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# 15

# DIGITAL NETWORKS AND TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS ECOLOGY

## A critique of agent-centred approaches to soft power

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### Introduction

Critiques of soft power have often remarked on Joseph Nye's agent-centred approach (e.g. Lukes 2007; Lock 2010). Nye himself has recognized and subsequently tried to tackle this issue (Nye 2007, 2011), albeit with limited success. This chapter, particularly interested in the *performative* aspects of soft power (Hayden 2012, p. 31, building among others on Stefano Guzzini) and the need for an approach that places mutuality and reciprocity at the heart of international communication and cultural relations, seeks to understand how the 'audiences' of soft power figure in the UK's foreign policy discourse and practices. It traces the *rhetoric* (Hayden 2012) that is used by government to define the scope and mechanisms of British soft power, focusing particularly on the 2014 House of Lords report on soft power and the UK's influence, *Persuasion and Power in the Modern World* (House of Lords 2014). This chapter also analyses the official rhetoric of the British Council (BC) and the BBC World Service (BBCWS) about their value and purpose. Long regarded as foundational institutions of British soft power, for over eight decades these institutions have acted in concert to expand their global networks and attract overseas citizens to learn the English language, enjoy British culture, benefit from its education and business opportunities and deepen their understanding of the British way of life, as well as aiming at exerting political influence among elites across the world (Gillespie and Webb 2012; Gillespie *et al*. 2014).

We argue that the slow shift from a simplistic transmission model of communication (sender–message–receiver) prevalent in international relations research to a network framework forces a reconceptualization of the role of audiences and overseas publics. They can no longer be conceived as passive targets but need to be understood as active global citizens who participate in political and cultural processes in new and often

surprising ways. We trace the deep tensions between the transmission and network models in Nye's ambiguous description of the role of 'the audience' as a singular, apparently homogenous, entity. These rhetorical ambiguities can also be found in the evidence given by the British Council and the World Service to the House of Lords 2014 Committee on Soft Power.

## Critiques of Nye's soft power: towards an empowered audience

The concept of soft power has been heavily scrutinized in recent years as its ubiquity and popularity as an analytical and policy-making concept have grown (e.g. Lock 2010; Zahran and Ramos 2010; Mattern 2007; Hayden 2012). Nye's vagueness in defining the concept has often been noted – especially his conflation of the resources, tools and strategies with the desired outcomes and behaviours associated with soft power. These very different concepts involve entirely different sets of implications in theory and in practice (Hayden 2012, pp. 39–53). This is particularly the case when considering the role of the subjects of soft power. The soft power concept has also been criticized for building on abstract, simplistic assumptions with little or no empirical substantiation about how influence and attraction actually work, other than as an entirely mysterious process of 'cultural osmosis' (Mattern 2007, p. 118, f.n. 4) – as if to design a strategy or soft power project were enough.

Further attacks on the concept focus on it being too theoretically 'soft' – for failing to fully investigate whether attraction is an individual or a socially constructed phenomenon or both. In addition, it is not clear how Nye's 'soft' power relates to similar concepts, such as Gramsci's hegemony (e.g. Zahran and Ramos 2010; Hayden 2012, pp. 38–9).[1] There is also a lack of appreciation of the crucial relational aspects of soft power that arise from the complementarity of institutions (BBC World Service and British Council acting together in different domains alongside other key soft power resources) and processes related to group/identity formation, networks, shared culture and values (e.g. Fisher 2010; Zaharna 2009). Nor are the ethical underpinnings and claims clear or coherent (e.g. Fitzpatrick 2014). And as for the difficulties and limits of evaluating soft power, very little progress has yet been made (e.g. Pamment 2014; Nye 2013). One wonders how the concept manages not only to survive but also to thrive. Could its ambiguity and reductionist simplicity be the cause of its popularity as well as of its demise?

Despite claims that current geopolitical dynamics (the Middle East imploding, the former Soviet states at war, Europe in a state of multiple crises) and the 'technological turn' make soft power more relevant than ever before, the advent and implications of digital media and the network society, especially for the politics of identity and representation, are challenges that policymakers have been slow to face. The 'technological turn' and 'culture wars' force us to redefine the role played by the subjects or audiences of soft power. The advent of interactive communications and media mean that audiences are active participants and co-creators of meaning. They are not the passive recipients of messages in a sender–receiver linear model of communication – if they ever were (Gillespie 2006). The newly imagined active 'producers' (Bruns 2008; Gillespie 2012) arguably strengthen relationship-building in the network, and the diversity that they bring to it enhances its creative collaborative synergies. The network framework understands audiences and citizens as legitimate stakeholders not only in communication processes but in defining the very terms of the relationship. If a soft power project implies or even hints at a concept of 'power over' audiences, it becomes instantly counter-productive, because "the exercise

of power over another is likely to be less successful to the extent that we ignore the fact that the other is an agent capable of action" (Lock 2010, p. 46). This is a crucial point that we have found time and again in our research with and on the BBC World Service and the British Council.

The technological turn erodes the hard-edged distinction between the agents and subjects of soft power in favour of a multiplicity of actors in diverse sets of relationships in pursuance of competing and often conflicting goals that require negotiation. It questions the need for a power-based model for public diplomacy (PD) unless it empowers citizens in some way and is not simply public relations (PR) for governments and national interests. Whether the concept of soft power is actually relevant at all in a relational network framework remains to be seen. But the attractions of soft power as a policy-making tool and the anxieties induced by the technological turn – how to understand and whether or not to wield soft power – seem to coexist quite frequently in the literature despite such inconsistencies.

In light of the above it is clear that soft power theory "threatens to dismiss any meaningful role for the subject of power" (Lock 2010, p. 37). The problem of soft power might not lie in the 'soft' but in Nye's understanding of 'power' (Lukes 2007; Ringmar 2007; Lock 2010). Indeed, within soft power literature publics are often referred to as 'targets' of foreign policy (Hill 2003, p. 279 as cited in Hocking 2008, p. 37; see as an example Nye 2011). The concept of 'target' reinforces a hierarchical understanding of the power relations and a simplistic transmission model of communication (sender–message–target). It is, therefore, telling that, despite Nye's assertion that "the targets matter as much as the agents" (Nye 2011, p. 84), they nonetheless remain 'targets'. The terms used to refer to the subjects of soft power thus mirror different understandings of how (soft) power works.[2] For example, Bially Mattern has pushed the critique of soft power to its limits by arguing that soft power is based on attraction as 'representational force', whereby 'subjects' become 'victims' rendered powerless by its coercive nature (Mattern 2007, pp. 110–11). On the other end of the spectrum, Vuving suggests using the term 'client' (as the British Council now does) to account for the fact that subjects of soft power are willing parties in the relations of power (Vuving 2009).

If soft power as a theoretical, empirical and policy term is to remain relevant, there is a need to re-evaluate it, not as a 'resource' that a policy agent can 'wield', but as a process that unfolds in response to activities or practices and as the actors involved relate to one another. Soft power works best when it goes unremarked, and is often generated through the everyday corporate cosmopolitan practices forged by established institutions and activities that are deemed relatively credible and are, for the most part, respected (BBC World Service and British Council, for example). Soft power is essentially about intercultural dialogue and to be successful must operate with acute cultural sensitivity in diverse geopolitical environments (Gillespie and Webb 2012). Central to current debates on soft power is the acknowledgment that not only resistance but cooperation among actors is desirable. Empowerment, or the 'power to' do things that might not otherwise be possible, challenges the idea that power relationships are necessarily hierarchical, as the concept of 'power over' implies (Gillespie *et al*. 2006; Berenskoetter 2007, p. 3). Indeed, as Ali Fisher points out, "the division between those that seek to exert 'power over' a target audience and those that intend to engage or empower a community" is "one of the key tensions in the practice of public diplomacy" (Fisher 2010, p. 271). We argue that this tension is also present in the rhetoric of UK soft power, as it is trying to shift from one approach to the other.

Critics generally call for a distinction – absent in Nye – between processes that might empower – e.g. influence through persuasion (Lebow 2007) – or disempower the actors involved, e.g. indoctrination (Lukes 2007) or attraction through 'representational force' (Mattern 2007). If the limits between attraction and coercion are blurred, soft power may be "not so soft" (Mattern 2007, p. 100; Lebow 2007; Lukes 2007; Ringmar 2007, p. 192, Bilgin and Elis 2008). Nye's soft power can, therefore, be seen as a continuation of the hierarchical approach to power of the realist school of International Relations, albeit with ideational resources (Lukes 2007; Ringmar 2007; Bilgin and Elis 2008). Thinking about soft power from the subject's perspective might also help re-balance what many perceive as an unclear ethical dimension to soft power.[3] In fact, if "foreign publics should have a voice in public diplomacy outcomes" (Fitzpatrick 2014, p. 35), the key to an ethical approach to PD, one that could permeate international relations more broadly, might be thinking beyond a power-based model, no matter how 'soft' (Fisher 2010, p. 9; Fitzpatrick 2014).

Alternatives to soft power have been suggested as ways in which to overcome some of its limitations, not least its agent-centred approach. Examples include Roselle, Miskimmon, and O'Loughlin's 'strategic narratives' (2014)[4] or Peter van Ham's 'social power' (2014), and, as we shall later explain, our Cultural Value approach which seeks to understand value from multiple perspectives and rebalance power relations (Gillespie *et al*. 2014). Castells thinks of PD not as an activity to "assert the power of a state or of a social actor in the form of 'soft power'", but to "harness the dialogue between different social collectives and their cultures in the hope of sharing meaning and understanding" by contributing to the formation of a global public sphere "in which diverse voices can be heard in spite of their various origins, distinct values, and often contradictory interests" (Castells 2008, p. 91). Castells' concept is very much in line with the stated policy and public purpose of the BBC World Service – to foster "a global conversation". The answer to the challenges of thinking about and researching soft power within the new media ecology and a complex global cultural context lies in the potential of a networked framework (e.g. Castells 2008, 2009; Hocking 2005; Zaharna 2007, 2009; Brown 2011; Fisher 2010; Fitzpatrick 2011; Hayden 2012; Pamment 2012; Zaharna, Arsenault and Fisher 2014).

## The 'connective mindshift': beyond subjects of (soft) power

The move towards a relational mode of international communications has been considered to be the foundation of a 'new PD' responding to the new media ecology and geopolitical context (Melissen 2005). Differing perceptions of the 'public' underpin theories and practices of contemporary diplomacy (Hocking 2005, p. 35). In the 'old' hierarchical model, "'publics' matter to governments as 'tools' of national foreign policy" (Hocking 2008, p. 41) and are seen as "as a target of influence generating pressures on foreign governments through their own domestic constituencies" (Hocking 2005, p. 32). In the network model, "stakeholders are viewed less as targets or consumers of government-generated messages than as possible partners and coproducers of diplomatic outcomes" (Hocking 2008, p. 66).

Similarly, from a communicative perspective, what has been termed as the 'connective mindshift' highlights this move in contemporary PD from 'the information framework' to 'the relational framework' (Zaharna, Arsenault and Fisher 2014). The former emphasizes the need to design tactics that help get the right message across and therefore rely

on marketing and public relations strategies. The latter shifts the focus from message content to message exchange and reception, arguing for an emphasis on the participation in and creation of networks. In the 'information/transmission framework' the public is viewed as a passive audience that needs to be persuaded or attracted by the agents who produce the messages. The meanings of their 'messaging' are clear, unambiguous and unproblematic – not open to multiple interpretations. Publics may occasionally be granted the potential to influence their national governments and, given the chance, to respond to the information. In the relational framework, audiences – "partners" or "active participants, stakeholders, or even constituencies" (Zaharna 2009, p. 149) – are conceived as active contributors in the co-construction of the relationship and the message. Soft power needs to be 'wielded' in the first model while it is 'created' by the dynamics of the network in the second (Zaharna 2009, p. 94; Castells 2009), allowing a common identity to develop as a 'knowledge community'. The co-making of a narrative further leads to co-building trust and credibility (Zaharna, 2009, pp. 106–7). From "competition to collaboration" (Hocking 2008), "from monologue to dialogue to collaboration" (Cowan and Arsenault 2008), from "battles to bridges" (Zaharna 2009) or from "messaging to mutuality" (Fitzpatrick, Fitzpatrick 2011), the call has been to rethink the concept of soft power through the role of the public.

To be sure, Nye has not totally ignored the role of 'the other'. In his 2007 response to the criticism of neglecting the subjects of soft power (Mattern 2007; Lebow 2007; Lukes 2007), Nye agrees that "[p]ower defined in behavioural terms is a relationship, and soft power depends more upon the subject's role in that relationship than hard power does" (Nye 2007, p. 169). In his 2011 *The Future of Power*, Nye incorporates criticisms and engages with insights from Lukes (2007), Mattern (2007), Vuving (2009) and Zaharna (2009). Yet while seemingly adopting a more subject-oriented approach than previously – "it is a mistake to think of power … as 'power over' rather than 'power with'" (Nye 2011, p. 90), Nye still refers to the 'subjects' of soft power in this essay largely as 'targets', reinforcing an understanding of soft power as a policymaking strategy from the agent's perspective. Building on Zaharna (2009), among others, Nye identifies the need for a relational approach when designing soft power strategies. But despite emphasis on how the loss of government control in favour of networks might prove "central to the *creation* of soft power" (Nye 2011, pp. 108–9), the tension between the two paradigms is evident.[5] Nye elaborates on the relational framework while insisting on its importance for "*wielding* soft power through public diplomacy" (Nye 2011, p. 100).[6]

Despite such criticisms, Nye's soft power concept still remains widely used, partly because of its simplicity and intuitive nature. It calls for action (Mattern 2007, p. 101) and enables policymakers to think in terms of ideational resources and international communication strategies that might be used by state and non-state actors, both national and transnational. If Nye's writing on soft power can be said to have favoured accessibility over analytical rigour, it has in turn enabled "innovative interpretation and creative re-articulation" (Hayden 2012, p. 36). Soft power is increasingly viewed as a response in international relations to the new media ecology and the changing geopolitical context – the fact that power is simultaneously shifting towards the east and south and diffusing into civil society. This makes policymakers anxious to find strategies that work – and hence to find ways of assessing whether they work. But it may well be that soft power cannot be strategized, for it is often regarded by its most established practitioners at the BBC World Service and the British Council as an unintended outcome of their activities – the provision of independent multi-lingual news and the promotion of mutuality

in international cultural relations. As "the term is not fixed, but a malleable signifier of political action" (Hayden 2012, p. 5), the fluidity of the concept of soft power may work in its favour if it is understood as performative – what it comes to mean and what it does through discourse and practice functions within specific policies that constitute a *rhetoric* of soft power in particular contexts (Hayden 2012, p. 31).

Even so, the lack of clarity of Nye's soft power might actually translate into bad practice (Mattern 2007, p. 98). For example, the contradictions in integrating the informational and the relational frameworks, and the conflicting understandings of audiences, can be found in the rhetoric of UK soft power, as translated into the 2014 House of Lords report on soft power, *Persuasion and Power in the Modern World* (House of Lords 2014), which is particularly reliant on Nye's understanding of soft power. The following reading of the House of Lords report will assess how audience research is understood within this soft power rhetoric, and whether it is consistent with the stated role of audiences as counterparts in the BBC World Service's 'global conversation' or as engaged in relations of mutuality – the core value driving British Council activities with overseas publics.[7]

## The 2014 House of Lords report on soft power

We concur with Hayden that the significance of soft power "lies in the term's *potentiality* across contexts as a resource for policy argumentation" (Hayden 2012, p. 5). This proposition can be tested through the 2014 House of Lords report on soft power and the evidence given by the BBC World Service and the British Council to the committee, as it specifically addresses, on the one hand, how the BBCWS and the BC view themselves as resources of soft power and, on the other, how this is interpreted by the House of Lords and the government's response to it, in what could be understood as a British official position on soft power, i.e. a *rhetoric* of soft power.

The House of Lords report was commissioned in response to the "transformed international order", the "rise of the rest" and the emergence of "hyper-connectivity" (House of Lords 2014, pp. 7, 23 and 27). Based on oral and written evidence, it was authored by the Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence, which was appointed by the House of Lords on 16 May 2013 in order to "examine the use of soft power in furthering the United Kingdom's global influence and interests" (House of Lords 2014, pp. 2 and 150). The primary goal was to "ensure that the UK's attractiveness and influence can be used by the Government and other British bodies to promote the country's interests" in order for the UK to remain "a top-rank performer in the global network" and to avoid "finding itself outwitted, out-competed, and increasingly insecure" (House of Lords 2014, p. 7). In our analysis of this report we will look into how these objectives had an effect on how the audiences of the UK's soft power were conceived.[8]

### *Conceiving the hyper-connected public*

Following on from Nye's two models of soft power – i.e. the direct model of influence over elites and leaders and the two-step model involving the trickle down from 'influencers' to the general public who "in turn affect the leaders of other countries" (Nye 2011, p. 94) – the House of Lords report also identifies two types of subjects of soft power. On the one hand, there are "specific individuals, groups and governments overseas" and, on the other, what the report calls "the overseas publics *in general*" (House of Lords 2014,

p. 59).[9] The report conceives of the latter as a new public at the intersection of consumers and producers of soft power, which increasingly rely on person-to-person relations as enabled by global networks and social media. In order to describe this phenomenon the House of Lords uses the term 'hyper-connectivity' as explained by the BC in its evidence (British Council 2014b, pp. 252–3; House of Lords 2014, p. 27).

Far from feeling challenged by this new public, the HoL report posits that "the degree to which populations now form networks across borders gives this soft power a newly increased impact because it relies to a significant degree on popular perceptions" (House of Lords 2014, pp. 9 and 40). The House of Lords emphasizes that 'hyper-connectivity' has not only removed the exclusiveness of government control over narratives, but has shifted communication from "elite-to-elite, then elite-to-many, and is now entering a people-to-people phase, through travel, migration and the internet" (Demos and Nye as quoted in House of Lords 2014, p. 28).[10] The report highlights how the UK needs to "understand that it is dealing with empowered and e-enabled publics everywhere and in every country, and accept through its tone and policies that power has to some degree shifted East, South and into the world's networks" (House of Lords 2014, p. 7).

By welcoming this hyper-connectivity, or at least accepting it, the report gives a picture of subjects of soft power as part of a relational framework strategy. In order to build trust and credibility in the global communication era, the concepts of 'mutuality', 'reciprocity', 'dialogue', 'networks', 'debate' and 'equality' are emphasized throughout the House of Lords report (see e.g. House of Lords 2014, pp. 45–6). The BBCWS and the BC are identified as having an important role in fostering these types of relationship by "'not just showcasing the UK's assets' but 'sharing' those assets and supporting a reciprocal exchange of ideas and culture" (British Council as quoted in House of Lords 2014, p. 45). Furthermore, the report acknowledges the role of the subject of soft power as important to the relation, as the "power of communication depends less on projection than on how audiences understand and interpret the act of communication in its entirety (what is said, how, why, in what context) and over time (because interpreting communication depends on prior experiences, assumptions, and expectations)" (Gillespie and Webb; Gaskarth, Rawnsley, Pamment, Brown, Roselle and Lukes referenced in House of Lords 2014, pp. 44–5). The report warns that "Just the act of projecting a narrative or trying to engage can be viewed as an act of coercion or manipulation" (Rawnsley, Mattern and Nye referenced in House of Lords 2014, p. 45), and advances the notion of 'power with' instead of 'power over' (Johnathan McClory referenced in House of Lords 2014, pp. 53–4).

But when giving a more specific account of who these global audiences are, instead of partners in the co-creation of messages and therefore stakeholders in the creation of soft power, they are often referred to in the report as new, unpredictable, rapidly shifting audiences in light of new technological developments and changing geopolitical contexts. They are also conceived alternatively as a critical audience, suspicious of politicians and prone to trust their peers, opinionated, interested in credible sources of truth but mostly in finding voices closer to their own, expecting "to be, or at least to feel, empowered" (Philip Seib referenced in House of Lords 2014, p. 30), and at times perceived as "extremely volatile and disruptive to anxious authorities" (House of Lords 2014, pp. 29–31). These new global audiences are, therefore, not only conceived as subjects of soft power but also as competing actors who often seek to circulate alternative narratives that challenge politicians and policymakers.

The mechanisms of soft power are also explained in the House of Lords following Nye's account: "To have soft power the UK's attractive traits and assets, such as the

creativity revealed by its culture, need to be understood to have these qualities [benignity, competence, beauty and charisma] so that they result in behavioural change in others" (House of Lords 2014, p. 40).[11] So even when being initially theorized as 'hyper-connected' and imagined as equal counterparts in the 'global conversation', foreign publics or audiences are still often conceived of in the House of Lords report as passively receiving British culture: "Most of the UK's cultural outputs, such as its literature, music, films and television programmes, are accessible to a huge audience, creating opportunities for people to develop a relationship with the UK" (House of Lords 2014, p. 104). Mattern's (2007, p. 118, f.n. 4) 'cultural osmosis' seems to be taking place here.

The report also suggests that influence might occur as a consequence of "building relationships with British people" (House of Lords 2014, p. 40). The emphasis seems to be on the general public, as "the resulting positive influence can develop through elite relations and networks. But more often publics and third parties are influenced, and they in turn influence the leaders of other countries" (House of Lords 2014, p. 40). Despite these claims, the report identifies mechanisms that seem more likely (in their view) to result in beneficial outcomes that entail physical – as opposed to virtual or mediated – "elite relations and networks" (House of Lords 2014, p. 55). The House of Lords is clearer in identifying which groups from the 'elites' of foreign countries are to be specifically targeted as subjects of soft power (and given access to UK visas quickly): students (future leaders and not to be included in net migration targets), researchers, scientists, business men and women, migrants "whose presence would further the UK's domestic and international interests" and tourists (House of Lords 2014, pp. 96–112; see also British Council 2014b, p. 268). But still, it is not entirely sure of who the general public overseas are.

### *Towards an integrative strategy?*

Despite claims to engage with a 'hyper-connected' public, the insistence on terms like 'deploy', 'project' or 'promote', representative of a nation-branding-inspired approach (Pamment 2012, p. 72), appear combined with the sense throughout the whole report of a possible loss of influence in a competitive environment. The report states from the onset that:

> The so-called 'rise of the rest' (the rising power and influence of the non-Western world), and in particular the rapid escalation in the might of Asia are coinciding with an unprecedented explosion in instant cross-border connectivity between citizens. These parallel phenomena are resulting in major alterations in the distribution of global power, and real changes in the very nature of power. In our inquiry, we explored what these shifts mean for the UK's position in the world and its ability to maintain its prosperity and security.
>
> (House of Lords 2014, p. 23)

Embedded in this is an incongruence between specific communication strategies and the UK's soft power 'grand strategy'. The relational framework would, to quote Zaharna, call for an organization's 'grand strategy' to be 'integrative'; that is, a strategy that views change as positive and an opportunity to grow, in which "Publics are viewed as 'interpretative communities' with legitimate interests and the organization works with publics to define issues and bring about changes" (Zaharna 2009, pp. 158–9). Indeed, the BBCWS does claim that their "assessment of the BBC's role has been informed by conversations

with a range of stakeholders" (BBC 2014a, p. 141). Despite this self-proclaimed role as enablers of a global conversation, however, the statements in the submission belong mostly to British academics (BBC 2014a, pp. 140–9).

Two-way communication ends up being seen as necessary only insofar as it ensures that the UK – or rather, its government as an agent of soft power – can effectively 'project' its values and defend its interests. Whilst dialogue seems to be promoted in the report, the aim is still to find "how the very most can be made of our undoubtedly unique assets" to avoid the UK "finding itself outwitted, out-competed, and increasingly insecure" (House of Lords 2014, pp. 7 and 9). The report sees other emerging powers as "competitors" and urges the government to "act to ensure that the UK is able to seize the opportunities presented by those soft power strengths, in order to turn them into the real competitive advantages that we believe can help to maintain and if possible enhance the UK's world position and deliver its interests" (House of Lords 2014, p. 24).

Aware of the hyper-connectedness of the new global arena, the report stresses how it has "become difficult for governments (and others) to 'segment' their messages on a particular issue for different audiences". To be sure, "in an age of hyper-connectivity, there are stronger links between domestic and foreign policy than at any time in the past" (House of Lords 2014, p. 126), particularly through the networks created by diasporas, which are in turn an example of promotable diversity at home because they prove that the UK is a tolerant and welcoming country (House of Lords 2014, p. 122). At the same time, however, the divide between British citizens and 'others' – the real subjects of soft power – remains deeply entrenched. It is the British public that needs to be informed of why soft power strategies are important for their security and prosperity (House of Lords 2014, p. 57). The report insists that the government must have "confidence in communicating with the British public" how soft power can "deliver tangible and measurable results over time" (House of Lords 2014, p. 57). Soft power outcomes are here to benefit, above all, the British public.

Another example of the tensions that arise from conflating such benefits with an apparently relational framework appears in the section of the report dedicated to foreign aid. As the House of Lords report concludes, there is "a clear overlap between commerce, international development, and the benefits that aid spending bring to British soft power" (House of Lords 2014, p. 73). True, the report aims at balancing a utilitarian promotion of UK aid, in which the benefits are based on gaining recognition, with the necessity to consider how the UK's actions might actually benefit local communities and generate a positive environmental impact (House of Lords 2014, p. 73). Nonetheless, it is still maintained that "a careful approach is needed to ensure that UK aid is spent in a way that both benefits people overseas *and* contributes to British soft power" (House of Lords 2014, p. 75).[12] The report insists on how "the promotion of British values through the funding of international development projects can yield significant soft power gains" (Gary Rawnsley referenced in House of Lords 2014, p. 73), and how considering other cultures might actually increase "the attractiveness of the UK in cultural or presentational terms" (Sir Jeremy Greenstock, as cited in House of Lords 2014, p. 73). In another passage, it is stated that "DFID should give consideration to the degree to which its work can support the promotion of British values" (House of Lords 2014, p. 75). Even promoting human rights can thus be seen as an asset of soft power. As the BC explains, the work of the FCO in promoting human rights abroad is "incredibly important to the UK's reputation", and "speaking out against repression, intolerance and criminality builds trust" with the victims of abuse and the "silent majority who despise injustice" (British Council 2014b, as cited in House of Lords 2014, p. 60).

In fact, the suggestion is quite clearly that the interests of 'other peoples' are best served precisely by 'British values such as democracy and the rule of law'. These, it appears, would "promote the stability of the countries involved and the wellbeing of their people" (House of Lords 2014, p. 75). As the critics of Nye's theory of soft power have pointed out repeatedly, 'universal' values are invoked as attractive and beneficial for the world's population as a whole, whilst at the same time they are claimed as belonging to a specific actor (Lebow 2007, Mattern 2005, Bilgin and Elis 2008, Zahran and Ramos 2010). Tensions often seem to coexist between different voices within the House of Lords report. As Urs Matthias Zachmann explains, "soft power which is successful *because* it is 'universal' is self-defeating in its purpose to promote specific national interest" (House of Lords 2014, p. 48). The BC, the BBCWS, the *Financial Times*, *The Economist* and the British Museum are all perceived (or at least perceive themselves) as primarily universal or aiming at global appeal (House of Lords 2014, p. 48). In fact, the BBCWS explicitly believes that its credibility is increased precisely because it is perceived not just as British but as also belonging to a global audience:

> The World Service is described as 'the world's radio station', meaning 'a sense of ownership by the world of something that is obviously a British-funded asset'. The BBC Trust has said explicitly that the World Service's perspective should not be based on a British national or commercial interest, because, as Peter Horrocks told us, 'other countries have services that are explicitly about reflecting the national political agenda … and their services are regarded as being propaganda'. According to Horrocks, by having an 'even-handed global perspective', the BBC 'can attract people to Britain precisely because we are not pursuing a British agenda'.
>
> (House of Lords 2014, p. 48)[13]

Despite still being considered by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as assets of British soft power, the BC and the BBCWS do not see their activities as directly concerned with soft power strategies, but rather see soft power as a by-product of their work:

> The BBC is not a soft power 'asset' to be deployed at will by the Government. However, through providing global public goods, the most trusted objective international news services, and content which deepens knowledge and understanding, and is inspiring and entertaining, it is able to project positive values about the UK around the world, and enables the UK to accrue soft power, both geopolitically and economically.
>
> (BBC 2014a, p. 140)[14]

Nonetheless, for the purpose of the House of Lords inquiry, the BBCWS and the BC did include in their evidence examples of audience research conducted in order to assess the soft power outcomes of the organizations.

## *Evaluating British soft power: the cultural value of the BBC World Service and the British Council*

When we look at the 'evidence' given by the British Council and the BBC World Service in relation to their role as soft power resources, it is obvious that concerns about the global and hyper-connected publics as subjects (albeit not yet stakeholders) of soft power

become more specific. These organizations do in practice give special attention to audiences and their responses (Gillespie, Mackay and Webb 2011; Wilding 2007). Audience research has been essential for the practice of the BBCWS and the BC, as the evidence given to the House of Lords Committee shows (for an overview of evaluation methods used by the BBC and the BC within the context of British PD, see Pamment 2012, pp. 71–98). The BC, for example, informed the committee that their "evaluation framework is grounded in a theory of change. Within the context of our overall strategy and purpose it sets out logically how our work in Arts, English, and Education and Society achieves positive change for our UK and overseas stakeholders" (British Council 2014b, p. 270). Peter Horrocks, the then Director of the BBC World Service, also gave examples of how the BBCWS aims at gathering information from overseas publics beyond measuring consumption:

> The BBC's audiences consumed a lot of Olympics content, as you would expect, but, as you say, just consumption does not prove the point. We have an online panel of those who use the BBC around the world, and when we asked them after 2012 two-thirds of them said they found the BBC coverage improved their perception of London and the UK in general and more than 80% of them said they were now more interested in visiting London or the UK as a result of it.
>
> (BBC World Service, British Council and British Museum 2014, p. 168)

Despite the reference of the BC to 'change' and 'stakeholders', most of the examples of evaluation methods given by the BC and the BBCWS in the evidence belong to what James Pamment designates as the 'outputs', the 'outcomes' or the 'perception' models (2014, pp. 55–6). Each of these models represents an articulation of evaluation tools, which respond to different theories of influence and the data needed to support it (Pamment 2014, p. 54). All of these articulations are best suited to the traditional mass-media information framework and are mostly cause–effect orientated, an aspect which even Nye considers as only a first approximation to evaluating soft power outcomes, usually a task best suited to "historians able to sort causes well after the events" (Nye 2011, p. 95).[15] In contrast, evaluation of soft power strategies within a relational framework could be done with "network models" (Pamment 2014, p. 57) which focus on relationship management, for example by assessing the partners' satisfaction with and the duration of the relationship (Zaharna 2009, p. 149). Pamment argues that instead of considering an evaluation method to be 'better' than the others, it would be best to attempt to "understand the relevance and validity of each approach within the context of institutional needs, national cultures of accountability, and how they influence the manner in which PD is conducted" (2014, p. 57). Our analysis highlights how the evaluation models chosen by the BBCWS and the BC in light of the report seem to respond to the need to account for their activities as generating soft power outcomes despite how unsupported such claims have proven to be. It seems that in 2014, "[t]he British take on the new PD" *still* "puts the organization's desired goals – as outcomes – ahead of attempting to understand reception" (Pamment 2012, p. 85), and, for that matter, the active role of the subjects of soft power strategies.

The examples given by the British Council and the BBC World Service in the context of an inquiry on soft power to prove how their institutions have an effect on overseas publics clash with their intended grand strategies. Their engagement with new media and the concepts of 'mutuality', 'hyper-connectivity' and of the 'global conversation' contrast

with the audience research data given in the House of Lords evidence, which points more towards an understanding of soft power as resources to wield and behavioural outcomes to account for, even if it is as a collateral effect of their cultural and broadcasting activities. In fact, both the BC and the BBCWS have participated in the Cultural Value Model project, the goal of which has been to understand how the BC and the BBCWS generate cultural value abroad and at home by interacting with their users and audiences (Gillespie *et al*. 2014, p. 4). This in itself proves how having to adapt to the governmental logics of soft power can limit the scope of action of these institutions, forced in the context of this particular inquiry to demonstrate their success with data that does not reflect the complexity of assessing the changing relationship of the BBCWS and the BC with their audiences.

In accordance with the connective mindshift, the Cultural Value Model (CVM) builds on a relational perspective, not only because it views cultural value as interdependent with economic and political value, but because it places the 'creation' of cultural value (and the soft power it entails) in "the dynamic triangular relationship between (i) the audiences, (ii) the organizations themselves and (iii) their funders" (Gillespie *et al*. 2014, p. 4). By shifting the focus from soft power to an assessment of the ways in which cultural value "is conceived, articulated and assessed, over time" (Gillespie *et al*. 2014, p. 4), the risk of an "overly instrumental view which views culture simply as a tool" can be avoided (Gillespie and Webb 2014, p. 442). If the BC and the BBCWS want to contribute "to fostering reflective individuals and engaged citizens", they need to face the changing nature of trust-building in the global communication era, and take full advantage of 'network frameworks' which emphasize a dialogic process (Gillespie *et al*. 2014, pp. 36–7). CVM evaluation methods, which emphasize the interpretation and understanding of cultural value, can build on the ways "intersecting aesthetic, political, ethical and social experiences are articulated in social media discussions and qualitative analyses of such digital traces ('big data' resources)" which can in turn be combined "with 'thick ethnographic' description to promote new ways of understanding and evidencing cultural value" (Gillespie *et al*. 2014, p. 37). This contrasts with and contributes to linear and causal-effect evaluation methods and audience research. As culture and communication are at the centre of soft power, the CVM can account for the articulation of informational and network strategies in a broader perspective while shifting the focus from the projection to the "reception of meanings in complex cultural and communication environments" (Gillespie and Webb 2014, p. 438), therefore bringing to the fore a meaningful role of the audiences. While the BC and the BBCWS have realized the importance of this shift, not least by actively contributing to the CVM, in the context of the 2014 House of Lords report their language and evidence are constrained by the limitations of thinking in terms of soft power as resources, even if 'targeting' a hyper-connected public.

## Conclusion

Our critique of the concept of soft power from an audience-centred perspective showed how ambiguities regarding the shift towards a network framework that conceives of empowered publics within the current global communications era translate from theory to policy discourse. The examples of the BC and the BBCWS show how the way in which they conceive of their audiences does not always match their intended grand strategy of

empowering a hyper-connected public and engaging with them in a global conversation, particularly in the context of an inquiry into soft power. Despite seeing them as a global constituency, there is also a sense in which 'projection' and 'deployment' is best served in contextualized (foreign) national contexts. While the House of Lords report, the BBCWS and the BC have embraced the rhetoric of the connective mindshift they struggle to put it into practice. This is not surprising given the challenges involved. The ambiguities and contradictions explored via the case study mirror the theoretical difficulties inherent in conflating the relational framework with the concept of soft power understood in terms of resources. Ultimately, it might prove more useful, and perhaps more ethical, to overcome the preoccupation with wielding (soft) power and projecting the right message, and focus on how to best engage publics as partners and co-creators of meaning in complex cultural contexts.

## Notes

1 Also Foucault (Lukes 2007; Ringmar 2007; Lock 2010), Bourdieu (Mattern 2007, p. 101) or Lukes (Nye 2007; Lukes 2007; Mattern 2007, p. 101; Bilgin and Elis 2008; Vuving 2009; Hayden 2012).
2 Nye's explanation of the specific mechanisms of soft power is also regarded as rather vague. A much more detailed interrogation of whether and how soft power works is required (Lebow 2007; Mattern 2005; Vuving 2009; Rothman 2011; Hayden 2012).
3 To be fair, Nye has always insisted that "Soft power is not a form of idealism or liberalism. It is simply a form of power" (2007, p. 170).
4 Although Nye uses the concept of 'narrative', by focusing on soft power he fails to develop a framework to capture the processes that shape and are shaped by narratives and its components, including the audiences (Roselle *et al*. 2014, p. 75).
5 Our emphasis.
6 Our emphasis.
7 James Pamment has advanced the notion of "articulation" in order to give a "framework for interpreting evaluation practices from a contextualized perspective, which grasps how and why soft power practices assume certain forms" (2014, p. 51).
8 The report broadly refers to the subjects of soft power by using the terms 'audience', the 'public' and the 'people' (with a few 'citizens' and 'nationals' in there), often combined with adjectives such as 'foreign', 'overseas', 'international' or 'global'.
9 Our emphasis.
10 Even when talking about a "vast audience", the House of Lords points out that "access to the internet is not universal and that there are parts of the world where governments seek to constrain internet usage, but the trend is clearly towards greater openness and a lower degree of state control" (House of Lords 2014, p. 29).
11 Nye based these qualities on Vuving 2009.
12 Our emphasis.
13 The 'Britishness' and 'universality' of the BBC was discussed in the oral interview (BBC World Service, British Council and British Museum 2014, p. 156).
14 This contradiction was partially resolved by the withdrawal of Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) funding for BBCWS in 2014.
15 For this report Nye claimed that public opinion polling could be called a "surrogate rather than a perfect measure" since it does not account for "the ultimate outcome, which is changed behaviour" (2014, p. 759). Nye and Horrocks also noted the high costs of surveying (Nye 2014, p. 759; BBC 2014a, p. 169).

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# 16

# SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOFT POWER POLITICS IN AFRICA

## Lessons from Nigeria's #BringBackOurGirls and Kenya's #SomeoneTellCNN

*Matthew O. Adeiza and Philip N. Howard*

### Introduction

Students of international relations are interested in power because it is central to understanding how nation-states relate to one another. States draw on different types of power in international relations that have been extensively discussed and theorized (Holsti 1964; Morgenthau 2006). Our contribution in this chapter is restricted to a conceptualization of a kind of power that was popularized by Joseph Nye in the early 1990s – soft power (Nye 2004, 1990). Soft power, Nye (1990, p. 166) explains, "occurs when one country gets other countries to want what it wants." Principally, soft power depends on "attraction" rather than coercion of, or payments to, other international actors (Nye 2006). The digital revolution enabled by the internet has empowered non-state actors to be more consequential in generating and utilizing soft power on an unprecedented scale (Bennett and Segerberg 2013; Castells 2012, 2007). Various ways through which soft power is generated and utilized have been examined in this volume (see Naren Chitty's chapter on 'Soft power, civic virtue and world politics', for example).

Our goal in this chapter is to present two examples of how social media has become a means of generating soft power in Africa, and to enunciate a new theoretical variant we call *social media soft power*. By social media soft power we mean the concerted international attention and buy-in into an issue or sympathy towards a cause generated by the savvy use of social media either by state or non-state actors. For the purpose of this chapter, we analyze cases of soft power in which the political actors of one country influenced how outsiders perceived and responded to domestic issues with non-sanction and informal social media techniques. With evidence from original content analysis and fieldwork interviews, we present two cases of such social media soft power: one demonstration of a citizen-driven campaign and another example illustrating convergence of interest between a government and citizens.

First we discuss how a Nigerian activist campaign to rescue over 270 girls kidnapped by the Islamist terrorist group Boko Haram went viral, drawing global attention and sympathy to the conflict in the north-east of the country and the suffering of vulnerable

women and children in the region. The girls have not all been rescued as at the time of completing this chapter, the campaign had other multiple unintended consequences for domestic and international affairs.

Second, in Kenya, a campaign by ordinary citizens to counter American television network CNN's coverage of President Barack Obama's visit to the country also received global coverage and had a small effect on subsequent coverage of the country during the US president's visit. We argue, drawing from these cases, that successful cases of social media soft power occur when the interests of some elites and ordinary citizens align to promote a particular cause. What constitutes 'success' in each case is open to different interpretations but it is clear that social media provides new opportunities for actors to exercise influence beyond their borders in a way that would be too expensive, and almost impossible at the turn of the twenty-first century in a developing region like Africa.

## Soft power in African politics

Soft power relies on subtly influencing the preferences of other actors to favor the same outcomes as the influencing actor. Influencer states aim to use their culture, political values and ideologies, and foreign policies to achieve geopolitical goals (Nye 2006). While Nye's work was primarily to explain how the US could continue to promote desired foreign policy objectives in a post-Cold War interdependent world, the term soft power has been adopted to explain a wide variety of co-option strategies which state and non-state actors adopt to influence foreign actors.

Unlike the US and other rich, developed (mainly western) countries, only six African countries have a GDP per capita of more than $10,000 (compared to $53,000 for the US). Consequently, they are incapable of using hard power to pursue foreign policy objectives. So their only real option is to generate soft power that makes their preferred foreign policy objectives attractive to other international actors. But as Nye has argued elsewhere, soft power is not enough to achieve foreign policy goals – state actors need 'smart power', that is, a combination of hard and soft power (Nye 2009). However, such standards do not necessarily apply to non-state actors like civil society groups who want to draw international attention and sympathy to an issue of domestic, regional or global importance. It is these groups that social media soft power most applies to, as our cases show.

Social media presents a huge opportunity for activists in Africa to engage global audiences online without huge resource commitments. Social media's relative low cost and openness compared to broadcast and print makes it a ready tool for people-powered campaigns (Eltantawy and Wiest 2011; Shirky 2011, 2009). Moreover, there is evidence that using information technologies over time increases a citizen's overall informational sophistication (Howard and Massanari 2007). The two cases we discuss show how these affordances of digital media were put to use by activists in Nigeria and Kenya, two leading technology hubs in Africa.

The remaining part of this chapter is organized into three sections. First, we discuss how the #BringBackOurGirls campaign started in Nigeria, spread around the world and created a public relations deficit for President Goodluck Jonathan that he could not overcome, contributing to his loss in Nigeria's presidential election in March 2015. Then we analyze a campaign in Kenya against perceived CNN negative coverage of the country, and ask if the campaign had any effect in the subsequent coverage of President Barack Obama's visit to the country in July 2015. We coded news stories from three popular mainstream British and US media, which shows that negative stories in American media

dropped significantly after the protest but increased in British media in the same period. Finally, we conclude with lessons that can be drawn from the cases in understanding how state and non-state actors with limited resources can utilize new technologies to project soft power.

## How Nigerians made the world care about 276 missing girls

Nigeria has been waging a war against the Islamic terrorist group Boko Haram for over four years but no one could have anticipated the scale of the militants' actions on the night of 14 April 2014. As many Nigerians went to bed that night some 276 young girls in a school dormitory in the north-east of the country where the militants were active were about to experience a horrifying ordeal. The girls were sleeping in a dormitory in Chibok village, where they had gathered from different villages to sit the graduating examination taken by all high school students in the country. As they slept, the terrorists reportedly invaded the compound and ordered them into waiting trucks before setting the school on fire (AP 2014). A few of them escaped to narrate their ordeal but most of them were transported by trucks to Sambisa forest, a vast expanse of savannah forest of nearly 23,000 square miles close to Chibok.

News of the attack and kidnapping soon filtered into Maiduguri, the capital of the state where the kidnapping occurred. During the following few days, news of the kidnapped girls began to appear in Nigerian and international media. First there were estimates of 120 girls; then it became clear that the number of kidnapped girls was much higher. The Nigerian army initially released a statement claiming to have rescued the abducted girls but they retracted it a few days later as the parents of the girls told the media that their children had not been rescued (Abubakar *et al*. 2014). For nearly three weeks after the event, President Goodluck Jonathan did not publicly comment on the kidnapping, and statements from his spokesman indicated that the government did not believe the girls were actually kidnapped (Okocha *et al*. 2014).

The first major presidential response was to constitute a 'fact-finding committee' on 2 May 2014 to determine what actually happened in Chibok, and the president only personally addressed the issue on 6 May (Agande 2014). This was after protesters under the banner of #BringBackOurGirls had taken to the streets to demand the rescue of the girls. The Nigerian media, which had become inured to the atrocities of Boko Haram, also treated it the new normal way – report and forget. The international media followed suit and the international community largely ignored it (Perkins 2014). The girls, it appeared, would be like several hundred other women, girls and boys that Boko Haram had killed or kidnapped before Chibok. However, a movement that formed a week after the kidnapping would bring the issue to international prominence and force local and foreign actors to take notice and act.

On 23 April, a week after the kidnapping, a former Nigerian education minister and former vice president of the World Bank, Ms Obiageli Ezekwesili, was a guest speaker at an event in the southern city of Port Harcourt to mark its designation by UNESCO as the 2014 World Book Capital. During her speech, she asked the audience to stand up and "[j]oin us in declaring that Port Harcourt as the Book Capital of the world makes a collective demand for the rescue of our schoolgirls." She noted that given how difficult it is to get girls into school in the first place, the kidnapping of the girls demanded action from those gathered to force the federal government to rescue the girls. She ended by saying, "So today, we call together, bring back all our daughters." Meanwhile, a lawyer in the

federal capital northern part of the country, Ibrahim Abdullahi, who watched the program on television, tweeted it with a little modification, "Yes #BringBackOurDaughters #BringBackOurGirls declared by @obyezeks and all people at Port Harcourt World Book Capital 2014." Later that evening, Ezekwesili retweeted him, adding two more:

> Earlier today @ the celebration of Port Harcourt as World Book Capital 2014 WE collectively STOOD & ASKED the FGN to #BringBackOurGirls … Lend your Voice to the Cause of our Girls. Please All, use the hashtag #BringBackOurGirls to keep the momentum UNTIL they are RESCUED.
>
> (Neubauer 2014)

The hashtag soon trended worldwide and the story was picked up by local and international media. In the following days it was reported by the BBC, CNN, *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and the *Guardian*, among others. Several Nigerian media outlets also created a countdown widget on their websites to remind visitors of the number of days the girls had been in Boko Haram captivity. As the hashtag received local and international media attention, world leaders and celebrities joined the campaign, using the hashtag to condemn the kidnapping and call for the girls to be rescued. President Barack Obama spoke to ABC calling the kidnapping "heartbreaking" (Zee and Bruce 2014), and the US Senate passed a resolution condemning the kidnapping and calling on the US and Nigerian governments to do everything possible to rescue the girls (NBC News 2014). The British Prime Minister David Cameron tweeted "proud to support #BringBackOurGirls" (BBC 2014a), US first lady Michelle Obama and other celebrities including Anne Hathaway, Alicia Keys, Amy Poehler, Angelina Jolie, Kim Kardashian and Cara Delevingne also expressed support for the campaign by posting a picture of themselves with the hashtag (Eby 2014).

The kidnapping, unlike previous Boko Haram abductions that the Nigerian government and world leaders had simply ignored, gained international prominence and could no longer be ignored. But one year later, the girls had not been rescued. Local and international media stories marking the one-year anniversary of the kidnapping suggested that the #BringBackOurGirls campaign had failed because the girls had not been rescued (Chandler 2015; Shearlaw 2015). However, that is only half of the story. Throughout the period of the girls' captivity, we have argued that the campaign demonstrates how local people can set the agenda and frame an issue for the world. In addition, the effects of the campaign were also felt in Nigerian internal politics.

## *Social media soft power as a game changer?*

The lead author conducted interviews[1] with members of the #BringBackOurGirls (BBOG) campaign in September 2014 in Abuja to understand the dynamics of the group's operations. BBOG members come from diverse ethnic and professional backgrounds, and most of those interviewed had never met before the protests started. While many of them said they learned about the movement from sources offline, every one of them said that their continued participation was enabled by social media, especially Twitter and SMS. Voluntary group meetings were in the afternoon and at the Unity Fountain in Abuja. Because the meetings occurred daily, some people could only attend at irregular intervals. However, because members constantly updated their Twitter accounts about discussions at meetings, even those who could not attend meetings could keep up with

developments and maintain a psychological connection to the group. It also made it easy for special events like visits by an important politician or a foreign diplomat to be easily disseminated to members. For many members, maintaining that sense of community and connection even when they were unable to physically attend meetings encouraged them to attend whenever they had an opportunity.

Social media also played an important role in the early stage of the protests when campaign activists faced harassment from the federal government. The Jonathan administration found the campaigners' daily meeting a painful reminder of its failure to rescue the kidnapped girls, and a potential electoral threat to his reelection bid in the election scheduled for early 2015 (BBC 2014b). Initially, government supporters labeled the protesters as opposition operatives who were 'playing politics' with the kidnapped girls (BBC 2014b). On one occasion, the protesters' sit-in at their Unity Foundation was attacked by 'hoodlums' while police stood by and watched (Tukur 2014), and a few days later the group was "banned" by the police for "posing a serious security threat" (Abubakar 2014). The group disregarded the ban and continued their daily sit-ins. Two leaders of the group told us in an interview that when they moved to a privately owned property for the meetings, government agents sent threats to the owner that they would ruin his business if he continued to host the meetings. They were surprised because they did not consider themselves anti-government and some even expected the government to work with them to seek international support. A leader in the group noted that since the government was determined to undermine their protests, they turned to social media to publicize their struggles and to publicly shame the government into not attacking them. It is plausible that without a means of reaching the world outside of mainstream media, the protests would have been more forcefully disrupted by government agents and would have stopped.

The cat and mouse struggle between the government and the protesters resulted in an unintended consequence for President Jonathan. By actively opposing a group the world had come to love and support, the president isolated himself not just from many Nigerians but also from world leaders. As the elections drew nearer, the opposition All Progressives Congress used the failure of the president to rescue the girls or be sympathetic towards their cause to argue in campaign messages that President Jonathan was no longer suitable to lead the country. In adverts in the media online and offline, the opposition sought to portray the president as a weak, inefficient leader that was incapable of leading a country as big and important as Nigeria (Ejiofor 2015). The media coverage of the election campaigns, too, became fixated on the plight of the Chibok girls and the government's failure to free them from the terrorist group. Evidence of how important it was emerged a few weeks before the election when the government abruptly postponed it from 14 February to 28 March 2015. Following the postponement, media reports indicated that the government had employed the services of mercenaries from South Africa to fight the insurgents and rescue the girls. In the weeks preceding the election, the military (and the mercenaries) regained several towns from the insurgents but could not rescue the girls (Nossiter 2015). But rather than enhancing the image of the president, this progress only served to highlight the failure of the government to act for over a year.

The pressure faced by President Jonathan as he sought re-election extended beyond Nigeria's borders. As the president lost more support within the country, major international players were also becoming uncomfortable with his administration (Cocks 2014). In January 2015, the government announced that it was postponing the election to enable it tackle the threat of Boko Haram to voters and ensure that those in the north-east of the country could vote. In what some Jonathan supporters saw as an unusually harsh

criticism, the State Department called the postponement "unacceptable" and accused the government of using "security concerns as a pretext for impeding the democratic process" (Kerry 2015a). One week before the rescheduled election, the US Secretary of State John Kerry and the UK Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond wrote a rather passive-aggressive opinion in the *Huffington Post*, arguing that "Nigeria has been held back by local tensions, a wide disparity between rich and poor, the lack of an adequate safety net for the disadvantaged, shortages of electricity, a rigid bureaucracy, and widespread corruption. These challenges have made the country vulnerable to internal conflict including the kidnappings, murders, and other atrocities perpetrated by Boko Haram" (Kerry 2015b).

A few hours after polls closed and Nigerians waited for the results, Kerry and Hammond released another statement warning that the results "may be subject to deliberate political interference" (Sieff 2015), and the international community did not take it lightly. A few hours later, after the election results were announced and the incumbent had lost, Kerry released another statement that did not mention the "political interference" they had feared earlier. Instead, he congratulated "Nigeria's Independent National Election Commission (INEC) and its Chairman, Attahiru Jega, on the generally orderly vote, on the use of technology such as card readers to increase the credibility and transparency of the electoral process, and on prompt communication of the results. While we note reports of logistical problems, such incidents did not undermine the overall outcome of the election" (Kerry 2015c).

In addition to diplomats, several major western media organizations wrote damning editorials on the president before the election, either explicitly or implicitly endorsing the opposition candidate Muhammadu Buhari in what some within the Jonathan administration considered a proxy war on him (Akinloye and Alagbe 2015). In endorsing Buhari, *The Economist* declared President Jonathan "an utter failure", arguing that Buhari was the better of two bad options available in the election (The Economist 2015). The *New York Times* was more tacit but the language was telling: it described Jonathan as a "lousy incumbent" who had spent much of the previous year "playing down the threat posed by the militants (Boko Haram)." Listing the failures of the government, including failure to rescue the abducted girls and corruption, among others, the *New York Times* (NYT) noted that Nigerians had begun "to look for new leadership" (NYT Editorial Board 2015).

The UK-based *Guardian* was more guarded but the tone was similar, cataloguing the worsening state of corruption and the "inertness" of President Jonathan while noting that the opposition candidate Buhari "has a reputation as one of the more honest and well-intentioned of the country's military rulers" (The Guardian 2015). Besides editorials, several of the newspapers published stories that portrayed an unflattering image of the incumbent president and a more flattering view of his challenger.

The Jonathan administration interpreted the reports, editorials, and warnings as an international conspiracy to oust him from power. A few weeks after the election, a media aide to the president asserted that "One of the reasons President Jonathan lost the election was a national and international conspiracy predicated on this carefully choreographed and assiduously sustained perception (of an incompetent president unable to rescue over 200 girls kidnapped under his watch)." Earlier in February, as controversy over the postponement of the February date raged on and western countries seemed to side with the opposition, Nigeria's Foreign Affairs Minister, Ambassador Aminu Wali, warned the US and its allies against "unguarded utterances" and "political advocacy

that are totally unrelated to conventional diplomacy" (Ojeme 2015). What is clear from the Jonathan administration is a sense of victimization – a pervading belief that he was abandoned by local allies and international partners at a critical moment. This can be further understood in the context of increasing rhetorical attacks from former President Olusegun Obasanjo, who played a major role in making Jonathan president in 2011. In letters and interviews the former president sought to distance himself from Jonathan, and even blamed him for failure to rescue the abducted girls (Crowcroft 2015).

We argue that Jonathan's loss of allies and isolation from international partners was due in part to the influence of the BBOG online and offline campaign. On the international front, the BBOG campaign drew international attention to the plight of the girls and Jonathan's response made him look callous to the international community. The consequent international media coverage that portrayed him as incompetent and unconcerned about the plight of young girls kidnapped under his watch made it difficult for governments in the west to associate with his government (Cocks 2014). On the local front, the messages from foreign governments and media served as cannon fodder for the opposition All Progressives Congress party as they also sought to portray the incumbent as "clueless" (Ejiofor 2015). The mismanagement of the fight against Boko Haram and the kidnapped girls became a defining frame of incompetence and corruption in opposition campaign messages. At the same time, we argue, it appeared increasingly uncool to associate with a president who was indifferent to the security of Nigerians. There may be other explanations for why the president lost the election but we believe that Jonathan's adversarial approach to the BBOG and his perceived incompetence in rescuing the kidnapped girls (which his challenger promised to do) created a public relations deficit that he could not overcome, and therefore he subsequently lost the presidential election.

The international outcry that followed the kidnapping of the girls was possible because ordinary Nigerians found a way to link up with people around the world and make them care. Over 2,000 people – including children, boys, girls and women – have been kidnapped since 2011 but the only incident that attracted national and international attention and exerted such pressure on the government was the Chibok girls. If the biggest impact was the ousting of President Jonathan, an interesting part of that process was how local actors set the agenda for international media. Before the #BringBackOurGirls campaign started, the kidnapping of the girls was discussed in international media as another episode in the war between the terrorist Boko Haram group and the Nigerian state. However, because a coalition of Nigerians (the leaders were highly educated with international networks) used social media to frame the kidnapping and the government's response as something much more significant, the international media picked up the narrative and were followed by their governments. The citizens who started and sustained the process had no means of using force to make people across the globe care about an event in a small corner of Nigeria. This shows how non-state actors can become significant in international relations and how the complex web of relations they maintain could shape issues and debates in sometimes unintended ways.

## Kenyan twitter protests against US media stereotypes

Western media has a long history of misunderstanding and misrepresenting African politics and culture. In a lecture at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in 1975, one of Africa's most important novelists, Chinua Achebe, delivered a blistering critique of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, calling him a "a bloody racist" for his portrayal of

the continent and its inhabitants in the novel (Achebe 1975). Conrad's novel became a poster book for racism in western literature and media. Achebe's critique aligns with broader critiques of international media that they ignore positive developments and overemphasize the negatives about the continent. Beyond such critiques, African states have no comparable communication infrastructure to reach global audiences as western media do (Gallagher 2015).

In 1976, an international effort to address the Global South's communication disadvantage led UNESCO to constitute the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems. The Commission, headed by Irish Nobel Laureate Sean MacBride, submitted its report *Many Voices, One World* in 1980. The report called for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) that strengthens national communication infrastructure to protect some countries that are disadvantaged in the global communication marketplace (The MacBride Commission 2003). Several western countries protested, and the US left UNESCO in 1984, only rejoining the organization in 2003. An assessment by Carlsson (2003) found that the objectives of NWICO had largely failed. Some recent studies have shown that the complexities of how coverage of Africa stories by international media are driven by economic imperatives rather than some hidden imperial agenda (Bunce 2015), and how ambiguous the idea of a true "Africa story" could be (Jacobs 2015).

The phenomenal growth of internet users in Africa from just over 4.5 million in 2000 to 330 million in 2015 (Internet World Stats 2015) has radically transformed the media landscape: as more people go online, they are able to engage with global audiences to influence how their countries are portrayed in the international media. The internet, unlike previous communication technologies, makes it easy for people to interact with and respond to messages they receive. The #SomeoneTellCNN protest in Kenya demonstrates how citizens who go online are not just passive consumers but can actively shape global discourses about their countries, especially as it relates to historically uneven power balance in access to communication technologies.

CNN had deployed a number of reporters and camera crew to Kenya ahead of President Obama's visit. In the morning of 23 July 2015, two days before Obama was due to arrive in Kenya, CNN published a story that labeled Kenya a "hotbed of terror". Many Kenyans took to Twitter to call out CNN's inaccurate labeling of their country with the hashtag #SomeoneTellCNN. Several of the tweets were humorous and offered an alternative view of Kenya: its beautiful safaris, bubbling cities, successful athletes, entrepreneurial citizens and stellar economic growth. The campaign soon trended worldwide and was picked up by several international media organizations including the *Washington Post*, the *Huffington Post*, France 24 and the BBC, among others (Amos 2015; Tharoor 2015). Kenya's Tourism Board also canceled an advert placement with the CNN. It changed the title of the online version of the story to "Obama's trip raises security concerns". Some of the tweets after CNN changed the article title suggested that they felt they had successfully changed the narrative and had sent a 'warning' to other media organizations to be fair in their coverage of the country. But how true is this optimism about the capacity of ordinary Kenyan citizens to change the behaviors of foreign media organizations? We investigated the effects using published online articles about Kenya in six major media outlets in the US and the UK The result and discussion are presented below.

To investigate, we selected three media organizations each in the UK and US that are popular and mainstream, regularly cover world affairs and devoted significant attention

to President Obama's visit to Kenya. We coded for story sentiments before and after the protest. Since our goal is to discover whether the protest successfully changed media behavior, we determined content sentiment along three main biases: positive, neutral and negative. The category a story falls into depends on what aspect of life in the country it emphasizes. For example, a story could be about terrorism and neutral if it is presented in a way that does not exaggerate terrorist threats against the visiting US president. The media selected are CNN, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* from the US and the BBC, the *Guardian* and the *Telegraph* from the UK We coded stories published online about Kenya one week before and one week after the campaign; that is, 15–30 July 2015. The BBC website is less structured for navigating previous stories so we had to depend on searching for Kenya as a keyword. It is possible that one or two stories may have been missed. We coded a total of 181 stories: 41 published before the campaign started and 141 after. The findings are presented below. Our goal is not to determine the ideological biases of the media organizations but to demonstrate whether the journalists and editors who covered the president's visit to Kenya responded to #SomeoneTellCNN by changing the tone of their stories.

Table 1.4.16.1 shows that CNN ran a total of 52 stories on Kenya, and about half of them were accompanied by a video; the BBC has a slightly higher proportion of videos in its coverage. These are the only broadcast media coded. Surprisingly, the *Washington Post* rose from just three stories before 23 July to 35 in the following week; one of its stories is a coverage of the backlash against CNN. While the *New York Times* did not run as many stories as either CNN or the *Washington Post*, its stories were longer and more in-depth. Overall, all the media organizations ran more stories in the week after 23 July than the week before, mainly because President Obama arrived in Kenya on 25 July and most of the reports focused on his itinerary and speeches.

Table 1.4.16.2 shows that the proportion of stories that were negative fell from 34.2 per cent to 27.1 per cent in the week following the #SomeoneTellCNN campaign. At the

*Table 1.4.16.1* Number of stories per media website

| | *Before* | *After* |
|---|---|---|
| BBC | *6* | 14 |
| CNN | *15* | 37 |
| New York Times | *6* | 14 |
| Guardian | *6* | 26 |
| Telegraph | *5* | 13 |
| Washington Post | *3* | 35 |

**Keys:** CNN = Cable News Network; BBC = British Broadcasting Corporation

*Source*: From authors.

*Table 1.4.16.2* Changes in story sentiments

| | *Before (%)* | *After (%)* |
|---|---|---|
| Positive | 26.8 | 35 |
| Neutral | 39 | 37.9 |
| Negative | 34.2 | 27.1 |

*Source*: From authors.

same time the proportion of stories that were neutral also fell slightly from 39 per cent to 37.9 per cent. However, the proportion of stories that were positive jumped by 8 per cent from 26.8 per cent to 35 per cent in the week following the protest, the highest change in the three sentiments coded for.

A further breakdown of the data shows that the CNN's negative reports dropped from 33.3 per cent to 29.7 per cent while the overall American media negative sentiment (*New York Times*, *Washington Post* and CNN) dropped from 33.3 per cent to 18.6 per cent. The *Washington Post* skews the data by having less than 1 per cent negative stories overall – only two out of a total of 35 stories after the protest began. Conversely, the British media's negative stories rose from 35.3 per cent before the protest to 45.5 per cent after the protest. The data are heavily skewed by the *Telegraph*, which had 80 per cent negative stories before the protest and 46.2 per cent negative stories after the protest. It also had the least number of stories on Kenya during President Obama's visit, with only 18 stories, most of them analyses of events that happened several months earlier. It also did not carry a single story on the reason Obama visited Kenya: to encourage entrepreneurship and investment.

The results show that, overall, the proportion of stories that were negative dropped significantly by 7 per cent while the proportion of positive stories rose by 8 per cent in the week following the #SomeoneTellCNN campaign. For all media organizations besides the *Guardian* and the BBC there was a drop in the proportion of stories that were negative. Also important is that US media seemed to respond with fewer negative stories than British media. This is possibly because CNN is US-based and other US media organizations knew that they would be the focus of more scrutiny. For example, the *Washington Post* called out CNN's framing of Kenya in its report of the campaign. Subsequently, in its coverage of the president's visit, it only ran two negative stories out of a possible 35. To achieve this, it carried very few reports on the security fears emphasized by CNN. Most of its coverage focused on Kenyans and the various aspects of life in the country as well as President Obama's connection to the country. Having called out CNN in a report, the newspaper seemed to have gone out of its way to present itself as the opposite of CNN: primarily neutral, and largely positive.

Barely a month after Obama visited Kenya, Tony Maddox, a senior executive at CNN, flew to Kenya to apologize to its president, stating that, "We acknowledge there is a widespread feeling that the report annoyed many, which is why we pulled down the report as soon as we noticed. It wasn't a deliberate attempt to portray Kenya negatively, it is regrettable and we shouldn't have done it. There is a world at war with extremists; we know what a hotbed of terror looks like, and Kenya isn't one" (Mutiga 2015). The time frame for this chapter did not allow us to interview journalists who covered the visit but behavior patterns suggest that the campaign decreased overall negative coverage and increased positive stories. This demonstrates that local actors within Kenya with limited resources deployed their collective voices on social media and influenced the behaviors of foreign actors. By deploying humor on social media, Kenyans made it uncool to be covered negatively.

## Conclusion: social media soft power

The purpose of this chapter was to examine, with two cases from sub-Saharan Africa, how social media enables local non-state actors to set an international agenda for local issues. We assessed the #BringBackOurGirls campaign in Nigeria and the #SomeoneTellCNN campaign in Kenya. In the former, the campaign to rescue some 270 kidnapped girls not

only gained international attention and sympathy but also shaped election campaigns nearly a year later. The Nigerian president never recovered from the policy relations deficit created by his reaction to the campaign and became Nigeria's first sitting president to lose an election to the opposition. In Kenya, a combination of Twitter protests with government pulling of adverts from CNN had small positive effects on how US media covered the rest of President Obama's visit to the country. The two cases are citizen-led, underscoring the rising role non-state actors play in international relations in the digital age (Castells 2012). In each case, the mode of organizing can be best described as "connective action" rather than collective action (Bennett and Segerberg 2013).

In important ways, understanding the core of global communication networks reveals much about power and by definition helps us understand what is not happening at the periphery of communication networks. When it comes to media and information, however, technical literacy as well as general literacy varies quite a bit from country to country. Media diets are different in Africa, where print newspapers are still a dominant political institution. Yet the analysis of life on the periphery of media networks is not just about developing countries, it is about sources of social inequality in developed countries too (Howard 2015). And, in surprising ways, social media has become one of the media by which soft power adapts the directionality of what Castells called the "space of flows".

It is unclear whether social media can serve as a reliable strategy for soft power generation for state actors. These cases were successful because there was a single challenge that a critical mass of users agreed needed to be addressed. But International Relations is not always about addressing occasional problems. It is about the push and pull of pursuing and balancing interests of states and important non-state actors. Viewed this way, the occasional successes of social media campaigns may obfuscate the huge international structural challenges that African countries face in projecting any form of power, whether soft or hard. And as Nye (2009) argues, effective foreign policy requires a combination of soft and hard power. At the moment African states possess little of both.

## Note

1 The interviews were anonymized because of the sensitive nature of the topic and the need to protect the interviewees. Interviews took place at the Unity Fountain, Abuja, location of the sit-ins over three days, and a further one was conducted at the home of a #BringBackOurGirls campaign leader. All interviews were concluded between 1 and 5 September 2014.

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# PART II

# Case studies

## SECTION V

## Europe and the Americas

# 17

# AMERICAS AND EUROPE (SECTION OVERVIEW)

*Katarzyna Pisarska*

## North America and Europe – the soft power outliers

As outlined by the Monocle Soft Power Survey (2014), which measures nations' attractiveness (and thus influence within the world), eight out of the ten highest-ranking countries come from only two regions: North America or Europe.[1] The findings have proved to be consistent over the years and allow us to draw two conclusions about the outliers of soft power. First, the ability to attract is strongly correlated with a country's development, measured in both economic terms (gross domestic product, per capita income, level of industrialization etc.) and human development terms (life expectancy, standard of living and literacy level). Second, the highest-ranking countries have moved beyond simply assuring security and prosperity. They also guarantee their societies the respect of core liberal democratic values such as the rule of law, human rights and social justice. The combination of prosperity and respect of personal freedoms generates a powerful message resonating positively with wider publics around the world. And it is this blend that has made North America and Europe unquestionable soft power outliers.

North America, home of the 'soft power' concept (Nye 2004), continues to be at the forefront of global locations with an impressive ability to attract. For the United States and Canada such capacity in international relations has traditionally been derived from distinctive history, openness to immigration and a devotion to freedom, democracy and rule of law (Lord 2008). But what best portrays the vastness of these countries' soft power potential is the array of economic, social and diplomatic instruments available. This is particularly true for the United States, which has shown a unique ability to channel its soft power by making the most of both 'pull' and 'push' factors. On the one hand, America's international image benefits from the country continuing to be the world's largest immigration destination (Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2013) and the second-largest tourist recipient (World Tourism Organization 2014). On the other hand, the US uses a number of well-crafted instruments to shape its positive image among foreign publics. It is the largest official development assistance (ODA) contributor in net terms, which reached $31.55 billion in 2013 (OECD 2014). It also spends a staggering $721 million annually for international broadcasting to support a network which includes the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and others (Broadcasting Board

of Governors 2015). Finally, it maintains its investment in direct people-to-people contact through exchange programs worth $570–620 million annually (Department of State 2015) Most importantly, however, it has a coherent message which prioritizes the promotion of American values and strengthens the image of the United States as a country of opportunity and 'the land of the free'.

Consistency in messaging is also the strong suit of Canada. Having a population roughly the size of California (around 35 million), Canada has been punching above its weight in soft power projection. Over the years it has earned the reputation of a 'good international citizen' and a responsible global stakeholder which takes a lead on many initiatives that improve the state of the world. It has been praised for its pioneering role in the field of peacekeeping, its engagement in supporting the UN system (Vickers 2004) and leading the international effort to ban anti-personnel landmines, known as the "Ottawa process" (Henrikson 2005). Since 1995 public diplomacy is recognized as a 'third pillar' of Canadian foreign policy on a global level, focusing on presenting Canada as a culturally diverse, technologically advanced, federally balanced democracy (Potter 2002). Being in a position which allows privileging diplomatic options over military action, Canada has continued to be seen as a country that lives up to its promises.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Europe has continued to project soft power by assuring consistent growth of prosperity of its citizens, emphasis on social justice, plight for human rights, environment-friendliness and the uniqueness of its integration model. With the emergence of the European Union (EU) as a global actor in the 1990s, Europe has gained an unprecedented soft power asset. It has the ability to attract and cooperate at two different levels: the level of the 28 member states and the supranational (EU) level. EU member states generate soft power by conducting their own foreign policy and by using a number of tools that fall into the categories of public, cultural and citizen diplomacy. The international outreach of each of the big European soft power players (Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the Scandinavian countries) only strengthens the positive perceptions of the EU abroad as a union of successful, friendly and prosperous nations. At the supranational level the European Union has a forceful story of its own. Created as an effort to reduce the threat of war within western Europe, in a few decades the European integration project had transformed the anarchic international relations between states on the continent into a law-bound framework (Batora 2003). Through consecutive enlargements the European Union, as a "normative power" (Manners 2002)[2], has been able to expand the zone of peace, prosperity and stability to large parts of central, eastern and southern Europe. Also beyond its direct neighborhood the EU proves to be a responsible international stakeholder, pursuing a number of policies (including climate change advocacy, development and humanitarian aid) which are seen as legitimate by others, thus enhancing its soft power.

Advocacy on behalf of the same policies forms the soft power core of another European actor: the Vatican state. Strengthened by the extremely popular papacy of Pope Francis, the Catholic Church has in recent years focused much of its effort on fighting poverty, advocating for climate protection and bringing Islam into the modern world (Roney 2014). This in turn has helped to win the hearts and minds of people regardless of their faith or beliefs.

The compelling success stories of the US, Canada and the European Union have, of course, their limitations. Many challenges remain to the detriment of the soft power capabilities of these two regions. In the last decade the United States' soft power effort has been undermined by the way in which its hard power has been used, whether it was

the invasion of Iraq, the use of drones in Afghanistan and Pakistan or the National Security Agency (NSA) scandal. America's largest liability in soft power projection is thus not living up to the values it preaches and the standards it sets for others. The European Union, on the other hand, faces serious internal challenges which might determine whether the whole model of integration endures. These include the way in which the bloc will deal with the consequences of the financial crisis, the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, the large influx of immigration (particularly from Africa and the Middle East) and with the deterioration of democratic standards in some EU members states (Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria). In addition, both North America and Europe might soon need to deal with fierce soft power competition from the outside world. Such competition is slowly materializing in Asia, where new models of successful economic and political transformation are being tested. If they prove more suitable for the emerging global order, the decline of western soft power will become a fact.

## Latin America – a region of ambivalence

In comparison to North America and Europe, Latin America is only just discovering its soft power potential. There is little doubt that the region has the ability to attract. For one, despite its relative homogeneity, Latin America is characterized by a rich and diverse culture that speaks to the imagination of foreign publics. It also has a predominantly democratic outlook and is perceived as an area where lack of military adventurism remains a norm. With its anti-colonial liberation history, 20 different countries, 13 dependencies and a total population of 588 million people, the region surely has a positive story to tell to the world. Instead, however, Latin America has remained largely insular and focused on domestic and regional affairs. Its image has been hampered by growing inequalities – among the 20 most unequal societies almost half are located in Latin America and the Caribbean (World Bank 2015) – economic uncertainties and endemic crime. Its governments have, in the main, made limited – if any – public diplomacy efforts. The only outlier – Brazil – has built its soft power as an "emerging economy", largely in opposition to the US (Brazil: Playing Chess 2012). It has become known as a country that has created and exported innovative ways to alleviate poverty. It has also provided billions of dollars of aid to its neighbors (Ristovic 2012). But Brazil's current limitations, which are the result of growing corruption and a grim economic outlook, are causing serious setbacks to the country's ability to attract and influence.

Today Latin America, as a region, is in many ways in the most disadvantageous position. It is not a soft power outlier like Europe, the United States or Australia. It is also not an underdog like Asia. It is somewhere in between. Not yet having discovered how to generate a positive message to the world, it is already facing fierce competition, which makes it all the more difficult to capture the imaginations and hearts of foreign publics.

## Notes

1 In 2014 the top ten highest-ranking countries were: the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, France, Switzerland, Australia, Sweden, Denmark and Canada.
2 The term 'normative power' refers to such a use of power which involves normative justifications rather than the use of material incentives or physical force.

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# 18

# POPULAR CULTURE, BANAL COSMOPOLITANISMS AND HOSPITALITY

## Notes for a Brazilian soft power

*Yuji Gushiken, Quise Gonçalves Brito and Taís Marie Ueta*

### Introduction: conceptions of Brazilian foreign policy

According to Celso Lafer (1987), jurist and former Minister of Foreign Relations in Brazil, all foreign policies come from the effort put into making internal needs compatible with external possibilities. In this equation, there are some immutable data such as the geographical location of the country, the availability of natural resources etc., which, together with longer-lasting external factors such as the structuring of power on a global scale, would explain certain lines of continuity that commonly characterize foreign policy. Lafer (1987) states that, as a result of this, there would be a relative stability in the ways a country can insert itself in the international system and it would be these possibilities that would put basic interests on the agenda, expressed in the coherence and continuity of its foreign policies.

The characteristic of continuity does not imply, however, inflexibility or impermeability. An opening for joint change and new demands (both on the domestic and foreign fronts), together with a pragmatic assessment of the power resources a country has available, would be the determining factors for the effectiveness of its foreign policy. In summary, all foreign policies are composed of changes and continuities where the latter, as a rule, are more frequent than the former due to the nature of the international system – after all, it is not possible to imprint changes on the work agenda of international labor organs in regional policies or in bilateral relations with the same speed as it is possible to achieve on the domestic policy front.

Traditionally, the proposal for the construction of the image and positioning of a country in the international system is made in three significant fields of action: the military-strategic field of hard power translates what a country means, or may mean, to others as an ally, protector or enemy in terms of the risk of war; the field of economic relations, which expresses the country's market potential; and the field of values, as a symbolic and legitimate basis for a country as a model in distinct areas of social life – the privileged, although not exclusive, space for the exercising of soft power.

With regard to the formulation process of Brazilian foreign policy, it must be noted that this has been marked, generally speaking, by continuity since the 1990s. Historically, the elaboration of the country's foreign policy was concentrated in the professional, bureaucratic and institutionalized diplomatic corps of the Ministry of Foreign Relations (also known as Itamaraty) where for many decades a guiding paradigm predominated for Brazilian foreign action, the pillars of which were based on the ideas of development, autonomy and universalism.

Universalism corresponds to the idea of being open to relations with all countries regardless of geographical location, type of regime or economic option. The emphasis on universalism can be seen by the fact that Brazil is one of just 11 countries in the world to maintain diplomatic relations with all 192 member states of the UN. In the final analysis, it implies independent behavior in relation to hegemony and can be linked to the behavior of a global player. The idea of universalism subsidizes another which is close to the heart of Brazilian diplomacy, that of pacifism. Autonomy is defined as the room for maneuver a country has in its relations with other states and in its role in international policy.

In relation to development, this topic found its priority in the speech and practices of the Itamaraty diplomatic corps since 1930 with the implantation of the so-called 'development diplomacy' in the government of Getúlio Vargas up to the end of the military dictatorship (1964–1985). Even though the development strategy adopted was varied – an agricultural exportation model at the beginning of the twentieth century; industrialization followed by strong state protection; guidance by market logic at the end of the last century – the search for a national development model was constant up to the beginning of the 1990s.

The complex globalization process which became more intense at the end of the bipolar order of the Cold War and the expansion of capitalism as it progressed into market capitalism will bring new configurations of the international system. Associated with this, the emergence of the neoliberal theory in the field of international relations in the 1980s encouraged the application of economic policies based on a conservative interpretation of the relations between capital and state and between civil society, with important consequences for the redefinition of national development strategies which, in turn, required new profiles in foreign policies. Abandonment of the state's developmental paradigm in favor of the neoliberal paradigm, in Brazil, was due to the arrival of President Fernando Collor de Mello into the government and corresponds to the transition from the developmental state to the neoliberal state.

However, the state, through its institutionalized organs, is not the only actor to define a country's foreign political agenda, above all because of the reconfigurations engendered by the global flow of people, symbols, products, money and technology and the establishment of what we can call a 'global cultural economy' (Appadurai 2005). The domestic players, companies and social communication media, reinforced by the new voices and pressures that come from the deepening of the national democratic processes, are variables that increasingly influence the state's choices on the international front as shown by the studies in foreign policy analysis.

This tendency in Brazil can be seen from 1990 onwards, when Itamaraty's monopoly on the decision-making process of national interests weakened, faced with the growing interests of other sectors of society regarding the foreign policy agenda and as these sectors gained more space within the marks of public policies. The neoliberal influence, responsible for the opening of the economy, "contributed to the politicization of foreign policy due to the unequal distribution of costs and gains, whilst democratic consolidation

encouraged debates and preferences on the different topics within the international agenda" (Lessa, Saraiva and Mapa 2011 p. 100).

All this resulted in making the connection between international problems and domestic issues undeniable and ever more present. The global financial crises affect people's daily lives, media news of global warming influences behavior on the local scale and defending human rights in distant countries mobilizes innumerous nationalities, placing in check the belief of the distinction between what is domestic and what is international and, in this sense, shaking the pillars that support realism as a hegemonic, theoretical current in international relations during almost the whole of the twentieth century (Pinheiro and Milani 2011, p. 16).

A country's foreign policy formulation process, when extrapolating the ambit of the diplomatic organ's bureaucratic abstraction and including civil society and the non-state players, complicates the apprehension of relations and mediations in the field of public diplomacy. This is not a naïve statement, even though these players may not be considered to be actual decision-takers in foreign policy, but it is noteworthy that they show great powers of agency (Pinheiro and Milani 2011). When talking about soft power, however, few state actions can be considered to be as effective as those generated spontaneously within civil society and its institutions.

In the same way that issues of a global order affect companies, NGOs and individuals in their daily lives, individual or collective actions by these players, strategically or not, act as agencies in the panorama of symbols, goods, ideas, people and services in an autonomous way, interfering in institutionalized national policy and in the possibilities of insertion into news cycles which opens the country in the international system. Our interest in this essay is to point out the ways Brazilian civil society, by means of the so-called banal cosmopolitanisms, constructs particular images of the country overseas, adding to the national soft power's potential in certain areas.

The term soft power, coined by the North American political scientist Joseph Nye, is seen by the diplomat and researcher Naren Chitty as a disruptive concept that comes from the field of international relations in the space contested by the neo-realist theory of the 1970s and neoliberalism in the 1980s (Ch. 1). According to Chitty, Nye's notion of soft power comes from the interpretation of a complex interdependence in the international scenario and its approach is linked to the culture of democratic political participation.

In brief, soft power refers to the power of attraction and co-optation in a relationship where the intended objectives by one party are achieved without the use of force or coercion of the other party involved. It is important to point out that a complicating factor around the notion of soft power is that it can be both the source (or resource) and the behavior of a response. From the perspective of a nation-state, the sources of soft power come from national culture (whether it is related to tradition or to the sphere of consumption culture), political values and foreign policies. Culture is the widest resource and must be seen as the basis, the political values emerging from culture and foreign policy and, in turn, from political values (Chitty 2015).

Soft power, as a conceptual tool, allows us to approach the paradigm of anarchy in International Relations – a situation of disharmony and conflict which is a natural characteristic of relations between states – by means of a perspective that values conflict management through dialogue where the role played by the non-state players in the definition of foreign policy is increasingly relevant to the maintenance of a healthy culture policy and a generator of participative potential for the states in the international system.

## Brazilian social thinking: miscegenation, domestic life and adaptations

The Brazilian social scientist Octávio Ianni states that Brazil thinks of itself "continuously and periodically". He points out, in a study that has been part of the social sciences with reflections on the so-called applied social sciences, that Brazilian thinkers raise and re-raise problems that deserve reflection (Ianni 2000, p. 56).

In configuring soft power in the Brazilian scenario, addressing national identity and values, we draw on two kinds of thinkers in a discussion of the historical formation of the Brazilian population as a domestic issue at national level. We draw on classic thinkers and these include Gilberto Freyre, Sérgio Buarque de Holanda and Darcy Ribeiro. We also draw on the contemporary thinker Renato Ortiz. They suggest considering the cultural characteristics as a condition for dialogue on an international scale and space for the exercise of soft power.

The essayist Gilberto Freyre (2003) showed the antagonisms between the lords of the mills and the enslaved people (indigenous and Africans) in his well-known antithesis between the "The Masters and the Slaves". However, one of the merits of the novel was that it pointed out the participation of Africans and Indians in the historical formation of Brazilian society in the pertinent notes on the daily life of the patriarchal family.

As pointed out by the Brazilian social scientist Renato Ortiz (2013, p. 615), Gilberto Freyre stands out in studies on the culture of his time (the 1930s) by his characteristic affirmations and brighter perspectives in relation to the predominant currents (permeated by biological and geographical determinism), conferring Brazilians with "an identity card" when he observed that the *mestiço* is the "harmonic ideal in which the secret to Brazil's success mirror's itself". Therefore, Freyre states:

> Hybrid from the beginning, Brazilian society is, of all the Americas, the one that is made more harmoniously in terms of its race relations: within an environment of cultural reciprocity that resulted from the advanced people making the best use of values and experiences of the backward people.
>
> (Freyre 2003, p. 160)

Freyre continues, saying that "the positive aspects of miscegenation due to white Portuguese mixing with the joyful negros 'who broke down all the dampening and vile sadness'" (2003, p. 551) with an indigenous diet (exotic fruit, edible roots and fish) and asepsis, shown in this case by their daily bathing (2003, p. 163).

The Brazilian historian Sérgio Buarque de Holanda (2004, p. 146), in his piece that comments on the national state development, mentions the common person's cordiality as a problematic issue. The problem arises when the 'cordial man' participates in public using the model of domestic family life for the social organization of the country. Criticism apart, the author ponders on this characteristic as being the "main Brazilian contribution to civilization".

The family intimacy in interpersonal relations is looked at more deeply under this premise: "[T]he normal manifestation of respect found in other people has here its replica, as a rule, of the desire to establish intimacy" (Holanda 2004, p. 148). Formality is not Brazilian people's strong point, Holanda ponders (2004, p. 147). In the period when the work was written, 1936, foreigners "recognized and exalted the hospitality, generosity and candor in the way they were treated" (Holanda 2004, p. 146).

The Brazilian anthropologist Darcy Ribeiro wrote about the people who immigrated to Brazil, such as Germans, Arabs and Japanese, and also about the growing urbanization which became a catalyzing agent for the standardization on the cultural front without, however, "blurring the differences" (Ribeiro 1995, p. 21).

On the topic of the European (non-Iberian) and Asian communities, Darcy Ribeiro (1995, p. 437) remarks on the process that began with the more homogenous centers. In a previous period, their expertise in the manufacturing industry (Germans and Italians) and in horticulture (Japanese), together with bilingualism, made their adaptation successful and subsequent generations were integrated into Brazilian society.

The Brazilian sociologist Renato Ortiz (2013, p. 621) defined identity as the symbolic construction built around a reference point, as a representation and not a concrete given that can be elucidated or discovered, as it can be transformed according to the historical contexts. He adds that in the global scenario, what matters are the inter-relations between countries.

Ortiz argues that it is necessary to insert Brazil inside a barter market on an ever-wider scale, since the symbolic constructions in the national ambit overflow the local borders and move into the global scale at a time in which market globalization operates by means of market "diversity" (Ortiz 2013, p. 630).

The author goes on to state that culture is an instrument to drive trade, conferring to the state the active element in the promotion of an idea of *Brazilian-ness* represented by a plentiful supply of symbols (Ortiz 2013, p. 630). The insertion of Brazil in the world allows for variations (local, regional, national and global), each of which is operationalized by what is being promoted.

## Popular culture, hospitality and banal cosmopolitanisms: Brazilian domestic issues

The concept of soft power, in the ambit of values, presents some singularities if you think of Brazil and its diverse cultural landscape. In a country that in the twentieth century was still going through dubious and resistant modernization experiences, the memory of traditions is considered to be a remnant of a period that has not completely ended, and popular social practices institute the cultural environment in which modernization resists installation.

However, the dynamics of the relations between different peoples in the ambit of globalization suggest, at least in theory, the search for singularity which characterizes each nation, region and city. Not unusually, in the case of Brazil, the singularities historically produced within the space of national territory pass through the cultural memories developed and which today are designated as many of the cultural habits held in distinct regions of the country.

The banal cosmopolitanisms suggest pacific coexistence, though not without conflicts, of different cultures and also constitute the historical conditions for sociability in a multi-ethnic country and one of great induction of intercultural contacts. It is relevant to approach cosmopolitism as a Brazilian characteristic, considering intercultural dialogue as "cultural construction" (Touraine 1996).

These are the aspects that are intended to be pointed to in relation to popular culture as a resource of soft power – seen from the viewpoint of Brazilian reality and what it may mean, at least virtually, as a tool for the production of favorable images of a country from the view of the multiple cultural landscapes – and thus present the virtues of these favorable images in the field of international relations.

The first image: in the Soccer World Cup of 2014, held in Brazil, a young South Korean fan found himself by chance with some Brazilian students in Cuiabá, the state capital of Mato Grosso, one of the 12 host cities for the event. This recently established friendship led to one of the students inviting the foreign visitor to have a meal at one of the street markets in the city. In later contact with Brazilian friends, the young South Korean said that one of his favorite experiences during his visit to Brazil was something that, to the inhabitants of Cuiabá, was something banal and unremarkable – eating the popular 'churrasquinho' (grilled meat on a skewer), a fast-food version of a barbecue, made as 'street food' and served in portions of approximately 300g of beef on a wooden skewer, accompanied by cassava, cassava flour and vinaigrette and which costs on average five reals (approximately $1.50).

The second image: a Polish tourist, living in Berlin (Germany), spent the end of the year in Brazil. Staying in a friend's house in Cuiabá, he spent the end-of-year holidays visiting relations and other friends' guests. On one of these visits he was offered a cold beer and snacks served generously from a table on the sidewalk of a street in the Old Center of the city. He stayed up until late chatting with householders and friends on the sidewalk, which had no pedestrians at so late a time, and in the street there was no traffic. That image, despite reflecting a common habit these days in small and medium-sized cities, is also representative of cities in the process of metropolitanization. Months later, he commented that one of the most remarkable experiences of his trip was being able to sit down and talk to the locals on the sidewalk.

The two scenes described above illustrate the passage of the most banal daily routines usually related to the practices of popular culture and common Brazilian customs and which, for this exact reason, are so present in the day-to-day existence, which passes by unnoticed, as a symbolic value on the agenda of social relations in contemporary life.

Popular cultures need to be understood as being equivalent to the social practices of the common individual associated with the economic and subsistence practices that show ways for social connections and of inhabiting the urban space in the contemporary world.

Popular gastronomy, in which street food is included, gains evidence from the image of the barbecued skewer consumed in street markets in city neighborhoods. The characteristics of street food are accessible pricing, generous food, leisure for the neighborhood residents, creative economics and a source of income for stallholders. In this interface between culture and the economy, a daily Brazilian social habit, as a cultural difference, becomes an experience for the foreign visitor and is engraved in his memory.

The cultural experience, in this case, gains an affective dimension as it becomes a memory brought to the forefront for the South Korean tourist during his visit to Brazil. The affective image brought by the young South Korean touches on the memorization power virtually present in the popular Brazilian gastronomic habits, generally thought of as being marginal within the ambit of the economic and cultural production of the country itself.

Popular cultures, which generally originate from the working classes, constitute reinventions of economic life or culture as a tool for generating income, despite acquiring the same pejorative connotations related to the conditions of that social class.

However, distinct government decisions and Brazilian civil society need to produce political reconsideration, on a domestic/national level, of the relevance of popular culture such as symbolic production in the sociality of common individuals and as tools for creative economics for wider bands of the population.

Cultural practices as economic practices are becoming ever more relevant considering that, in the twenty-first century, large regions of Brazil are unaware of what could be an industrialization experience and live emphatically from the commerce of goods and services.

Within the ambit of civil society, distinct ways of community organization have been reallocating the knowledge of popular cultures in their economic dimension, necessarily beginning with the attribution of symbolic value by the actual agents involved. There is a need today for a review of the meanings of culture when talking about the production of a favorable image of each city or each nation-state when faced with an ever more media-based and technological world which also allows a greater view of what makes distinct regions of the planet unique.

Popular culture, however, does not necessarily refer to extraordinary productions of large cultural artistic and media events related to well-known names celebrated by the agents responsible for the construction of hegemonic environments or the so-called *mainstream* (Martel 2012). Neither does it apply, in an expansive way, to the concept in vogue, especially in North American academia, as the equivalent of mass culture.

Previously, popular culture referred to the social practices that constituted people's daily lives with common knowledge and, generally, they are characteristically in the public domain. In the case of Brazil, many of the popular cultures refer to folklore and traditional knowledge, generally originating in rural areas, renewed by the dynamics of modernization in certain regions of the country.

In the case of street food, popular gastronomy shows how much popular knowledge simultaneously constitutes a tool in the world of work and a kind of goods or service to be offered to the local population as well as to visitors. For local inhabitants and visitors, street food is equivalent both in terms of diet (in the nutritional sense) and food (in the socialization practices).

The act of eating connects people, making it, in the modern world, both a condition for economic production and imagination about a country, a state or a town. This is about the experiences in relation to flavors and aromas that tend to reinforce the idea of production from a specific geographical location and leave traces of memories from the cultural exchange experienced by the visitor.

Not unusually, these gastronomic experiences gain visibility in the audiovisual recordings by thousands of tourists that wander around Brazilian cities and which are available in the form of amateur videos on social networks. This media visibility shows one of the most relevant aspects of the production of a favorable image for the country; the filter given, in the post itself, by the visitor's viewpoint as an endorsement of an identity with its differences.

## The stranger who comes into our field of vision and the sociality of conversations

People sitting on the sidewalk in small or medium-sized towns, chatting or just doing nothing, form an image in Brazil of community social life that resists the urban experience. It is an image of a pause or slow pace in relation to the speed of daily life in towns that are in the process of metropolitanization, a phenomenon more strongly present in Brazilian cities in the second half of the twentieth century.

The act of conversing constitutes one of the experiences of the slowness of towns, these being characterized by heavy car and train traffic. The excess of information

suggests the indifference of people in the midst of languages of all types that do not now produce meaning when competing for people's attention.

The image of rocking chairs on the sidewalk, with people sitting and chatting, suggests free time as a supplement required within the world of work. The sociality provided by the opportunity to chat, when denoting a principle of social connection, becomes a condition of hospitality for the inhabitants of the town and also for the stranger who appears in their field of vision.

The practice of conversation favors the ability of the visitor to see the local way of life, the inhabitants, their idiosyncrasies and, as a whole, to get an image of what their private and daily lives are like. The meeting between locals and visitors, or between identity and difference, favors the exercise of hospitality as understood by the local population, as the visitor comes into the field of vision as either an immigrant or a tourist.

For the tourist who lives in a world in flux, the possibility of pausing tends to constitute a sensory experience that comes with being together. The pause and the interpersonal contact favors the sensing of flavors, smells, temperature, movement and the dynamics of the hospitality offered, the oddities and the recognition of the intercultural relations that are insinuated. Hospitality, as a habit that is more or less rooted in certain Brazilian regions, singularizes an image of Brazil as a country that is open to foreigners who arrive as immigrants or tourists.

The practice of conversation with locals constitutes a knowledge process to which is attributed symbolic value to those who make use of the hospitality. With the production of symbolic value there is the simultaneous production of memories, which, as they become virtually present, tend to be recovered and recorded as better images for visitors.

Conversation as a practice of hospitality gains a positive connotation, especially in relation to people who were previously unknown to each other but who have subjected themselves to the experiences of symbolic experience exchange. Being open to the unknown, generally something awkward in cultural standards both in the east and the west, tends to be a habit in Brazilian daily life, even though this openness is seen more in some regions than in others.

A Polish tourist being welcomed by a resident in the old part of Cuiabá, with the possibility of a chat lubricated by some beer, reproduces a popular old habit of sitting outside on the sidewalk to pass the time, something that is becoming less common as the sense of danger and violence is heightened in the urbanization process.

The warmth of the meeting and the conversation may have the quality of promoting the production of a type of memory that tends to virtualize the visitor's best memories as something that can bring uniqueness that comes from the cultural difference.

Casual chats, as an image of an economically unproductive life, are also the equivalent of the opportunity to access local customs, Brazilian private life and what the daily cultural practices mean: the way the house is tidied, cooking method, living habits and ways of welcoming visitors.

Conversation, a popular habit for most of the Brazilian population, recomposes the idea of sociality which is becoming rarer in the atomization to which each individual is relegated by the speed of the modern world. Brazilian sociality, therefore, becomes the backbone of a lifestyle that tends to offer the world an image of what the relationship between people from different cultural patterns can be like when considering the demands of circulating in the modern world.

The two cases, briefly presented above as micro-events, constitute scenes in Brazilian domestic life which have no connection to the production of large events as resources for

the divulgence of the image of cities and the country in the competition to which they are submitted on local, regional, domestic and international scales.

Observations to be made on Brazilian daily life suggest a review of the ways the country's image is thought of in the rest of the world and how they favor, to a greater or lesser extent, a positive perception of Brazil in worldwide public opinion.

Images of Brazil, in this case, need to be re-thought based on the practices of civil society, which implies considering these practices within the ambit of popular culture in general. This perspective suggests a focus on the daily lives of common people, meaning the ways individuals adapt to the environment they live in.

It is this environment, where the social practices are developed as economic practices, which tends to grab attention and generate warmth in the relationship between the visitor and the place visited. Daily life, when people's basic needs are met, becomes a motive for the production of social connections, not only for city inhabitants but also between locals and tourists.

Consideration of daily life, when dealing with the production of the economic life of local populations, translates the reach of local well-being into a material perspective. In Brazil, the daily lives of millions of people are directly connected to economic production based on knowledge originating from popular traditions, including gastronomy, handicrafts, music and other activities. It is this daily life, as a national domestic issue, that suggests the virtuality of cultural experience exchange between Brazilians and foreigners circulating around the country.

Hospitality, as a practice of intercultural relations, suggests the exercise of tolerance as a virtue of the people who are willing, in today's world, to interact with the cultural differences and knock on the door in search for new contacts with local uniqueness.

## Conclusion

The interface between communication and culture provides a virtuality in which a country's images can become a tool for visibility in an international scenario, currently marked more and more by the intense circulation of people, goods and information.

If we consider that contemporary culture is a communicational culture – though emphatically not only this – we can raise awareness of what cultural uniqueness is as a symbolic value to be produced and to be recognized in the political front.

From the perspective of communication, rather than emphasizing what has already become media, and is, therefore, endowed with visibility among a variety of audiences, it is worth raising issues and topics so that they can gain the attention of the sub-fields of journalism, advertising, public relations, cinema and radio.

Popular culture in Brazil has risen higher on the agenda of the field of communication. Reports, documentaries and television series have, after all, broached more positively and emphatically the traditional and daily social practices as virtues of common Brazilians.

Little by little, the field of communication acquires a kind of reflectivity turned towards popular knowledge in relation to music, dance, gastronomy, festivals and hospitality. In the case of Brazil, this observation makes sense insofar as popular cultures tend to be criminalized by the police and marginalized when represented negatively by the media system.

The best images of a country with many social problems, such as Brazil, may lie in the places least noticed – in the social practices within popular cultures which characterize the most banal daily lives of common Brazilians and which need to be captured, thought about and valued in public policies at a national level.

The fields of culture and communication, where it is suggested that *soft power* is thought of as a political resource, may need to ponder a part of the process that should precede international relations – the internal relations of governments with civil society with the aim of consolidating an idea of national society.

Civil society, as a type of internal audience, needs to be recognized and thought of as a fundamental agent, which may be the most important thing a nation-state can have to maintain its political unity. In Brazil, popular culture, the more traditional that originates from the rural zones as well as urban culture, is going through continuous processes of marginalization and criminalization.

It is necessary, therefore, to take the viewpoint of a foreigner so that the popular cultural practices in a country such as Brazil, in its most intimate aspects of daily banalities, go through a different process of symbolic evaluation within the national ambit. One possible virtue of the globalization of the economy and culture may be the virtuality of promising intercultural contacts, insofar as popular culture, as a national domestic issue, begins to attract the attention of foreign eyes that maintain them as their best memories of Brazil. As the literary critic Alfredo Bosi said about the plural Brazilian culture, "[w]e need to look again, slowly" (2000, p. 8).

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# 19

# INTERNATIONAL CHALLENGES OF CATALONIA

## Defining its public diplomacy through parliamentary debates

*Xavier Ginesta, Mireia Canals and Jordi de San Eugenio*

### Introduction

After a deep parliamentary debate, the Catalan Law on External Action and Relations with the EU (CLEARE) was approved on 26 November 2014 in the Parliament of Catalonia with 99 votes in favor, 29 against and 3 abstentions. The Spanish government decided four months later to take this law to the Constitutional Court. The conservative Spanish government considers that the Catalan administration does not have the competence to deal with foreign actions.

However, in 30 years of democracy in Catalonia, there has never been the possibility of having a text with the rank of law that would regulate its political action abroad. In the current context of Catalan politics, where a self-determination process has been led by the regional (from now on called 'autonomous') government, this new bill fixes the guiding principles of foreign affairs, determines the instruments for planning and monitoring external action and defines how to establish international relations of the autonomous government abroad. The rule also establishes the structure and organization of the representation of the Generalitat (that includes the executive and legislative bodies of the autonomous government) and devotes a special section to the definition of public diplomacy.

This chapter incorporates some of the most relevant results on this law, the political approaches that the Catalan political parties debated about in the Catalan Parliament (4 December 2013) and their relationship to public diplomacy. At this point, it is necessary to mention that this chapter starts with a review and interpretation of the law that highlights the most relevant content on public diplomacy, a simple exercise of description being rejected. So this article is based on the text of the Catalan Law on External Action and Relations with the EU, a consequence of the debate in the Catalan parliamentary chamber.

## Material and method

As for the methodology used, it is specifically based on theory and the application of critical review of law, taking into consideration all Catalan political parties. The results are presented as a case study. It has been especially important to access the audiovisual and documentary database of the Parliament of Catalonia, available at www.parlament.cat. The case study, as a methodology, is understood as an "empirical investigation of a contemporary phenomenon, taking its context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident" (Yin 1994, p. 13). As pointed out by Escudero, Delfín and Gutiérrez (2008, p. 7), "the case study as a research strategy has been used in many situations that have helped to generate awareness of a phenomenon that is an individual, group, political and/or complex phenomena". We believe this to be the best way to present a first approach to the new Catalan foreign affairs regulation.

## Theoretical framework

### *Catalonia as a stateless nation in a context of political change*

On 4 December 2013 the Catalan Parliament discussed for the first time the draft law and finally agreed to continue to process it (Parliament of Catalonia 2013a). The law was finally approved on the 26 November 2014. Out of 135 MPs, 99 voted in favor; they were from political parties (or groups) that were closer to Catalan nationalist ideology (CiU and ERC), the socialist party (PSC–PSOE) and the eco-socialists (ICV–EUiA). The post-communist party (CUP–AE), having voted in favor of the first draft, finally abstained from voting. Members of the Conservative Popular Party (PP) and the non-nationalist Ciutadans (Cs) voted against the law.

In the current political situation, we can identify different social cleavages, as it shows in Table 2.5.19.1. Catalan parties have positioned their arguments, basically taking into account the historical national cleavage into center and periphery (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Serrano 2013). For this reason, when analyzing the law, a key concept appeared in it – public diplomacy (Nye 2008; Cull 2008). In 2014, Catalonia belonged to one of those territories we can consider "a nation without a state characterized by the importance of dual identities [Catalan and Spanish], with a predominant civic nationalism" (Serrano 2013, p. 1). Therefore, its autonomous government cannot use the historical state or *traditional* diplomacy, based on exchange of ambassadors, to facilitate "government-to-government communication" (Signitzer and Coombs 1992, p. 138) to reach a strong and singular positioning in the global geopolitical context. Keating (1997, p. 708) summarizes the "economic needs" that a non-state's external action can serve thus: "it can secure support to language and cultural development" and "it legitimizes nation-building and helps to consolidate it at home, by placing the minority nation in the wider family of nation-states".

In order to better understand how public diplomacy strategies are designed, Cull (2008) establishes a taxonomy of public diplomacy, dividing its practices into five elements. First, "*listening* is an actor's attempt to manage the international environment by collecting and collating data about publics and their opinions overseas and using that data to redirect its policy or its wider public diplomacy approach accordingly" (Cull 2008, p. 32). Second, *advocacy*: "An actor's attempt to manage the international environment

*Table 2.5.19.1* Political cleavages and electoral results of Catalonia (2010–2012)

| *Name in Catalan* | *Initials* | *Origin* | *Social cleavage* | *National cleavage* | *Seats 2010* | *Seats 2012* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Convergència i Unió | CiU | Non-statewide party | Liberal/ Christian democratic | Self-determination | 62 | 50 |
| Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya | ERC | Non-statewide party | Social democrats | Self-determination | 10 | 21 |
| Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya | PSC– PSOE | Statewide party | Social democrats | Spanish federal reform | 28 | 20 |
| Partit Popular | PP | Statewide party | Conservative | State of the Autonomies | 18 | 19 |
| Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds – Esquerra Unida i Alternativa | ICV– EUiA | Non-statewide party | Post-communist | Self-determination | 10 | 13 |
| Ciutadans – Partido de la Ciudadanía | Cs | Non-statewide party | Social democrats | Spanish federal reform | 3 | 9 |
| Candidatura d'Unitat Popular – Alternativa d'Esquerres | CUP–AE | Non-statewide party | Post-communist | Self-determination | 0 | 3 |
| Solidaritat Catalana per la Independència | SI | Non-statewide party | Liberal | Self-determination | 4 | 0 |
| **Total number of seats in the Catalan Parliament** | | | | | **135** | **135** |

*Source*: E. Ordeix and X. Ginesta, 'Political engagement principles as basis for new regional self-determination process in Europe: the case of Catalonia', in *American Behavioral Scientist*, volume 58, issue 7 (2008).

by undertaking an international communication activity to actively promote a particular policy, idea or that actor's general interests in the minds of a foreign public" (Cull 2008, p. 32). Third, *cultural diplomacy*: "The attempt to manage the international environment through making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas and/or facilitating cultural transmission abroad" (Cull 2008, p. 33). Fourth, *exchange diplomacy* or the willingness "to manage the international environment by sending its citizens overseas and reciprocally accepting citizens from overseas for a period of study and/or acculturation" (Cull 2008, p. 33). And last but not least, *international news broadcasting*, or the necessity of using mass media or sources based on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in order to engage foreign spectators/viewers.

Catalonia has different resources available that allow it to be recognized worldwide. The Government of Catalonia has been very active in foreign relations since its establishment in 1977. In that scenario, corporate and cultural diplomacy (Blitzer 2012) were key factors for the internationalization of the Catalan reality. As Bargalló (2011) explains, Catalan culture has four aptitudes. First, there is the quantitative and qualitative excellence and relevance of creative and talented Catalans. Good examples of these are Miró, Sert and Dalí in art, Gaudí, Miralles and Calatrava in architecture, Casals in music, Carreras and Caballé in opera, Llull in medieval literature, Rodoreda and Monzó in modern fiction, Adrià and Roca in gastronomy, and the Barcelona Football Club and Gasol in sport. Second, there is the relevance of Barcelona as an international capital of culture. Third, the cultural industry itself, particularly in relation to publishing and audiovisual production, as well as music and contemporary art events, is important. Finally, Football Club Barcelona is a soft power actor, sport playing a soft power role in divided societies such as Israel and Palestine (San Eugenio, Ginesta and Xifra 2015).

## *The political context for new Catalan foreign relations*

On the basis of the provisions of the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia (SAC), the fact that the government of Catalonia develops an external action no longer derives merely from a political practice, but happens to be mandatory and it sets up a legally established field of actions. This foreign affairs law should be allowed to continue towards an effective external action, consistent and coordinated with the set of actors that act on the international scene, as well as position the interests of Catalonia in the world. All of these reinforce relationships with other governments, multilateral cooperation networks, organizations and active participation in the EU. Actually, the institutionalization of Catalan public diplomacy had a previous episode in 2010 "with the government's *Foreign Action Plan 2010–2015* (FAP) and its three paramount goals: positioning Catalonia as an actor of reference; setting a strong public diplomacy strategy; and building governance as a marker of identity" (Xifra and McKie 2012, p. 823).

The SAC, approved in 2006, enabled Catalans to provide coverage of organic law in the foreign activities developed by the public Catalan administration. Catalonia has gradually increased its projects and common partnerships abroad and in the EU, with the clear jurisprudential support of the Spanish Constitutional Court (SCC). This has allowed performances of regional relevance, in understanding that deployment of certain regional competences requires this type of action (SCC 80/1993). The decision of the SCC 165/1994, of 26 May, states that international relations cannot be identified with all other kinds of relations abroad. This is clear from the literalness of the Spanish Constitution (SC), as well as the interpretation already carried out by the jurisprudence

of the SCC, in declaring that the international dimension of an issue cannot be used for an expansive interpretation of the article 149.1.3 SC that subsumes into the state all actions related to foreign affairs.

In accordance with the provisions of chapter 2 of title 5 of the SAC, the Government of Catalonia participates in matters related to the EU that affect the powers and interests of Catalonia, participating in the institutions and European agencies and helping with the positions of the Spanish state. On the other hand, EU law is fully integrated into Catalan law. Since the approval of the SAC, there has been a significant evolution in the rules at a European level, in particular with the latest modified *Treaty of the European Union* and of the *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*. It is necessary, therefore, that the Government of Catalonia continues to ensure the proper transposition and application of the European regulation.

So, the Catalan Law on External Action and Relations with the EU is intended to define the scope of application, the general lines of action, the structures and the mechanisms of planning, participation, management and follow-up of the foreign affairs of Catalonia, in order to achieve, under the direction, coordination and guidance of the government, the maximum promotion and international projection of Catalonia and position it with regard to matters within its competence and interests.

## Results: a qualitative revision of the CLEARE and its political arguments

For the purposes of this law and its implementing regulations, foreign affairs are understood as international relations; a set of policies, actions, activities and other initiatives to promote a territory worldwide. In line with this definition, 'foreign affairs' covers all policies, actions, activities and initiatives of the government arising from the powers and competence of the exercise of the functions related to foreign relations, of the performance of the government of Catalonia in relation to the EU, of the promotion and international projection of Catalonia and cooperation. So, according to the law, foreign affairs in Catalonia are governed by the following guiding principles (Parliament of Catalonia 2013b): a fully European vocation; the economic internationalization of the region; political consensus; the transparency of the Catalan administration; the defence of culture, language and national identity; the fulfilment of mutual loyalty with other administrations; the recognition of Barcelona as a capital and a brand; and, lastly, respect for international law.

CLEARE aims to clear out and give coherence to the foreign affairs of Catalonia. So it should mobilize all the players available in the country to project Catalonia in the world, since the view outside the country does not only affect the government. For this reason, the new disposal rules also identify the subject of the action outside of Catalonia: the government; the administration of the government; the parliament and other statutory bodies; other public administrations, particularly local administrations; the consortiums, foundations and other public bodies; and corporations as the Chambers of Commerce. At the same time it establishes the instruments for planning, coordinating and following up the actions outside that are specified in the *Strategic Plan for External Action* (Clavell, Miralles and Cotxà 2010) that will define, for multi-year periods, the government's priorities in the international arena and the creation of an Interdepartmental Foreign Affairs Committee.

The bill proposed by the government determines how the government is going to establish institutional relations abroad (Parliament of Catalonia 2013b). In particular, it refers to bilateral relationships with other governments and with the EU, on the understanding

that Catalonia has to directly defend its interests as a priority, without undue concern, the mechanisms for multilateral participation being provided by the state. In line with this, the rule also governs Catalonia's participation in international organizations and regional cooperation networks, as well as relationships in the foreign affairs field, aimed at promoting internationalization of Catalonia as an engine of economic growth (Blitzer 2012) of the Mediterranean and southern European axis.

Revisiting in depth the aim of this article, the initial draft of the law suffered a first amendment when the Government of Catalonia presented it in the Catalan Parliament on 4 December 2013 (Parliament of Catalonia 2013a). In the debate on the amendment of the entire draft of the law, presented by the parliamentary groups of the PP and Cs, the first intervention to the debate was by the Catalan Minister of the Presidency, Francesc Homs, explaining the rationale behind the bill.

Taking into account his intervention, we can identify the most important elements of this project according to the government. To begin with, the law should serve to clear out and give coherence to the external action of Catalonia as a whole and, more specifically, the same government of Catalonia. Second, there is an identification of all the actors participating in the foreign action of Catalonia in order to accommodate them in the international scenario. Third, the bill establishes the structure and organization of the government and the network of units for institutional representation of the government and of units for sectorial policies, depending on the administration of the government, which acts abroad with the aim of cohesively and effectively promoting and defending the interests of Catalonia abroad.

Furthermore, the bill determines the instruments of planning, coordination and follow-up of the foreign affairs of the government, such as the Interdepartmental Committee on Foreign Affairs and the *Strategic Plan for External Action* outside of the same government, which must be set to long-term periods of government priorities in the international arena and ensure the coherence of all performances. In addition, the aim is that the departments can draw up – in collaboration, obviously, with the department in charge of Foreign Affairs, and the Secretariat (which in this case is the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and the EU) – the annual plans that pinpoint the sectoral development of this strategic plan of the Catalan administration.

The bill also confirms the commitment of Catalonia to a more politically and economically integrated Europe. For this reason, the bill refers to the relationship between Catalonia and the EU. The government understands that Catalonia has to defend – and must be able to defend, as a priority, and directly when possible – its own interests vis-à-vis the EU. In this sense, the law carries out the articles of the statute related to the participation of the government in the EU, whether in relation to the participation of the government in the decision-making process or in the policies and actions of the EU, and also in the negotiation of treaties and other international agreements of the EU that affect their competencies, including in relation to the recognition of the Catalan language or the management of and access to European funds.

The law also regulates the participation of Catalonia in other international bodies, especially those competent in matters of relevant interest for Catalonia, as is the case, clearly, with UNESCO, which the SAC references in article 198. The law foresees, at the same time, that the administration of the government can send staff to international organizations with the aim of improving knowledge of its operations, as well as to intensify the establishment in Catalonia of international organizations and promote the holding of their meetings and conferences in Catalonia.

Moreover, the law devotes a full title, the third title, to the relations of the government with citizens and civil society. This title aims to value the support that the government gives to those performances from people from civil society who have a positive and effective impact on public opinion, with the aim of promoting the image, influence and prestige of Catalonia.

The recognition of individuals that promote initiatives that contribute to generate positive public opinion abroad and strengthen the prestige and the international influence of our territory is another aim of CLEARE. Thus, the law provides for various measures to enhance this collaboration, and gives special attention to law 18/96 on Catalan Communities Abroad (CCA) with the aim of updating it in depth in the future.

Finally, the initial draft reaffirmed the country's commitment to Foreign Aid Development. Article 2 stands as the guiding principle of the external action of Catalonia in projecting itself as a committed, supportive and responsible international actor, and the letter G of the same article envisages as another guiding principle the promotion of peace, non-violence, human security, solidarity and aid development. In fact, in articles 12 and 13 of the bill, cooperation is considered in aid development as one of the axes of bilateral relations and relations with international organizations.

Obviously, during the debate the intervention of the Catalan Minister had the support of his own political group, CiU. Its spokesperson explained that the law came to the parliament as a result of a commitment expressed by the government in the parliamentary plenary session. Moreover, CiU's spokesperson defended the bill, because CiU believes it is necessary to expand the powers of the Catalan SAC in matters of foreign affairs and "because it will develop statutory provisions facilitating the establishment of guidelines and mechanisms that will allow for a better coordination of the different departments and agencies in the area of foreign affairs, and also the foreign action of other administrations and public bodies. Ultimately, it maximizes the potential of the external action instruments and positions Catalonia at the international level" (CiU spokesperson, 2014).

According to the spokesperson of ERC, the party that supports the government as a parliamentary coalition partner, it is positive to have for the first time a law that deploys the statutory provisions with regard to the public policy of foreign affairs, and which orders the instruments and sets the fields, values and aims of foreign affairs.

Moreover, ERC's spokesperson stated that "this new draft law explains the need to have public instruments of foreign policy at the service of the country and the need to take advantage of the willingness of a dynamic civil society to carry out this agenda" (ERC spokesperson, 2014). However, he also insisted on the need to place more emphasis on the role it should have "in Foreign Aid Development, the promotion of peace and human rights in the foreign action of Catalonia, in a time where this outer action becomes the letter of introduction of Catalonia in the world" (ERC spokesperson, 2014).

The spokesperson of the parliamentary group of the PSC articulated his speech from a legalistic point of view. He explained that the only criterion that should be used at the time of the taking a bill into consideration is whether it is at odds with the Catalan legal framework, and this law is in concord with it. He was convinced that "a good action is one of the best services that can be built in and to Catalonia in this global world in which we live, a world of increasing interdependence and shared sovereignty" (PSC spokesperson, 2014). The Socialist Group is of the belief that it is necessary to strengthen this national dimension of the country and give a little more relief to certain issues, because it does not give enough importance to many other actors of this action (Committee of Regions, the Euroregion, UNESCO, etc.). It is perceived that the will of this law is that

the great efforts made by other Catalan administrations are well-presented. The local world, specialized institutions, NGOs and universities should see their experience in this field reflected, as well as the field's capacity and potential.

Although the eco-socialist parliamentary group also gave support to the initial draft, it had an important consideration to press. Its spokesperson, asked for the promotion of "citizen participation" (ICV–EUiA spokesperson, 2014). Moreover, according to the group there was not much prominence afforded to human rights, "which should be the main objective of any foreign action policy promoted by the Government of Catalonia" (ICV–EUiA spokesperson, 2014). And, taking into account its position, "this could be done by extending the references to international standards or establishing procedures for the planning and monitoring of compliance" (ICV–EUiA spokesperson, 2014). The spokesperson of CUP expressed some arguments that reinforced the previous debate about "citizen participation" (CUP spokesperson, 2014). According to him, there were a number of shortcomings that had to do with participation, commitment, ambition and extension in relation to the scope of this law. He highlighted the need for a social sharing device for social participation.

He also pointed out that his group considers international cooperation as the most-recognized foreign action and argued that the government had cut and ignored such policies lately, so they see it as difficult to understand the coherence of the full text of the law. But with regard to citizen diplomacy, or "exchange diplomacy" according to Cull's taxonomy (Cull 2008), he highlighted that "who tells the society in the world nowadays is mostly very internationalized Catalan civil society, with all its diversity and all its sectors" (CUP spokesperson, 2014).

Although some of the spokespersons quoted above asked for some new approaches in the draft, four groups voted in favor of the law and CUP finally voted for abstention in the final debate. However, two groups voted against: PP and Cs, the most Spanish nationalist groups. According to Cs, this is a bill of the state to use outside the state and against the state. Its spokesperson argued:

> Government will have the support of Cs to carry out a foreign policy whose main and fundamental axis is the internationalization of the Catalan economy to overcome the crisis and for job creation, as well as for the projection and promotion of many positive values that Catalonia has.
>
> (Cs spokesperson, 2014)

But, above all, he defended keeping "a principle of unity of external action and coherence with the foreign policy of the state, as in all serious countries, in which there are subnational entities that carry out external action" (Cs spokesperson, 2014).

Finally, let us pay attention to the arguments of the spokesperson of the parliamentary group of the PP, which rules with absolute majority in Spain. For the most part, the intervention of this MP focused on underestimating the task of foreign affairs carried out by the government of Catalonia, and referred to newspaper articles and the independence debate. The Catalan PP introduced amendments to the entirety of this project of law of foreign affairs for various reasons. The first of these, as a matter of exemplarity, even of shame, is the following: "When CiU is cutting back on welfare and in coexistence of the Catalans, the priority cannot be or should not be expanding the political framework abroad or make a law to give legal coverage" (PPC spokesperson, 2014). The spokesperson ended up stating that it seemed obvious that this law of foreign

affairs was a priority for the government, ahead of other economic and social priorities of the Catalan people.

## Discussing public diplomacy in the new Catalan foreign policy

Title 3 of the final law is devoted to government relations with citizens and civil society. Concretely, Chapter 1 of this law deals with the public diplomacy of Catalonia. For the purposes of this law and its implementing regulations, public diplomacy is "any performance of a public or private agent who has a positive and effective impact in the public opinion with the aim of enhancing the image, the influence and prestige of Catalonia internationally" (Parliament of Catalonia 2013b). Moreover, analyzing the law in depth, it is important to pay attention to the concept of "cultural diplomacy" (Cull 2008), which involves the international projection of the Catalan language, industry and creative areas – as described in the theoretical framework (Bargalló 2011) – as well as support for the training of creatives abroad. The economic diplomacy of Catalonia is based on boosting the recognition of Catalonia as a destination for investment and source of exports and center of prestige in the field of research and innovation: the region is the fourth European economic area in investment attraction (€2.170 million) (*El Punt Avui* 2015) and receives 30 per cent of European research funds given to Spain (*Ara* 2013). However, we cannot avoid talking about the permanent significance of tourism activities, for instance, in building Catalonia's international positioning. As for the support for the internationalization of civil society, all of the political groups that defended the initial draft considered civil society as a key ally in the development of the international arena.

All in all, the Generalitat aims to promote the international projection of those entities and civil society organizations from the business sector, trade unions and those involved with communication, cooperation, culture, peace, human rights and sports. They could actively participate in related entities with the aim of maximizing the presence and influence of Catalans abroad. Actually, we can also observe the need for the government to maintain a constant dialogue with research centers in Catalonia in the field of International Relations, and with universities and business schools that have wide geographic and international specialized expertise, in order to make these institutions partakers in outdoor action and associate them as transmission channels to the nation's civil society and Catalans abroad. "Academic ambassadors", as Ordeix and Ginesta (2014) explain in their work, can be very efficient partners for the internationalization of Catalan vindications, such as the Wilson Initiative.

In relation to international media coverage, the Catalan government maintains fluid and permanent contact with the media from around the world and ensures a close and continuous dialogue with international opinion-generators. The government's communication strategy must ensure the dissemination of information materials and analysis to provide clear and relevant information, proven and linked to the strategic plan of action outside of the government. Projection and international positioning of Catalonia can be advantaged by its capital, Barcelona, a pioneer in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

This requires the coordination of the Catalan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which directs and coordinates the legislation, and the government agencies that work in relation to public diplomacy activities, in order to guarantee their adequacy and coherence with the *Plan of Foreign Affairs of the Government.* One of these agencies is DIPLOCAT, the Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia, that is a public–private partnership. It came

into existence in November 2012 inspired by Anglo-Saxon public diplomacy councils and institutes. The institution is an effective instrument to contribute to the knowledge and recognition of Catalonia abroad. Its main mission is to disseminate the reputation and international projection of Catalonia by exporting an accurate knowledge of its unique assets and values in order to promote its internationalization (DIPLOCAT 2014).

DIPLOCAT aims to explain why Catalans wanted to vote in a referendum to decide if they were to be a new European state (9 November 2014) in a context where Scotland had also had its referendum for independence on 18 September 2014. However, a simple list of grievances would not capture the spirit of optimism, tolerance and modernization which is at the heart of the move to independence. For a long time many Catalans would have been happy for Catalonia to be a region in Spain with a status similar to that of any Länder within Germany (Keating 1997; Serrano 2013). But strong opposition within Spain means that devolution has always been half-hearted, chaotic and ineffective. Furthermore, "the debate on the necessity of introducing recentralization policies for economic and efficiency reason" emerged (Serrano 2013, p. 2), and this has led to a huge shift in public opinion in Catalonia: in ten years, the proportion of Catalans who want an independent state has increased from 17 per cent (Keating 1997, p. 700) to 48.5 per cent (Catalan Opinion Studies Center 2013, p. 34).

## Conclusion

In a context where the Catalan government, the Generalitat, leads a self-determination process, the Catalan Law on External Action and Relations with the EU is the first regulation of the international competences of Catalonia. It contributes to the development of the competences specified in the SAC, and it clarifies the role of the government, Catalan institutions, civil actors and Catalans abroad and the relationship between the Spanish State, the EU Treaties and international relations elsewhere. It has been clearly defined that, for the purposes of this law and its implementing regulations, *external action* is understood as international and European relations; a set of policies, actions, activities and other initiatives. Also, it has been clarified and explained that external action in Catalonia is governed by nine guiding principles.

The specific and complementary role of the relations between the Generalitat, understood as a legislative, executive and institutional body, and civil society is acknowledged. This aspect has been a key point which some political groups, even those who gave their support to the initial draft, asked to reinforce in the future law. A very interesting point, considering Cull's (2008) taxonomy on public diplomacy, is the deepening of public, cultural and economic diplomacy in Catalonia. With the practical example of DIPLOCAT reflecting the civil argumentations into a website, with a team working specifically towards two main objectives that justify this relationship between citizens and government, the understanding is reached that CLEARE is born of a civil society that is in constant dialogue with the Catalan government.

To conclude, the new structure of Catalan public diplomacy should represent the end of a blockage by the state referring to external action of this autonomous community. As is explained (San Eugenio and Xifra 2015), a good example is the deployment of initiatives of paradiplomacy carried out by stateless nations, which have at their disposal new opportunities for international representation and promotion. In this sense, the Catalan Law on External Action and Relations with the EU is the starting point for further research on the benefits of paradiplomacy in stateless nations.

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# 20
# GERMAN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY
## The importance of culture and education

*Falk Hartig*

### Introduction

In July 2014 *Newsweek Magazine* declared 'The German Century' and noted it was mightily impressed that Germany's "football team is the toast of the world, and Germany's political, cultural and environmental credentials suggest the future is striped black, red and yellow". Only a year later Germany, in the wake of the showdown over the Greek debt crisis, had wound up in the role of the European bad guy and the Greece bailout revived the image of the "cruel German" (Faiola and Kirchner 2015). Twitter was swamped by protests, using #ThisIsACoup and #BoycottGermany hashtags which prompted observers to conclude that the "ghosts of the pasts have returned with thunderous style" (Nock 2015). Especially the proposal by German finance minister Wolfgang Schäuble that Greece could temporarily leave the euro was interpreted as a prime example of Germany's bullheadedness which observers described as "a disastrous move in terms of public diplomacy" (Nehring 2015) or a "public diplomacy disaster" (The Economist 2015) alike.

While Germany regularly scores highly in country rankings and similar contests, those negative perceptions of Germany exemplify the importance of public diplomacy, soft power and image for Germany's foreign relations. So far, only very little research exists on German public diplomacy (Zöllner 2006, 2009; Auer and Srugies 2013) and this chapter aims to broaden the knowledge and understanding of German public diplomacy. It starts with a theoretical positioning by outlining the conceptual and terminological understanding of public diplomacy in Germany. Both German scholarship and diplomatic practice are strongly influenced by the concept of Foreign Cultural Policy (*Auswärtige Kulturpolitik*) and the idea that culture is an important means of a country's foreign policy (Wilhelm 2006; Schreiner 2011). While *Auswärtige Kulturpolitik* bears great similarity to the concept of cultural diplomacy and has a long tradition in Germany, the broader concept of public diplomacy only recently started to attract attention in academic and practitioner circles (Ostrowski 2010; Maaß 2013).

Following this conceptual sketch, the chapter analyses aims and goals of German public diplomacy and shows that Germany pursues not only normative, idealistic purposes, although they are highlighted and emphasized, but also more functional goals.

Here, one focus of Germany's engagement with the world is on the aim of spreading values to others, as other western countries do (Fitzpatrick 2010). The chapter furthermore outlines the practice of the most relevant German public diplomacy actors and the most important instruments, outlining the importance of culture and education for Germany's conduct of public diplomacy. Based on an evaluation of the relevant literature and analysis of publicly available documents, this chapter sheds light on the understanding and structure of public diplomacy in Germany and seeks to identify the strengths and weaknesses of German public diplomacy.

## Conceptual outline: terminology, aims and purposes – abroad and in Germany

"Public diplomacy is one of the most salient political communication issues in the 21st century" (Snow and Taylor 2009, p. 9) but until today "scholars have not yet pursued or even sufficiently promoted systematic theoretical research in this field" (Gilboa 2008, p. 73). While there is not much academic consensus when it comes to public diplomacy, it is widely accepted that public diplomacy can be defined through a distinction from traditional diplomacy. Traditional diplomacy can be described as the external management of state affairs (Powell 2004, p. 61), which is based on self-interest as well as on the particular values and historical experiences that shape a country's identity (Henrikson 2008, p. 5). A general classification of diplomatic activities might include government-to-government activities, diplomat-to-diplomat contacts, government-to-people contacts and people-to-people contacts (Manheim 1994, p. 3). The first and second belong to traditional diplomacy while the third and fourth belong to the area of public diplomacy.[1]

As Jan Melissen (2005, p. 8) points out, nowadays almost all countries, whether small or big, democratic or authoritarian, affluent or poor "have in recent years displayed a great interest in public diplomacy". The reason why countries engage in this kind of self-presentation and impression management may vary from case to case, but one can identify some general purposes which are interrelated and to a certain degree may be relevant for different countries (for an overview of purposes see Fitzpatrick 2010, pp. 93–4). One basic reason for public diplomacy may be the desire to be noticed, preferably in a positive way, by other countries, or to increase people's familiarity with one's country (Leonard *et al*. 2002). Another common reason why states apply public diplomacy is to generate understanding of their policies and to present a positive image to the world. Yet another important reason why states engage in public diplomacy is to rectify negative external perceptions, or what Melissen calls "building a line of defense against foreign criticism" (Melissen 2011, p. 14). And a number of countries, especially in the west, aim to spread universal values to others (Fitzpatrick 2010).

Overall, one can identify two broad goals of public diplomacy: on the one hand normative, idealistic purposes; on the other hand more functional goals (Mark 2009)[2]. Idealistic purposes include the development of mutual understanding, combating ethnocentrism and stereotyping and preventing conflicts. These idealistic objectives frequently include the idea of a two-way relationship based on mutual exchange and dialogue, although the practice has tended not to be nearly as reciprocal as its practitioners may intend (Mark 2009, p. 9). Functional objectives include advancing trade, political, diplomatic and economic interests, developing bilateral relationships and helping to maintain bilateral relationships in times of tension (ibid.). Other functional objectives can include the recovery of a negative image or the presentation of a positive image involving a

certain country and keeping citizens of one nation who are located in foreign countries close to their native culture (see for example Aguilar 1996). All these functional objectives, as Mark makes it clear, relate to the purpose of advancing national interests (Mark 2010, p. 64).

## *Public diplomacy in Germany: conceptual understanding and practical purposes*

The term public diplomacy is a recent addition to the political vocabulary in Germany (Zöllner 2009; Auer and Srugies 2013), although the practice has a long history. Analysing both academic writings and policy documents one has to detect a certain ambiguity and confusion regarding the term.

Both German scholarship and diplomatic practice are strongly influenced by the importance of culture as an important means of a country's foreign policy (Wilhelm 2006). This is reflected in the term and concept of Foreign Cultural Policy (*Auswärtige Kulturpolitik*). The officially used term, however, is Foreign Cultural and Educational Policy (*Auswärtige Kultur- und Bildungspolitik*), which was introduced by the coalition of the Social Democrats and the Greens led by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder (1998–2005). Nevertheless, though, the term did not gain acceptance in academic circles in Germany (Maaß in Thomas 2015, p. 237). Foreign Cultural Policy, which is most similar to the concept of cultural diplomacy, has a long tradition in Germany, but the broader concept of public diplomacy only recently started to attract attention in academic and practitioner circles (Grolig and Schlageter 2007; Zöllner 2009; Ostrowski 2010; Maaß 2013; Auer and Srugies 2013; Auer, Srugies and Löffelholz 2015).

While scholars note an increasing interest in public diplomacy (Maaß 2011, p. 593) and some argue that the term is "gradually replacing" Foreign Cultural Policy (Zöllner 2009, p. 262), the analysis of the respective policy documents shows a slightly less obvious picture. The most recent official conception outlining Germany's activities in this area, *Foreign Cultural and Educational Policy in the Age of Globalisation* (*Auswärtige Kultur- und Bildungspolitik in Zeiten der Globalisierung*), explicitly refers to both cultural and public diplomacy (Auswärtiges Amt 2011, p. 18).[3] Referring to modern communication technologies and new forms of communication, it notes that Germany has to adapt its Foreign Cultural and Educational Policy "as cultural diplomacy" and its "public diplomacy" in order to increase the communication of and about Germany (ibid.). Interestingly enough the most recent work report, *Foreign Cultural and Educational Policy 2013/2014*, released in spring 2015, does not mention cultural or public diplomacy; neither do the related English websites of the Foreign Office.[4]

While this may seem to be a case of mere terminological quibble, it points to a more fundamental observation which can, apparently, be partly explained by German party politics. The 2011 conception was drafted by the Christian–Liberal coalition under Chancellor Angela Merkel (Christian Democratic Union) and Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle (Free Democratic Party) while the 2015 work report was released under the aegis of Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier from the Social Democrats. In 2012, the Social Democrats, then leading opposition party, questioned the explicit mentioning of cultural diplomacy in the 2011 conception, asking (and thereby indirectly criticising) whether foreign cultural and educational policy should be driven by interests and thereby raising the question of how dependent or independent culture should or can be from politics (Thomas 2015).[5]

Leaving these terminological aspects aside, it can be noted that culture still plays the most important role in Germany's public diplomacy. It is understood as the key element "of a credible, sustainable German foreign policy" because it goes "straight to people's hearts and minds" (Auswärtiges Amt 2015c). This understanding is informed by the view that, along with political and economic relations, an interest in cultural relations – including education – is not only one of Germany's foreign policy cornerstones, but also carries a long-term impact. In 1970, Ralf Dahrendorf, acting on behalf of the Foreign Office, developed the "guiding principles for foreign cultural policy" (Auswärtiges Amt 1970) which formed the basis for the then chancellor of Germany Willy Brandt's notion of foreign cultural policy as the "third pillar" of foreign policy.

These guiding principles introduced the concept of "extended culture", which is understood as a major "paradigm shift" in German foreign cultural policy (Grätz 2009, p. 2) because it broadened the understanding of culture in a Williamsian way and it defined the work of the organizations dealing with cultural activities until today. By tradition, the German grasp of culture tended towards a narrow definition which was reflected in the self-perception of Germany as the land of poets and thinkers (Land der Dichter und Denker): "German Kultur traditionally stressed high culture and was closely linked to the enhancement of *Bildung* (knowledge, education), ethnically bound, deeply rooted in German history, and – in the case of the arts, music, and performance – dependent on state funding" (Gienow-Hecht 2000, p. 486, emphasis in original).[6] It was in this context that Dahrendorf argued to "extend" the understanding of culture: "Nowadays culture is no longer a privilege of elitist groups, but it is on offer to everyone" (Auswärtiges Amt 1970, p. 5), it concerns everyday life, and "as part of the dynamic process of societal change [it] has to deal with a variety of present-day problems" (ibid.).[7]

The purposes of Germany's public diplomacy, as stated by the Foreign Ministry, include the promotion of the German language, contribution to crisis and conflict prevention, the promotion of European integration and the presentation of a realistic and vibrant image of Germany (Auswärtiges Amt 2015c). Furthermore, public diplomacy should enhance cultural exchange and intercultural dialogue and it should contribute to the development of Germany as a science and business location (Standort Deutschland). The underlying values of German public diplomacy include freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law (Deutscher Bundestag 2015).

The so-called Conception 2000, outlining guidelines for Germany's public diplomacy, clearly notes: "Our cultural activities abroad are not simply neutral, they are value-orientated. With regards to the promotion of democracy, the realization of human rights, sustainability of growth, participation in scientific-technological progress, poverty reduction or the protection of national resources [we] take up a clear position" (Auswärtiges Amt 2000, p. 1). This value-oriented approach becomes clear in the above-mentioned most recent conception, *Foreign Cultural and Educational Policy in the Age of Globalisation*, which proclaims as the overarching goals of German public diplomacy: "winning partners, conveying values, representing interests" (Auswärtiges Amt 2011).

According to Auer and Srugies those goals are, by and large, implemented by the various actors of German public diplomacy as they, according to their self-understanding, contribute "to raising awareness of and increasing knowledge about Germany as well as shaping and maintaining a positive image of the country abroad by reducing stereotypes and prejudices, evoking understanding and sympathy for ideals, goals, and (political) programs, as well as establishing long-term partnerships" (Auer and Srugies 2013, p. 8).

## Actors and programs of German public diplomacy

Germany's public diplomacy activities, as Zöllner points out, include the usual array of lectures, youth, academic and sport exchanges, cultural and art exhibitions, and language training "that are typical of Western-style democracies" (Zöllner 2006, p. 170). While it is somewhat difficult to make a clear distinction between actors and programs, the following part will give a brief overview of who is in charge of German public diplomacy and what is done.

### *German public diplomacy actors*

The major actor of German public diplomacy is the Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt, or AA) in Berlin as it is in charge of the overall framework conditions. The AA designs the principal guidelines for German public diplomacy, such as the above-mentioned Conceptions and a variety of policy documents and recommendations. It thereby "claims overall coordination and strategic formation sovereignty" (Thomas 2015, p. 238). This overall coordination includes funding and guiding the work of Germany's various public diplomacy organizations such as Goethe Institut, Deutsche Welle or exchange organizations like the German Academic Exchange Service.

Furthermore, the AA is itself a public diplomacy actor via its embassies and consulates abroad (Ostrowski 2010) and via various media outlets. In addition to its embassies, the Foreign Office runs German Information Centers in Cairo, Paris and Washington as well as "web-based centers" for Brazil, Mexico, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The German Information Center USA, for example, is, according to its website, "the public diplomacy department of the German Embassy in Washington [and] delivers relevant information to a United States audience and fosters the dialogue between our two countries" (German Information Center USA, n.d.).

The AA's central website has versions in seven foreign languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Chinese and Russian) and seven people are in charge of internet-related activities. At the end of 2014 the Foreign Office was running a German Facebook page and about 90 Facebook pages by diplomatic missions abroad. There is a German Twitter account, an English Twitter account and about 40 Twitter accounts from various embassies and consulates (Tretbar 2014). Other AA-sponsored web resources draw on topical attractive events, such as a website in nine languages on football (soccer) in Germany, or feature online editions of the *Deutschland* magazine and the *Facts about Germany* handbook in various major languages. "The printed version of *Deutschland* magazine is issued six times a year in 11 languages (total print run: c. 400,000 copies), while the *Facts about Germany* handbook is published in 13 idioms and likewise has a circulation of 400,000 copies" (Zöllner 2009, pp. 263–4).

Other ministries contributing to Germany's public diplomacy include, amongst others, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth in charge of international youth exchange and the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (Maaß 2015). Also engaged in German public diplomacy, although to a lesser degree, are the German federal states, municipalities and German cities.

A second group of actors are various non-governmental organizations. On the one hand there are typical NGOs working in the field of development aid, including social church institutions or private operators organizing children and youth exchanges. In the

religious realm alone, it is assumed, over 10,000 groups are engaged in developmental work (Pogorelskaja 2015). On the other hand, there are various German foundations which can be divided into two subgroups: political foundations and other foundations.

German political foundations are formally considered non-governmental organizations, but nevertheless they are associated with German foreign policies through the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Foreign Office. Unlike most NGOs, they are financed by public funds and the amount each foundation receives depends on the number of each political party represented in the Bundestag (Dakowska 2005). Currently, six political foundations exist: the Friedrich Ebert Foundation affiliated to the Social–Democratic Party, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation affiliated to the Christian Democratic Union, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation affiliated to the Liberal Democratic Party, the Hanns Seidel Foundation allied to the Bavarian Christian Social Union, the Heinrich Böll Foundation affiliated to the Greens and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation allied to the post-communist party The Left. As Dakowska (2005, p. 150) notes, the political foundations have played an important role in facilitating party cooperation in countries in transition from authoritarian rule and in the context of the transformation of Central and Eastern European countries. Nowadays they are often engaged in strengthening transatlantic and European cooperation and contribute to crisis and conflict management. These foundations "do not act on behalf of the German government, but only with its agreement and financial support" (BMZ, n.d.). They are becoming increasingly involved in international and global dialogue processes. They also help to strengthen civil society organizations from developing and transitioning countries through capacity building and help to introduce them to transnational structures and global policy networks as well as the coordination, negotiation and decision-making structures of central international institutions (ibid.).

An increasingly important role is played by private foundations. There are thousands of private foundations in Germany, several hundred company foundations, for example, as private giving and the work of non-profit-oriented foundations have grown in importance due to increasing social challenges. Some of the most prominent private foundations engaged in German public diplomacy, broadly understood, include the Körber Foundation, the Bertelsmann Foundation and the Robert Bosch Foundation. The Bosch Foundation, for example, is engaged in a variety of dialogue and exchange programs in order to create direct and personal contact between the future leaders of different countries. The foundation, according to its mission statement, creates platforms for the exchange of opinions and ideas across national borders and, in doing so, helps to create a realistic and nuanced view of the respective other country (Theiner 2015). One of these programs is the Media Ambassadors program, a journalist exchange program for journalists from China and Germany. This program "aims at winning over journalists for the task of fostering international understanding between China and Germany. In addition the program promotes a global democratic dialogue and targets to strengthen independent quality reporting" (Medienbotschafter, n.d.).

The major actors in Germany's public diplomacy, however, are so-called intermediary organizations (Mittlerorganisationen). These are non-governmental autonomous agencies, which get funding from the government through a ministry, but at the same time the government delegates policy control and execution to these agencies. The government thus retains overall control but funds and contracts non-official agencies to operate independently in accordance with Foreign Office (as the main funder) guidelines and funding. As the Foreign Office explains it: these agencies "shape their programmes in cooperation with

the Federal Foreign Office and the German missions abroad, but are *largely free* to decide the content for themselves" (Auswärtiges Amt 2015c, emphasis added). The government's principal partners in this area are: most prominently the Goethe Institut, promoting German language and culture; the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (ifa), focusing on worldwide artistic exchange and dialogue between civil societies; the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH), both focusing on academic and scientific exchange and cooperation; and Germany's international broadcaster Deutsche Welle (for an overview see Zöllner 2009).

The approach that the government's role is limited to sponsorship or the arms-length guidance of activities executed by non-state actors is highly praised in the German literature and, according to the mainstream understanding, the advantages of these intermediary organizations outweigh potential disadvantages. The advantages discussed are apparently not unique to the case of Germany and include more flexibility in conducting public diplomacy and better local knowledge and expertise compared with foreign affairs officials in Berlin or regularly rotating embassy staff. The biggest advantage, however, is seen in the independence of these organizations and the resulting limited state influence which provides reputation advantages (Streiter 2008), the chances for more innovative thinking, speed and flexibility, and "more credibility compared to interest-led national foreign policy motives" (Maaß 2015, p. 269).

Kurt-Jürgen Maaß, one of Germany's leading voices in the public diplomacy debate, also notes a couple of disadvantages, however. Because of the various different actors, goal-setting and supervision by the Foreign Office is more complicated, as is the coordination of the various different actors and their respective programs (Maaß 2015, p. 269). From a communicative point of view one can also argue that although a myriad of voices may increase the diversity and richness of Germany's public diplomacy, it may also lead to a rather confusing and incoherent message as different agencies have different audiences and focus on different aspects.

Furthermore, the fact that various federal government departments are involved leads to "department egoisms" which are potentially intensified in the various organizations themselves (Maaß 2015, p. 269). Competitiveness among these organizations "may act positive but can also act inhibiting" because these organizations "are prone to protection of vested rights" (ibid.). Maaß, who was the general secretary of the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations and therefore knows very well what he is talking about, also notes that because the Foreign Office is afraid of losing influence it tends to over-bureaucratize the work of the organizations, which in turn cuts their time (ibid.). Overall, however, he emphasizes the "significant and politically much weightier" advantages which, in his understanding, more than compensate for the disadvantages (ibid.).

### *Cultural institutes and the importance of culture*

"Germany turned to culture to help restore relationships after the Second World War" (Schneider 2005, p. 158) and the most prominent actor in this regard is the Munich-based Goethe Institut which was founded in 1951. Currently there are 159 Institutes in 98 countries (including 12 in Germany) and number 160 is currently in the making in Windhoek, Namibia. The Goethe Institut is organized as a private association in which the Federal Republic of Germany and, among others, political functionaries are part of the membership assembly, thereby making it a quasi-public service institution (Zöllner 2009, p. 265). Its budget is mainly allocated by the Foreign Office, which in 2014 provided €213.6 million.

The Goethe Institut earned about €76.5 million with its various language courses, which brought the overall budget in 2014 to almost €310 million (Goethe Institut 2015a).

The core activities of the Goethe Institut include: first, the promotion of the German language by running language courses, compiling teaching materials, training teachers, contributing to scientific research and participating in politico-language initiatives; second, the fostering of international cultural cooperation by organizing programs of events and making contributions to various festivals and exhibitions in the fields of film, dance, music, theatre, literature and translation; and third, conveying a comprehensive image of Germany by providing information about cultural, social and political life through libraries, information centres, discussion forums and a variety of print, audio and video publications.

The "cultural and educational programmes encourage intercultural dialogue and enable cultural involvement [and they] strengthen the development of structures in civil society and foster worldwide mobility" (Goethe Institut, n.d.). The promotion of civil society is one important aspect of the global engagement of Goethe Institutes (GIs) and is currently a focus of the Institute's work in eastern Europe, especially the Ukraine. As the general secretary mentioned in mid-2015, it is the aim of GIs to "bring together actors from the cultural and educational sphere so they can exchange views about the future of their societies. In these countries, but also in Russia, we mainly attempt to strengthen civil society" (Goethe Institut 2015b).

An increasingly important aspect of the GIs' work is the engagement with refugees both in Germany and the Middle East. In the Middle East and Turkey, the Goethe Institut offers language courses for Syrian and Iraqi refugees as well as cultural education workshops for children (ibid.). The work with refugees also points to the above-mentioned fact that different organizations work in related fields, as the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (ifa) also engages with refugees. The ifa promotes art and cultural exchange in exhibitions, dialogue and conference programs and it connects civil societies, cultural practices, art, media and science. It is, furthermore, running a research program, 'Culture and Foreign Policy', and one of the programs is dealing with 'Foreign Cultural and Educational Policy in refugee camps'.

### *Academic exchange and scholarships and the importance of education*

The German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, DAAD) is a private, publicly funded, self-governing organization of higher education institutions in Germany. It is the German national agency for the support of international academic cooperation. It offers programs and funding for students, faculty, researchers and others in higher education, providing financial support to almost 120,000 individuals per year, making it, according to its own statement, the world's largest funding organization for the international exchange of students and researchers. The DAAD furthermore represents the German higher education system abroad, promotes Germany as an academic and research destination, and helps to build ties between institutions around the world. Its aims are:

1 to enable "young academics and researchers from around the world to become leaders in the fields of science, culture, economics, and politics – as well as friends and partners of Germany";

2 to qualify "young German elites to assume positions of leadership in a global environment by providing them with international and intercultural experiences";
3 to enhance the internationalization of German higher education institutions;
4 to promote scholarship on the German language, literature, and the arts in universities worldwide;
5 to support the process of economic and democratic reform in developing countries and in the transition countries of Middle and Eastern Europe by supporting their academic research and progress

(DAAD 2015)

The DAAD budget is derived mainly from the federal funding for various ministries, primarily the German Federal Foreign Office, but also from the European Union and a number of enterprises, organizations and foreign governments. In 2014, the DAAD had a total budget of €441 million with €177 million (about 40 per cent) coming from the Foreign Office, €103 million (about 23 per cent) from the Ministry of Education and Research, €41 million (about 9 per cent) from the Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, €65 million (about 15 per cent) from the European Union and €55 million (about 13 per cent) from various other funding bodies (DAAD 2015, p. 16).

The DAAD, as the outlined aims indicate, mainly targets specific groups of people, namely future leaders and elites or what Joseph Nye (2004, p. 109) describes as "key individuals". While the DAAD also promotes ordinary university students, for example, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) follows a more elitist approach as it promotes "academic cooperation between excellent scientists and scholars from abroad and from Germany" (AvH online n.d.) by providing generous scholarships.

Those programs are designed for a rather elitist audience or key individuals and are characterized by access control via a competitive application and selection process. Probably the most prominent of these programs is the US Fulbright Program. As the flagship international educational exchange programs sponsored by the US government, it is a highly competitive merit-based grants scheme for students, scholars, teachers, professionals, scientists and artists. AvH also runs various similar programs, including the German Chancellor Fellowship for Tomorrow's Leaders. This fellowship points to the rather functional objectives of those programs, as it is only open for potential future leaders from certain strategically important countries: the United States, the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, Brazil and India. Interestingly, until 2014 only citizens of the USA, China and Russia were entitled to apply (Hartig 2016, p. 40).

## Conclusion: the strategic importance of public diplomacy and its concurrent relative insignificance

Although one may understand the selection criteria for the Chancellor Fellowship only a small thing and a minor matter, it nevertheless exemplifies that German public diplomacy is, after all, not only concerned with idealistic purposes but is also very much about realizing more functional goals which, essentially, makes it a "strategic action oriented to success" (Zöllner 2009, p. 267).

The case of Germany also highlights a more basic insight which critics may describe as the relative insignificance of public diplomacy "in comparison with the rather more visible initiatives dealing with high politics, war and peace" (Melissen 2006, p. 6). Not only the above-mentioned Greek crisis but also the resulting refugee crisis and Germany's

way of dealing with it (first welcoming tens of thousands of refugees and then closing the borders abruptly) illustrate how much short-term high politics and questions of war and peace influence the perception and the image of a country and may potentially sideline public diplomacy, which, especially in the context of cultural work which is a major aspect in Germany, works more over the long run. On the other hand, however, both crises also illustrate how necessary public diplomacy is in order to communicate and engage with foreign publics in a meaningful manner. And this, apparently, is why Jan Melissen notes that "in reality it is small public diplomacy that makes the big difference" (Melissen 2006, p. 6).

## Notes

1 In the context of this chapter public diplomacy is broadly understood as a country's communication and engagement with foreign publics in order to achieve certain political interests. Public diplomacy is furthermore understood as a means to facilitate soft power (Rawnsley 2012) and to communicate certain narratives about a country.
2 Mark develops this framework for cultural diplomacy. As I understand cultural diplomacy as one component of public diplomacy, it seems suitable to apply these categories to public diplomacy.
3 The conception was drafted by the Christian–Liberal coalition under Chancellor Angela Merkel (Christian Democratic Union) and Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle (Free Democratic Party).
4 The website describing Germany's goals and aims in this sector describes this part of German diplomacy as "Cultural relations and education policy" (Auswärtiges Amt 2015b). The mission statement of the division in charge, the Directorate-General of Culture and Communication, describes its job as "to plan, coordinate and steer German cultural relations and education policy, communication and media policy and public-relations activities in the political sphere" (Auswärtiges Amt 2015c).
5 Interestingly enough neither the English term 'soft power' nor the German equivalent is mentioned in any of the official documents or policy statements quoted or consulted here.
6 Referring to this narrow understanding, Gienow-Hecht explains that people living in West Germany after World War II "did not necessarily view the invasion of American popular culture as 'cultural imperialism' because to them, American culture was incompatible with Kultur" (Gienow-Hecht 2000, p. 486).
7 This democratized understanding of culture is probably most prominently outlined in a book entitled *Culture for Everyone* by Hilmar Hoffmann, president of Germany's Goethe Institut from 1992 to 2001. Hoffmann argues for the equality of high culture and everyday culture, because for him "culture is how people live and interact with one another" (Hoffmann 1990, pp. 58–9). It is in this context that, for example food culture, cultivation of home décor and youth culture are seen as equal in importance to classical high culture, the latter being understood as a set of cultural products mainly in the arts.

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# 21

# GOOD HEALTH IS ABOVE WEALTH

## Eurozone as a patient in eurocrisis discourse

*Magdalena Bielenia-Grajewska*

### Introduction

Modern times are determined by changeability and fluidity, observable at the level of people, things and organizations. One of the key factors of the twenty-first century is globalization, with its influence summarized in Naren Chitty's quote: "new geographies are peopled with diasporic communities, having hybrid identities and consuming cultural wares, of transnational origin, that are marketed by multinational corporations" (Chitty 2005, p. 556).

One dimension of globalized realities is communication. Narrowing the scope of discussion to the institutional level, modern organizations differ from the ones that were present on the market many years ago. One of the most important factors determining organizations operating in the twenty-first century is the language itself, with its importance investigated from various angles. One of the key notions in the discussion on the linguistic side of companies is treating language as the crucial determinant of companies' performance on the internal level. This dimension encompasses the notions that result from the increasing complexity in terms of linguistic forms used in organizations.

Languages can be understood in the broad sense, by investigating mother tongues as well as professional sublanguages, dialects, genres and other forms of linguistic representation. The mentioned complexity on the linguistic level leads to organizational strategies that aim to respect corporate linguistic rights, exercise effective linguistic policy and facilitate organizational performance. Taking the outer dimension into account, language is also an important factor in cooperation between the company and the broadly understood environment. Since the modern global market is not restricted in terms of geographical distance, companies may also operate in very distant countries, those that differ, among other ways, in terms of languages and codes of communication used by diversified speakers. Thus one of the key notions shaping the external side of corporate performance is the focus on translation and localization of products, services and company image offered and maintained simultaneously in various countries.

The mentioned aspect of linguistic performance encompasses various linguistic tools and different levels of investigation. Taking into account the importance of symbolism in intercultural communication as well as the growing role of nonliteral communication in modern times, this contribution focuses on the application of metaphors in organizational communication, by concentrating on their role in creating and exercising soft power as well as responding to it.

This chapter starts with the brief characteristics of metaphors in organizational communication. To narrow the scope of the research, the European Union as an institution has been selected, being a place of multilingual dialogue. Moreover, to examine the mentioned coexistence between plurilingualism and mono-monetarism, the focus of discussion is on the Eurozone, being the monetary union consisting of EU member countries using the euro as its currency. Thus the Eurozone, with its members speaking different languages and using one currency, can be studied through the prism of *heteroglossic linguistic identity* (Bielenia-Grajewska 2013a) and *monoglossic currency representation.*

Since the aim of this contribution is to discuss the role of language in soft power, the study of metaphors as an effective tool of exercising soft power is supported by selected examples of metaphorical communication on the Eurozone. The objective of this approach is to show the Eurozone discourse, paying attention to its figurative dimension and its function as an instrument of soft power. The chapter focuses on three theoretical pillars – identity, metaphors and the Eurozone.

The reasons for selecting this topic are as follows. First, no studies on the relation between soft power and the Eurozone have been conducted, taking into account metaphors as powerful instruments of soft power creation, implementation and execution. In addition, the aim of this contribution is to focus on the topic that has not been studied so far in literature – the Eurozone identity through the perspective of metaphors. Second, the creation and implementation of metaphors, being the instruments of soft power, have not been discussed in depth in literature. Third, the topic reflects the current discussion going on in the press, important not only to Eurozone members but also to other stakeholders.

## Linguistic dimension of soft power

The relation between soft power and language is very strong, being represented in different linguistic tools and text types. Starting with the textual dimension, the link between discourse and soft power is visible in narrative functions. It can be discussed, for example, from the perspective of narration in international contacts: "We argue that the concept of strategic narrative is particularly relevant in international relations today. Rational theories are for well-ordered worlds and for leaders set within that world. Today, however, we have a chaotic world, with leaders who are ill-prepared for its complexities. Narratives are even more important for ordering the chaos" (Roselle, Miskimmon and O'Loughlin 2014, p. 74). Thus, soft power used at the text level may introduce and sustain order, creating the picture of a given phenomenon in the eyes of stakeholders.

Focusing on the more micro dimension, soft power is created and exercised through linguistic tools. Both literal and nonliteral linguistic elements constitute the way soft power is put in words, perceived and understood. Soft power influences linguistics since it shapes the function and popularity of some linguistic tools. For example, the popularity of metaphors is determined by the domains of life they operate in. Moreover, the functions of soft power linguistic tools are influenced by the functions of soft power as such. As Hayden (2012) states, the goals of soft power are, among others, to improve a

country's credibility, the way it is represented in the media and its contacts with the public in other countries.

Another important notion is the relation between attractiveness and soft power. The notions of soft power are attractive since they are in line with one's personal narration, either current or in the future (Roselle, Miskimmon and O'Loughlin 2014). The linguistic dimension of soft power is discussed by Chitty (Ch. 1). Moreover, items and their soft power may be viewed through the perspective of Actor–Network Theory (ANT), an approach that stresses the role of both living and nonliving entities. ANT in that case facilitates the active role of technological tools and applications, such as websites, Facebook and email, in creating and understanding discourse (Bielenia-Grajewska 2011). The mentioned ANT perspective shows that inanimate objects are not only the passive recipients of individuals' activities, but they also shape the discursive environment.

To digress, soft power is not the only type of power that is created and exercised by organizations. Another term that is often discussed is *smart power*, which is defined as "the capacity of an actor to combine elements of hard power and soft power in ways that are mutually reinforcing such that the actor's purposes are advanced effectively and efficiently" (Wilson III 2008, p. 115). Wilson III (2008) discusses the factors that have to be taken into account for smart power to be effective. First, the target audience should be known very well, both its internal and external dimensions. The recipient group is not restricted to the individuals or societies in focus; the local, regional, national and pannational contexts should be taken into account. Second, the one who creates smart power should be aware of its knowledge, goals and capabilities. Third, the used tools should be effective on their own and together with others. Moreover, the one who uses these tools should be aware of their limitations (Wilson III 2008). Linguistic soft power does not exist in isolation; it determines other types of power and, at the same time, it is shaped by them. Thus the way linguistic power is used depends on other types of coercive and non-coercive ways of interaction and persuasion.

## Organizational metaphors

As has been discussed in the previous parts of this chapter, modern organizations, having to face competition, changeability and fluidity governing the world of things, people and ideas, have to rely on carefully selected linguistic tools that will not only strengthen their internal position but will make them competitive and attractive employers, leaders in global markets as well as reliable and efficient creators and/or distributors of things or ideas among the broadly understood stakeholders. Among various linguistic tools, metaphors are the ones that are employed in different contexts and in different ways. Among different theories on metaphors, the author has concentrated on the conceptual metaphor theory, when the domain of experience is used to understand another one since it is more physical, more novel and easily understood than the one that is intangible (e.g. Kövecses 2015).

As far as the functional domain of organizational metaphors is concerned, modern companies rely on symbolic language to create and exercise their communication policy. Stibbe (2015) draws our attention to the word *corporation* containing the metaphor of a person, since it comes from the verb *corporare*, meaning to form into a body. The metaphorical approach to organizational communication facilitates discussion on the way discourse is created and exercised. For example, *company linguistic identity* may be studied by the '3Ps' model of company linguistic identity, with such domains as personnel,

products and purchasers used to show the broad application of symbolic language in commercial contexts (Bielenia-Grajewska 2015b). The mentioned perspective offers an analysis of the way metaphors may facilitate the description of a company's story, its strengths and the broadly understood image and identity of an organization (Giacconi 2011). Their functionality can be discussed through the event prism. Thus, they are used to describe standard situations, making routines easier to understand and repeat. Relying on the same metaphorical names in everyday organizational discourse facilitates communication, taking into account both internal and external dimensions.

Examining the inner sphere of organizational discourse, metaphors foster effective communication between specialists representing different domains of professional activity or among diversified personnel in terms of languages used by workers. In the second case, metaphors make the unfamiliar concept understandable. At the external level, metaphors are often used to facilitate dialogue with the broadly understood stakeholders, having different knowledge on the topic and different interests in organizational performance. In addition, metaphors are also useful in situations that demand immediate communicative reactions. For example, using metaphors in crisis or risk situations makes the situation understood faster than by using standard forms of expression.

Metaphors facilitate the discussion on change management since they help eliminate *metathesiophobia*, the fear of change (Zaltman and Zaltman 2008); they ease the comprehension of new situations and novel applications. Metaphors stimulate the perception of risk cognition (Bielenia-Grajewska 2015a), facilitating crisis or risk management. Metaphors act as efficient tools for discussing complex issues by means of well-known concepts and symbols. This is especially crucial when companies have to face some risks or crises and effective communication is important in conducting a quick communication campaign and restoring the company's image in the eyes of the broadly understood stakeholders. In addition, symbolic language reinforces the introduction of new products and services on the market by offering a cognitive link between the merchandise that is known and the one that is novel.

Since they leave a place for individual interpretations, metaphors are understood by people from different cultures. However, this aspect may also be treated as a disadvantage of metaphorical communication and soft power since the same piece of information may be perceived in different ways within the company and among the stakeholders. Thus the selection of 'universal' metaphors without proper localization may lead to some misinterpretation of information and different perceptions of products and their features. The mentioned issue leads to the necessity of discussing the notion of *metaphorical localization* that stresses the importance of applying cross-cultural filters, e.g. in global communication, such as the ones used by international organizations and companies. On the internal level, understanding how metaphors are created and understood by a diverse workforce may facilitate effective communication and a better corporate climate.

Another important notion is the principle of economy; metaphorical names occupy less space in printed or recorded materials; this feature is also crucial for modern media that focus on the most economical ways of presenting data. The works on the role of metaphors in depicting crisis involve, for example, the studies of Cortés de los Ríos (2010) on magazine covers as well as the pictorial and verbal metaphors coming from, for instance, the domain of natural disaster or weather. Another work on the semiotic character of organizational discourse is the one by Domínguez (2015), who studies in his article the role of a symbol of a pair of scissors in depicting economic crisis. His discussion focuses on how this representation of economic cutbacks evolved through a period of time.

## Metaphors and soft power in organizations

There are several reasons why metaphors are a powerful element of soft power. As Nye (2004, p. x) states, "soft power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion of payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideas and policies". Taking the mentioned attractiveness into account, it can be stated that metaphors constitute an appealing way of coding information. Their enchantment is connected with a selected domain; for example, the domain of fairytales makes the content more interesting than pure figures.

It should be mentioned that the application of metaphors in soft power has both advantages and disadvantages. As far as the possible traps are concerned, first, metaphors offer listeners or readers the possibility of making their own interpretation. Thus the intentions of metaphor creators may not necessarily be understood in the same way as projected by the creators.

Second, the message created and disseminated by metaphors is always to some extent subjective, being emotionally laden with encoders' attitudes. Since decoders may vary in the way they approach the issue in focus, their understanding of the message may be different from the expected one. Another issue that should be observed by metaphor creators is the notion of culture. Not all metaphors are cross-cultural; some metaphors rely on concepts that are understood only by a given community. For example, the way colors are perceived differs in many cultures, with white associated variously with birth, innocence or even with death.

Third, metaphors may not mirror the situation as it really is. Substituting numbers and precise data with metaphorical names depicting a situation may alter the picture of it, making it stronger or weaker in the eyes of target receivers depending on their knowledge of source domains, their attitude to symbolic language, etc. Moreover, in metaphors describing organizations the individual responsibility is dispersed; no one knows who is really behind these decisions. Since an organization is responsible, no particular person can be blamed.

Another feature connected with the notion of soft power and metaphors is the virality of the latter. The 'life' and 'power' of metaphors can be examined through the prism of memetics, studying how metaphors 'infect' users and 'live' in other texts and contexts. For example, in the case of symbolic language used in speeches on the euro, metaphors that are liked by the audience are repeated and live another life in the speeches, articles and messages produced by others (e.g. Bielenia-Grajewska 2008).

## Metaphors and the EU

There are different works showing how the EU identity is constructed through metaphors. For example, Leonhardt (2012) examines body concepts and their role in shaping the personae of the European Union. The role of metaphors in creating the identity of organizations has been discussed in scientific literature. For example, McEntee-Atalianis (2011) studies the speeches of the Secretary General of the United Nations to discuss how metaphors shape international diplomacy and organizational identity. Straehle *et al*. (1999) present the metaphor of struggle used to elaborate on how unemployment is mirrored in the EU discourse. Carta (2014) uses metaphors originating from literature, such as Candide and Pangloss (from Voltaire's writing) and Don Juan. Drulák (2006) discusses in his article that Motion, Container and Equilibrium belong to the most key metaphors

describing the EU. Caliendo and Magistro (2009) elaborate on the discursive side of the European Union, whereas Vaara, Tienari and Säntti (2003) in their article focus on identity-building in the cross-border environment through the metaphoric perspective, studying such notions as collectivism or action in organizations. In another article, Vaara (2014) examines the discursive side of the legitimacy crisis of the Eurozone. In his contribution, media discussion in Finland is taken into account as well as the way discourse is important for legitimation, delegitimation and relegitimation.

Magistro (2007) offers a discussion on identity and the European Union, whereas Chaban, Bain and Stats (2007) concentrate on the EU enlargement as presented in the Australasian news. There are also studies, such as the ones by Rutkowski and Engel (2010) that focus on the relation between the European Union and soft power as well as hard measures.

## The Eurozone and its metaphorical representation – case study

The characteristics of symbolic language in international business are investigated by taking into account the research materials of various types available in English, German, Italian and Polish. The mentioned diversity of languages taken into account offers a broad forum for the discussion of different types of metaphors and shows both similarities and differences as far as the usage of metaphors in different languages is concerned. The presented examples come from books and articles on the Eurozone and they are listed in the section on research materials. The gathered corpus of symbolic language has led to the following categorization of metaphorical perspectives on the Eurozone.

In the EU discourse the Eurozone is often personified, being shown as a human being. The approach to organizations as human beings has been discussed in literature (Morgan 2006) and it is often used to stress the strengths and weaknesses of companies through the prism of a person's feelings, opinions and anxieties as well as life cycles. After analyzing the gathered material on the metaphorical representation of the Eurozone, it can be observed that organizations are often viewed as patients.

### *The Eurozone as a patient*

The metaphor of patient with regard to organizations has been used in connection with healthcare services (e.g. Rubin 2011). The Eurozone can also be personalized, having the characteristics of a person who, apart from being strong, has some weaknesses that have to be coped with on an everyday basis. One of them is the vulnerability to bacteria and viruses, made visible in the illnesses that human beings have to face. This feature has led to the popularity of medicine-related metaphors, used to strengthen the aspect of having a fight with unfavorable conditions. Thus different medical metaphors appear.

The first subdomain that can be exemplified is the group of processes, with such stages of the health life cycle as infecting, healing or recovering. The mentioned processes are examined in greater detail by concentrating on examples that represent them. Some metaphorical connotations are supposed to reflect the economic condition of the euro area by comparing the situation to an illness: "This highlights the structural malaise in the economy: the lack of policies and investments in growth-oriented economic activity that creates and sustains market competitiveness" (Derviş and Mistral 2014, p. 6).

One of the most popular metaphors is treating the Eurozone or selected countries of the euro area as a patient suffering from certain medical problems:

- "Eurozone economy: The patient is stable, but that's not the same as being cured" (McRae 2014)
- "Eurozone Debt Crisis Part II: The Contagious Greek Patient Cannot be Kept Isolated" (Sundaram, *Forbes* 2012)

> Greece wants to shed the shackles of the troika, but it still hasn't fulfilled the requirements to do so. Despite this, Athens' European partners want to provide additional aid to ensure that the Greek patient makes a complete fiscal and economic recovery.
>
> (Pauly, Reiermann and Schult, Spiegel 2014)

Apart from the holistic approach to the Eurozone as a patient, the focus may also be on the way the Eurozone, like a human being, is likely to experience illnesses and sicknesses:

- "IMF: in the Eurozone the recovery is stronger but the risk of contagion does not stop"[1] (Il Sole 24 ore, 2015).
- "The Eurozone remains exposed to vulnerability"[2] (Il Sole 24 ore, 2015).

The contagious character of crisis can also be expressed by different illnesses such as cold or flu:

> First, the fragility of the eurozone. Five countries, including Spain and Italy, are already in deflation. Germany, the big engine, has caught a cold from Russian sanctions and the eastern wing of the eurozone looks even more vulnerable. In Greece, the yield on 10-year debt is suddenly back at 9%, suggesting investors are doubting European Central Bank president Mario Draghi's pledge to do "whatever it takes" to protect the single currency.
>
> (Pratley, the Guardian 2014)

> "Will Europe get Greek 'flu?" (Walker, BBC News 2015).

Another medical domain used in the discourse on the Eurozone is the sphere of medical instruments. Within the healing processes, a sticking plaster, used to help a wound heal when the skin is irritated and permeable by viruses and bacteria, is applied as a temporary measure to abate the crisis: "So strange that the pressure to leave the single currency will mount for some as the continuing, sticking-plaster approach to the crisis continues" (Reece, the Telegraph 2011).

Another solution is to use the metaphor of vaccines; in medicine, vaccines are used to stimulate immunity of an organism against diseases, whereas in the Eurozone discourse they may be applied to show the wrongly selected solution to the problem:

> Amid the current economic crisis and financial uproar, many officials have proposed the creation of more institutions to introduce more rules and regulations that must be respected as a "vaccine" to "cure" the current "illness." They fail to realize that the current "disease" is not because there was a lack of measures, but because these were not obeyed.
>
> (Lorca-Susino 2010, p. 23)

Staying within the area of medical apparatus, a drip is used to stress that a member country needs financial help: "Greece on a drip"[3] (Pawlicki, Gazeta Wyborcza 2012). Another metaphor is a respirator: "The ECB will not be the one to unplug the respirator" (Maltezou, Strupczewski and Georgiopoulos, Irish Examiner 2015).

Like patients, the Eurozone may also experience recovery: "While Greece's new Government has been given a mandate to pay hardball over the terms of its colossal bailout, the other Pigs are slowly returning to health" (Dawber, the Independent 2015).

> During this critical situation it turned out that the governance structure of the eurozone was not at all prepared to deal with the challenges ahead. 'Muddling through' became the rule of the day, and from Council meeting to Council meeting only band-aid solutions were provided, until the next wound was detected. The national governments of troubled economies tried to make use of their (shrinking) negotiation powers but overall were willing to accept the austerity 'medicine'. In cases such as Greece, Spain, Portugal, Ireland and Italy, this led to the discharge of governments, only to bring in new governments that were sticking to the prescribed 'treatment'.
>
> (Hübner 2013, p. 32)

Other medical metaphors focus on patients' pain tolerance: "For Mody, it's clear that the least disruptive way would be Germany reverting to its former currency, the deutsche mark. 'Germany would experience the least pain in withdrawing from the euro,' he said" (Shwayder, Deutsche Welle 2015); "'The fact that eurozone countries aren't benefiting from this stimulus cocktail doesn't bode well for the rest of the year,' said Carsten Brzeski, an economist at ING Bank" (Adam and Blackstone, Wall Street Journal 2015).

Apart from processes, the Eurozone is pictured through the perspective of organs or systems within the human body that facilitate the proper functioning of the body as a whole. One medicine-related metaphor is the cardiovascular system, which is used in the context of the European Central Bank (ECB) and the quantitative easing (QE) program: "pumping more money in the bloodstream"[4] (Błasiński, Rzeczpospolita 2015).

Another donor of medicine-related metaphor is psychiatry, with the straitjacket being an example of such a metaphor to symbolize a situation, phenomenon or condition connected with limitations of movement and decision-making. Ashoka Moody, an economist from Princeton University, said:

> If all that happens is that Greece exits the eurozone, the likelihood that this Greek-like problem reemerges is a near certainty … the fact that diverging countries cannot stay within a monetary and fiscal straightjacket, that reality will not change.
>
> (Shwayder 2015).

## The functions of metaphors in the Eurozone discourse

The above discussion on metaphorical representation has led to the presentation of key functions metaphors play in the Eurozone discourse and their implications for soft power creation and execution.

### *Educational functions*

Metaphorical discussions on the issues related to the Eurozone facilitate the understanding of economic notions, including among laypeople and individuals who have

little or no knowledge of the topic. Using well-known domains to discuss chances and challenges that the Eurozone has to face enhances the interest and understanding of EU matters among the broadly understood stakeholders. In addition, metaphorical content is more interesting for readers than literal content. Metaphors often attract readers to information, making the text more attractive than a non-figurative text on the same topic. In addition, metaphors often rely on domains that mean the same in different cultures, and consequently they serve as an effective tool of cross-cultural communication.

### *Representative functions*

Linguistic instruments of soft power, in this case metaphors, provide a link between *heteroglossic linguistic identity* (Bielenia-Grajewska 2013a) and *monoglossic currency representation*. The latter term, created by the current author, reflects the nature of the Eurozone, with the Bachtinian understanding of monoglossia as the representation of the dominant group and stability. As Breithaupt (2008) stresses, identity and currency are interrelated, thus such concepts such as identity and currency are treated as connected ones. Moreover, metaphors may serve ornamental roles, making the described entity more attractive than others.

Metaphors may serve the function of representation, showing the vision and mission of a company, stressing its strengths and uniqueness. Within organizations, this representative application of metaphors may be observed not only at the company level but also at the individual one. Some economists or managers are known for their metaphors or metaphorical names they use in their speeches or letters to stakeholders. An example is Warren Buffett, CEO of Berkshire Hathaway, who is known for his letters to shareholders with such metaphorical domains as 'bathtub' or 'tennis' used to denote the current economic situation. At the same time, it should be remembered that improperly selected metaphors may create negative images of organizations, showing them as ineffective or unattractive.

### *Informational functions*

As has been discussed in the section on educational aspects of metaphors, symbolic language plays an important role in providing information on the Eurozone issues. However, it should be stated that apart from the positive sides of metaphors in stimulating knowledge flows on Eurozone successes and crises, there are also potential traps connected with using symbolic language in discussing important financial matters. One of them is making the phenomenon childish, without showing the real dangers or the real success.

The critics of using symbolism in economic discourse stress that only literal language offers precise coverage on EU issues. This aspect is also mentioned by Patomäki (2013, p. 14), who states that concepts:

> interweave to create a field of speech and thought that organizes and restricts the lines of argumentation that are possible. With these metaphors and frames in place, it is thus all too easy to create simplistic narratives, for instance about the Greek, Portuguese or Spanish debt crises, especially if those narratives fit comfortably with established cultural prejudices and stereotypes.

## Conclusion

The aim of this contribution was to examine the metaphorical nature of the Eurozone communication, taking into account how symbolic language may be used to exercise soft power. Since there are different metaphors used to discuss the Eurozone, the author has selected one of the most popular ones, *Eurozone as a patient*, to present how the challenges that the Eurozone has to face are described in a figurative way.

The purpose of this discussion was to show how soft power is exercised through non-literal linguistic tools. Future studies on soft power and the Eurozone may involve, for example, neuroscience. For instance, the neuroscientific dimension of metaphors can be studied by looking at symbolic language through the prism of learning and marketing. As far as learning is concerned, novel techniques offer a broad scope for study of how learners interact and how new material is perceived, understood and stored in memory (Bielenia-Grajewska 2014). Another perspective is to discuss how neuroscientific studies make the company more efficient or competitive on the market by discussing the complexities of neuromanagament (Bielenia-Grajewska 2013b).

In this article, the focus has been on the Eurozone and its members, concentrating on the way the monetary union and its representatives are described in the press or scientific literature. It should be stated, however, that another field rich in metaphorical names is the euro currency itself, with such metaphors as *euro under respirator*, *post-operative complications*, *plague*, or *collapse* (Bielenia-Grajewska 2010) present in the press. Thus the figurative sphere of the Eurozone can be studied in different ways by concentrating on its members, monetary phenomena or the currency itself.

## Notes

1 In original version: "Fmi: nell'Eurozona ripresa più forte ma non cessa il rischio contagio".
2 In original version: "l'Eurozona rimane esposta a vulnerabilità".
3 In original version: "Grecja pod kroplówką".
4 In original version: "wpompowania jeszcze większej ilości pieniędzy do krwioobiegu".

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# 22

# OF EXTENDED HANDS AND VELVET GLOVES

## US–Iran metaphorical wars

*Esmaeil Esfandiary*

### Introduction

When Barack Obama was elected as America's forty-fourth president, some signs indicated that a new era in the bitter history of US–Iran relations could commence. In his Inaugural Address in January 2009, the change-minded new president addressed Iranians with a metaphorical promise: "we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist" (Obama 2009a, para. 24). This was new language, a hand of friendship offered to a government in a 30-year-old state of animosity with America. Obama had made similar overtures in his presidential campaign before, signaling that he was prepared to meet Iranian leaders without any preconditions (Pecquet 2013).

President Obama's offer invoked the Iranian leader's response. Soon after Obama's inauguration, Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei stated the following publicly: "We do not have a record of the new U.S. President and administration. We will observe (their behavior) and then make judgments. If you change, our behavior will change too" (Khamenei 2009a, para. 49). This was stated in his annual Persian New Year address in the north-eastern city of Mashhad.

President Obama's dramatic metaphor – extended hand and clenched fist – did not go without further response from the Iranian leader, though. After making his cautiously positive comment mentioned above, Mr Khamenei was quick in reacting to Obama's offer of America's extended hand. He said he was afraid of an "iron hand covered with a [nice] velvet glove" (para. 45). This response marked the beginning of a chain of public "metaphorical wars" between the two leaders.

This chapter argues that the two leaders deployed metaphors as persuasive arguments to portray themselves in a moral, legitimizing light and the other side as bad. The two leaders' recurring metaphors and their historic and cultural connotations will be analyzed in this chapter. It will be argued that this war of metaphors is part of a larger, decades-old war of narratives between the two states – a war that aims to frame the nature of their geopolitical rivalry for local and global audiences. In fact, Iran's war of moral narratives against US hegemony in the region has been a soft but crucial part of its geopolitical "resistance" ever since its Islamic revolution of 1979.

In their war of metaphors, the two leaders used pertinent literary, historic and cultural grounds to show the *virtuousness* of themselves and the *evilness* of the other side. Powerful metaphors – in some cases reminiscent of landmark historic battles or collective memories with strong emotional connotations – became the moral 'weapons' they deployed to win the crucial public diplomacy battle over who is or is not on the right side of history.

Over the course of the years, the ongoing battle between the two countries continued on two intertwined levels. The first level is geopolitical battles conducted through a range of military (proxy), economic (sanctions), political and diplomatic (negotiations) means. The nature and extent of these battles show how strategic Iran's geopolitical role is in the region. As former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said more than 15 years ago, "Iran's future direction will play a pivotal role in the economic and security affairs of what much of the world reasonably considers the center of the world [i.e. the Middle East]" (Albright 2000, para. 4). Fifteen years later, Thomas Friedman, famed *New York Times* columnist, called the newly-reached Iran Nuclear Deal "one of America's most important foreign policy shifts in the last four decades" (Friedman 2015). For better or for worse, Iran has come to represent one of America's major foreign policy challenges, posing difficulties in relation to a wide range of issues.

The second is the US–Iran war of narratives based on their use of existing communication and media apparatuses. It was through this public war of narratives that both sides tried to define the nature of their geopolitical rivalry in the region. In other words, the war of narratives became the battleground on which the two states fought a moral war for the hearts and minds of domestic and foreign audiences.

The significance of this war of narratives between the two countries should not be underestimated. These wars are the sites in which the leaders frame their larger geopolitical battles for audiences of hundreds of millions of peoples, especially within the Middle East and Muslim world. In fact, these are the propaganda wars aiming to determine how the regional audience understands the nature and outcome of the geopolitical rivalry between Iran and its allies on one hand, and the US and its allies on the other. On-the-ground battles between the two camps – whether in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon or elsewhere – are intertwined with their publicly staged war of narratives. Because their war of narratives will determine which side is seen as the *virtuous* side in the eyes of the audiences, it is ultimately a moral battle with huge consequences for one's legitimacy and power. Analysis of these narratives shows how they evoke moral themes to legitimize one's own side. It thus adds to the literature by illustrating that moral themes are core legitimization elements of strategic narratives.

In this chapter, I will first review the concepts and theories connected to strategic narratives and the battles waged among them. Second, I will discuss metaphors and metaphoric criticism to show how metaphors affect our thinking, cognition and culture. Next, I will analyze and interpret the metaphors used in the metaphorical wars between President Obama and leader Khamenei. Finally, I will put these metaphorical wars in the larger context of their decades-old war of narratives, explaining its significance for their geopolitical rivalry throughout the region.

## Strategic narratives and US–Iran soft public diplomacy

What are 'strategic narratives' and how do they work? In *Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order* (2013), Miskimmon, O'Loughlin and

Roselle provide valuable insights into understanding strategic narratives and their role in constructing national identity and projecting power in international relations. "Strategic narratives are a means for political actors to construct a shared meaning of the past, present, and future of international politics to shape the behavior of domestic and international actors" (p. 2). But this is not merely true about narratives regarding one's own identity: "actors work to frame their own character *and that of others*, by selecting and highlighting some facets of their history or actions in order to promote a particular interpretation and evaluation of their character" (Miskimmon *et al*. 2013 p. 5, emphasis added).

Strategic narratives are built around shared memories adopted from history and culture. Miskimmon *et al*. refer to "History, analogies, metaphors, symbols, and images" as the resources that can be used to construct these narratives (p. 7). From a similar perspective, Monroe Price (2014) argues that "A state is, in part, a collection of stories connected to power. Remembered traditions, obligations and laws – all stories in themselves – shape internal and external perceptions of a state and the range of its efficacy" (p. 41).

Strategic narratives have a twofold power effect. They are "an instrument of power in the traditional Weberian or *behavioral* sense of A getting B to do what B otherwise would not" (Miskimmon, O'Loughlin and Roselle 2013, p. 17); but they also constitute "the experience of international affairs and thus the identity of its actors and the meaning of the system" (ibid.). For example, a carefully designed and promoted narrative can imply that military intervention is the only way to save indigenous populations from dictatorship and tyranny, hence persuading allied states to participate in military coalitions serving such purposes. But at the same time such narratives also define the 'real world' for pertinent actors and ascribe identities to them. It is true that hard facts exist on the ground, but strategic narratives connect facts with ideologies and histories in order to make them meaningful – to construct a coherent *reality*. In other words, a combination of both external facts and discursive practices enable narratives to strategically define the 'real world'.

These issues also remind us of the concept of soft power formulated by Joseph Nye (1990). Nye defines soft power as the attractive and exemplar status of a state in such a way that others would naturally want what it wants. This has a direct connection to the functions of strategic narratives: "Central to Nye's initial formulation was a concern to forge a new US narrative of international affairs to give meaning to the post-Cold War era" (Miskimmon, O'Loughlin and Roselle 2013, p. 3). In other words, Nye's concern was about how the world should make sense of the new uni-polar, post-Cold War international order in a way that best serves US interests around the globe.

Iran and the US have had their own rival strategic narratives in the Middle East for the past 37 years. More recent ones include their narratives on crises in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen. A prominent example is their competing narratives over the definition of such groups as Hamas and Hezbollah. While Iran portrays them as genuine, legitimate resistance against occupation – hence *moral* forces of liberation – the US calls them terrorist and sees them as Iranian tools/proxies to threaten Israeli security – hence illegitimate and *immoral* in nature. According to Miskimmon *et al*. (2013, p. 16), "if they [states] are unhappy about the prevailing way in which borders, human rights, collective action, the basis of rule, or any other foundation of political order is done, then these can be contested. And this involves forming an alternative narrative about international relations that puts these core aspects in a new light". They also bring on the example of how the UK Ministry of Defence sees the issue: "Where our narrative meets the competing narratives is referred to as the battle of the narratives, although the reality is that this is

an enduring competition rather than a battle with winners and losers" (p. 3). In a similar vein, Price argues "[w]hether it is the clash of civilizations, the loss of 'values' or the need to protect jobs or economies, competition for national narratives of legitimacy – for good and for ill – will persist" (Price 2014, p. 60).

The issue of *legitimacy* is the core of all these efforts to win the hearts and minds of people within a nation or across the world. In order to persuade people about the legitimacy of its foreign policy initiatives, a state has to project them in a moral light; to imply that they are, in essence, virtuous. Even in the most brutal military interventions, certain narratives are employed to show that intervention is moral and humane; to protect vulnerable people (like women or children) or to uphold sacred values such as democracy, human rights and national security.

Thus it may be argued that wars of narratives are inherently wars of moralities, i.e. how systems of morality are used to justify and promote national interests and foreign policy initiatives. In the context of the US–Iran war of narratives, America emphasizes the themes of democracy, freedom and human rights. Iran, on the other hand, capitalizes on Islamic traditions and culture to project itself as the protector of Islamic values and morality in the face of the west's 'corrupting' influence. "The revolutionary rhetoric," Price writes, "still salient and sustained thirty-five years later, is situated as a bulwark against those seen to be meddling in Iran's domestic affairs, with the regime imagined as the righteous defender of Islam and caretaker of a moral society" (2014, p. 137). I will argue that the real geopolitical battle between the US and Iran is fought more on soft fronts, on values and moral narratives, than on hard military or economic fronts. I will discuss these in more detail throughout the conclusion. Before that, let me address the meanings and functions of metaphors in the next section.

## Metaphors and metaphoric criticism

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines 'metaphor' as a "figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). According to Lakoff and Johnson "*The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another*" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, p. 5). George Lakoff (2003) brings on the example of "International Community". When we use this phrase, we are actually thinking of the collection of countries, or nation-states, as a community. The *community* metaphor has certain implications and meanings: communities have leaders, they have a hierarchy with higher and lower members, they have good and bad members, members are supposed to behave in certain ways and follow certain rules when it comes to decision-making and shared future, and many other associated meanings. It also implies that nation-states are like persons who constitute members of this community. As Lakoff (2003, para. 4) puts it:

> The Nation as Person metaphor is pervasive, powerful, and part of an elaborate metaphor system. It is part of an International Community metaphor, in which there are friendly nations, hostile nations, rogue states, and so on … In the International Community, peopled by Nation-Persons, there are Nation-adults and Nation-children, with Maturity metaphorically understood as Industrialization. The children are the "developing" nations of the Third World, in the process of industrializing, who need to be taught how to develop properly and to be disciplined.

Metaphors are important because they have major impact not only on our understanding of social phenomena but also on our future course of action. "Metaphors have entailments through which they highlight and make coherent certain aspects of our experience" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, p. 156). Metaphors are used extensively – but often unconsciously – in all areas of human knowledge and understanding. The fact that they are usually unconscious or used uncritically makes them even more powerful (and potentially dangerous). This is especially true because "In allowing us to focus on one aspect of a concept … a metaphorical concept can keep us from focusing on other aspects of the concept that are inconsistent with that metaphor" (ibid., p. 10).

This leads one to the more important field of policy and action. "Metaphors may create realities for us, especially social realities. A metaphor may thus be a guide for future action" (ibid., p. 156). For example, if we embrace and absorb the widely-used metaphor of nation as a person and associate it (as it usually is) with the metaphors of war as business and politics, then we will come up with the familiar concept of just war. "Nations [as persons] naturally seek their self-interest, and when necessary, they use military force in the service of their self-interest. This is both natural and legitimate" (Lakoff 2003, para. 18).

But the problem with this metaphor is that nations are not persons. They usually comprise of (tens of) millions of people with vast differences. So, if a war is waged against a nation-person, those millions who have no role in the decision-making process will also suffer; think of ordinary people, children and even future generations. Thus the politics and economics that justify war between persons are not applicable to nations because the victims usually have nothing to do with the inter-governmental dynamics that bring about war. In fact, the war-mongering elite usually remain untouched by the wounds of war while the innocent pay the price. Hence, nation-person metaphor could unconsciously, and falsely, hide the truth to justify disastrous wars.

Metaphors permeate our language, our culture and our understanding. "It [metaphor] is central to our understanding of our selves, our culture, and the world at large" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, p. 214). Not only do metaphors operate in our language and linguistic choices, but they also shape our cognition and thought process. This is particularly true when it comes to metaphors that are well-established in a culture, hence rarely noticed. "To study metaphor is to be confronted with hidden aspects of one's own mind and one's own culture … that one has a worldview, that one's imagination is constrained, and that metaphor plays an enormous role in shaping one's everyday understanding of everyday events" (ibid., p. 214). And such analysis is exactly the aim of metaphoric criticism.

In metaphoric criticism metaphors are treated as the "means by which arguments are expressed. Moreover, metaphors may provide insight into a speaker's motives or an audience's social reality" (Burgchardt 2005, p. 305). In other words, because it unconsciously shapes meanings and understandings, metaphor by itself is an effective means of persuasion. This chapter analyzes the metaphors used by US and Iranian leaders according to this definition.

In order to analyze US and Iranian leaders' 'war of metaphors', the metaphors they used were retrieved first. Their official websites were searched for any metaphor they used in reference to the other side. The time span for this search was from the time President Obama came to office until 2016. On the Iranian leader's official website (Khamenei.ir), all his public addresses and speeches regarding America (from 2009 until 2016) were retrieved and analyzed. For Obama's speeches, the White House website (whitehouse.gov) was searched to find his metaphors referring to Iran. In the next section, I will analyze the two leaders' metaphors.

## War of metaphors or metaphorical wars

As mentioned before, President Obama used a metaphor in his Inaugural Address in 2009 to urge Iranian leaders to reconsider their relations with the US: "we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist" (2009, para. 24). It seems, however, that his main audience is the people. After all, it is not necessary to use such colorful metaphors to persuade foreign leaders; concrete behind-the-scenes offers would have made a better diplomatic tool. Thus he is likely targeting Iranian people more than their leaders. Metaphorical language is more persuasive, and can shape or re-orient the thinking of Iranian and global audiences.

In response to Obama, Mr Khamenei first made a point about waiting to see his policy change in action, not just words. Then, he chose to respond to the "extended hand" metaphor in kind: "what kind of a hand is this? If [like before] it is an iron hand [fist] in a nice velvet glove, then it does not have any good meaning" (Khamenei 2009a). This was the first episode in the chain of metaphorical wars between the two leaders.

These two metaphors have important political and cultural connotations – especially in historic shadows of the distrusted US–Iran relationship. We are ready to "extend our hand" if you "unclench your fist" frames the positions of both sides from the American perspective: Iran's foreign policy is about the "clenched fist" of a radical revolution that refuses to open up to the outside world to work towards "what it wants to build, not what it wants to destroy" (Obama 2009b), according to President Obama. Thus the metaphor portrays Iran as the radical, stubborn and irrational side. The US, on the other hand, is portrayed as the reasonable, generous and forgiving side which is trying to "extend a hand" of friendship. The metaphor, therefore, gives a big picture of whom to blame in the context of US–Iran animosity: as the more powerful side, the US generously offers to make friends with Iran. Iran, however, stubbornly refuses to open up and continues to act in an irrational way. All in all, it gives the US moral authority over Iran; the US is the *virtuous* side in this equation.

On the other hand, Mr Khamenei's counter-metaphor is no less clear in its portrayal of the two sides: just like before, the US is extending its "iron fist" to suppress and destroy the Islamic Republic. This time, however, it is covered by a nice "velvet glove". This image, which directly confronts the "extended hand" metaphor, suggests that Iran will not be duped by nice words. In other words, it puts the US in the position of suspect and implies that their new posture is another trick to achieve the same 'regime change' goals pursued in the past. It also evokes the dramatic imagery of 'iron fist in velvet glove' which is an old metaphor in literature. Altogether, it is Iran that enjoys moral high ground in this equation; Iran is *virtuous* in refusing to be duped. The US, on the other hand, should be blamed for its hypocrisy and malignant intentions.

This very first exchange of metaphors and counter-metaphors in the war of narratives between the two leaders became the bedrock for future metaphorical battles between them. For example, referring to the Iranian government's treatment of street protests in the aftermath of the contested presidential election of 2009 (which saw the disputed re-election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad), Obama evoked the theme of 'iron fist' several times again. It looks like he adopted that metaphor from the toolkit of Khamenei, who had first referred to America's extended hand as an iron fist in a velvet glove.

For example, Iran's street protests, according to Obama, "have been met with the iron fist of brutality" (Obama 2009d). At another point, he says new communication technology makes it impossible to hide such violence – using the same metaphor: "In

2009, no iron fist is strong enough to shut off the world from bearing witness" (Obama 2009c). Elsewhere, he says "the aspirations of the Iranian people were also met with a clenched fist" (Obama 2010). These are not the only uses of the metaphor for him though. He uses the same notion in portraying Iran's refusal to show more cooperation with America: "faced with an extended hand, Iran's leaders have shown only a clenched fist" (Obama 2010). What are the meanings of 'iron fist' or 'clenched fist'? As an argument, what do they imply about the nature or conduct of the Iranian government? In general, an iron fist implies uncompromising and forceful treatment. It can also signify violent repression. Together, these two metaphors portray a regime with a violent, irrational, maybe even 'mad' nature. The moral aspect is clear again: Iran is the *bad* party.

Another interesting metaphor, which has Cold War connotations, criticizes Iran's efforts for internet control and circumvention: "An electronic curtain has fallen around Iran" (Obama 2012). Reminiscent of the all-too-familiar metaphor 'iron curtain', it redeems the Cold War milieu implicitly suggesting that Iran is the new Soviet threat. Second, a "curtain [that has] fallen around Iran" implies that the Iranian regime is isolating its own citizens from the outside world – in this case through internet control. Thus, as prisoners of their own government, Iranians are being kept in the dark, uninformed about what is going on in the world. They might not even know what is good or bad for them.

This argument has an implicit but strong moral aspect: the familiar theme is of innocent people held captive by tyrants and needing to be saved by the US. Again, the US is portrayed in the position of moral authority while the Iranian people might even be ignorant of their own needs and rights because they are behind a curtain. It is arguably our moral responsibility, then, to remove the curtain and 'liberate' them. All in all, it portrays the Iranian government as the new evil empire that is victimizing its own citizens.

Beside these negative metaphors, Obama also used positive metaphors to entice Iranian people and leaders into a more cooperative relationship. He has used the occasion of Persian New Year (21 March, the beginning of spring) every other year since the start of his presidency to send a short video message to Iranians celebrating the ancient festival of Nowruz. In those messages, he has always used the positive metaphor of spring to suggest a "season of new beginnings" (Obama 2009b) between the two countries. He says that we should not be "bound by the chains of the past" (Obama 2011) and promises that if the Iranian government shows openness and cooperation then it can re-claim its "rightful place in the community of nations" (Obama 2009b). These metaphors suggest the possibility of a bright, 'shiny' future as opposed to Iran's 'dark' past – all metaphoric arguments in and of themselves.

He also evokes the metaphor of 'the community of nations', discussed in the previous section. It uses the image of community and the fact that Iran is 'missing' its place in that community. In other words, Iran has been expelled from the 'world community' because of its own actions – perhaps being too rogue a nation-person. But, interestingly, it can still return to the community if it changes into a more reasonable, less defiant member. Altogether, Obama uses a combination of negative and positive arguments suggested by dramatic metaphors to entice and encourage Iranian people (and leaders) towards the types of policy shifts he sees as good for America. In all these metaphors there is a strong moral component: while the American government is virtuous and forgiving, Iran should change its bad conduct in order to be accepted back into the community of nations. All in all, America enjoys the moral high ground.

Iran's leader Khamenei, on the other hand, deploys his literary arsenal's own metaphors to neutralize Obama's public diplomatic efforts to portray America as enjoying the moral high ground. The core argument of his counter-metaphors is shaped around the theme of American hypocrisy and deception. In fact, his metaphors are geared towards discrediting Obama's promises of friendship and new beginning as dishonest and deceptive; that they are still pursuing the same strategy of regime change – this time more hypocritically. His very first metaphor, the dramatic one of an 'iron fist in velvet glove', is the literary epithet for deception and treachery. Mr Khamenei also talks of the enemy who "smiles in our face while hiding a dagger behind their back" (Khamenei 2009b, para. 9). At other points, he criticizes the "velvet [that is] stretched on cruel fists and bloodied paws" (Khamenei 2008, para. 20).

All these metaphors are arguments for pessimism and suspicion towards Obama's intentions/policies. In general, these metaphors are aimed at refuting positive perceptions of Obama's 'friendly' posture within Iran and the Muslim world – an outstanding public difference he had with his predecessor George W. Bush. At several points he emphasizes that "[we won't be fooled by] your [nice] perfume smells and ties and suits, your chic appearance" (Khamenei 2008, para. 20), implying that the same enmity is now covered in a nice and likable clothing.

At another point, he uses the metaphor originally coined by Ayatollah Khomeini, the founding father of the 1979 Islamic Revolution – that the US–Iran relationship is "the relation of wolf and sheep" (Khamenei 2009b, para. 9). It implies that, due to the unequal nature of the relationship and malicious 'regime change' intentions of the other side, any such relationship would be harmful and treacherous for Iran. It suggests that this relationship, by nature, is zero-sum. Even more, that one side is an existential threat for the other. Therefore, it is a moral argument against normalization of US–Iran relations, emphasizing Iran's moral right to self-defense and America's aggressive, hence immoral, policies.

## Conclusion

This paper shows how metaphors are deployed as important literary weapons, adopted from culture and history, in the battle of narratives between the US and Iran. Moral-based narratives help leaders gain the allegiance of domestic and global audiences for their competing claims over the right side of history. Relevant, dramatic metaphors can serve this purpose effectively if they resonate well with the cultural experience and collective memory of the audience. As George Lakoff puts it about the framing powers of metaphors, "[t]hat is what [metaphorical] framing is about. Framing is about getting language that fits your worldview. It is not just [haphazard] language" (Lakoff 2004, p. 4). Leaders on both sides use moral-based language at the core of their metaphors. This helps them boost their legitimacy by projecting themselves and their policies in a moral light while projecting the other side as immoral.

In reference to Iranian policy, President Obama emphasizes the theme of 'clenched fist', portraying Iran as radical and destructive while he projects the US as forgiving and reasonable. The Iranian leader, on the other hand, portrays the new US policy of engagement as deceptive and hypocritical by evoking the counter-metaphor of 'iron fist in velvet glove'. At the core of these metaphors, moral themes are used to portray one's own side as virtuous and the other side as bad. Moral themes, therefore, are the core component of these narratives of legitimacy.

Iran's post-revolutionary moral narrative has its roots in Islamic, Shia history and traditions. In fact, the Shia narrative of perpetual conflict between oppressors and the oppressed was a key weapon that enabled Ayatollah Khomeini, founding father of the revolution, to mobilize millions of Iranians against the powerful, western-backed monarchy of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. It was his narrative and its credibility that privileged him in the fight against the Shah. The Shah enjoyed all the material sources of power one could imagine, from astronomic oil incomes, modern military, hegemonic regional status and western diplomatic backing to a 2500 year-old legitimizing monarchic heritage besides effective internal policing. But he arguably lost all those to Khomeini's credible moral narrative. A determining factor in the victory of the 1979 Iranian revolution was its moral narrative, the narrative of 'arrogant' western powers (and their puppet Shah) oppressing and corrupting Iran and other Muslim/poor countries.

This seems to be still true today. The Islamic Republic has tried in the past 37 years to accumulate other elements of power such as asymmetric, preventative military technologies, regional allies in its 'resistance axis' and ideologically-supportive constituencies. As a mid-sized, lone regional power, however, it has never enjoyed enough material – military, economic, diplomatic – resources to directly confront a regional hegemon such as the US and its camp. But it has had ambitious dreams translated into moral narratives and revolutionary ideals such as morality, justice and equality, and independence and freedom for the 'oppressed' nations.

This has made the 'war of narratives' a core element of US–Iran relations. Ayatollah Khomeini, father of the revolution, called the United States the "global arrogant power" and formulated a moral narrative based on the historic conflict between "the oppressors" and "the oppressed", with Iran standing beside "the oppressed" (Ram 1993; Saeidi 2001). This narrative targets poor, deprived populations in the farthest lands of not just Muslim countries but also places like African nations. As rivalry between Iran's camp, 'leader of the resistance axis', and the dominant US camp in the region has intensified in the past 37 years, the war of narratives has become a crucial part of their battles spread from Afghanistan to southern Lebanon. In his influential volume *Global Communication in Transition*, Hamid Mowlana (1996) argues that Iran's major source of power has been 'intangible', i.e. its culture, ideology and values. Iran's appeal – for domestic and regional audiences – is still to a large extent based on its trademark narrative of "resistance of the oppressed against oppressors". In this context, the importance of ever-increasing propaganda and media wars in the region becomes more evident.

To complement this research, the impact of these narratives should be studied as well: what makes a moral narrative credible in the eyes of local audiences. How already-accepted systems of morality (along with audiences' collective memories) could serve as a foundation to formulate credible narratives that frame new geopolitical battles in a moral light. Future research should thus include empirical studies of the effects/impacts of those narratives. To that end, a study of local value and morality systems can illustrate the context necessary for effective narratives.

Finally, one ought to be more conscientious about the war of moral narratives in the years to come. In fact, the mushrooming media outlets and the new cyber/social media forms in the region continue to be the battleground on which major geopolitical wars will be fought in the future. In order to win those very real wars, one should have a more powerful arsenal of moral narratives that match moral systems and resonate with collective memories of regional audiences.

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## SECTION VI

# Africa and the Middle East

# 23

# SOFT POWER MOBILIZATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA (SECTION OVERVIEW)

*Aziz Douai*

## Introduction

State and non-state actors have recognized the growing interdependence of the global economy and the considerable extent to which soft power and cultural diplomacy efforts help achieve their foreign policy objectives and agendas. Soft power stems from the power of attraction and co-optation, rather than coercion or payments usually associated with traditional instruments of hard power, such as military force or economic sanctions (Nye 1990, 2004). Nye postulates that soft power should be regarded as a foreign policy tool that enhances a state's power to influence the behavior of other international actors, inducing them to 'want' what the dominant state 'wants' – primarily because of attractive cultural exports, political values and legitimate leadership. In latter iterations, Nye (2004) illuminates the three resources central to the deployment of soft power in international politics: "The soft power of a country rests primarily on three resources: its culture, in places where it is attractive to others; its political values, when it lives up to them at home and abroad; and its foreign policies, when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority" (ibid., p. 12). These soft power resources comprise tangible elements and intangible attributes that inspire awe, admiration and attraction in other actors.

Soft power's diffused nature overlaps with cultural public diplomacy, which is traditionally associated with deliberate and organized government efforts to communicate directly with foreign publics (Gilboa 2000). Commenting on Nye's conceptualization of soft power, Chitty distinguishes soft power from public diplomacy and clarifies that they overlap in the area of soft public diplomacy or cultural diplomacy. Hence soft power implies diffused re/sources of 'influence', including policy and cultural exports, which hinge upon the attractiveness of a country's broader culture (Ch. 1). A country's soft power draws on what Mowlana describes as "tangible resources", such as education, media, literature and sports, and 'intangible' power resources, such as ideologies, belief systems and religion (Mowlana 1996). This wide conceptualization follows Nye's explication of soft power, although I recognize that divergent approaches to the concept exist. In this chapter, I will provide an overview of the soft power and cultural public diplomacy resources and efforts of the Middle East and Africa and will specifically address the Gulf States, the Levant, northern Africa and sub-Saharan Africa.

The diffused nature of soft power suggests that emerging soft power centers support a multi-polar world system. In this respect, the global rise of the Gulf States (or the Arab Gulf City States), such as Qatar and Dubai, indicates a resurgence of Arab soft power bolstered not only by global media brands like Al Jazeera Media Network that provides outreach for Qatari soft power, but also by glitzy architectural structures and international mega-sports tournaments that attract tourists and sports fans and strengthen the image of Qatar. That is why it is important to analyse how these nations mobilize and deploy other forms of soft power instead of being solely attached to official public diplomacy efforts. This chapter assesses soft power and cultural public diplomacy capabilities in the broader region of the Middle East and Africa, comprising the Gulf States, the Levant, northern Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. In this critical assessment, I argue that political stability and economic development are central to the effective mobilization of soft power abroad. With the notable exception of the Gulf States' emerging soft power, persistent economic struggles, political instability and governance difficulties have largely undermined soft power development efforts in these regions.

## The Gulf states: emerging soft powers

The Gulf States of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait and Oman have taken a strategic approach to soft power and soft public diplomacy that emphasize cultural capital and outreach. Among these states, Saudi Arabia's soft power emanates primarily from its strategic status as the spiritual capital of Islam and Muslims, the Land of the Two Holy Shrines, the two holiest places in Islam, Al-Masjid al-Haram in Mecca and Al-Masjid al-Nabawi in Medina. The Islamic ritual of *haj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca, attracts more than two million annual visitors to the country. In an interplay of soft and hard power (Nye 1990), the kingdom has used its vast oil wealth to sponsor and fund Islamic charities and promote (Sunni) Islam around the world (Perlez 2003). Being the spiritual epicenter of Islam has endowed Saudi Arabia with an enduring resource of soft power that the country uses to wield political influence regionally and internationally (Gallarotti and Al Filali 2012). Saudi Arabia was able to persuade Arab States meeting in Casablanca, Morocco, to form a Tripartite Committee that eventually brokered the Taif Agreement that ended the Lebanese civil war in 1989 (Krayem n.d.). In the post-'Arab Spring' upheavals, Saudi Arabia led alliances of Islamic countries to push for the resignation of former Yemeni president Abdellah Saleh and isolate the Bashar al-Assad regime of Syria (Obaid 2015).

Unlike their big neighbour, the other smaller Gulf States have invested in media and information industries to transform their soft power and influence on regional and international politics. For instance, Qatar has deployed its media powerhouse, Al Jazeera Media Network, as an effective instrument to project its soft power abroad. Launched in 1996, Al Jazeera reaches "more than 220 million households in more than 100 countries" (Al Jazeera Media Network 2015). Al Jazeera prides itself on being a voice for the south and provides current affairs programming and news coverage of hot spots in Arabic, English and Turkish languages. In this respect, Qatar has used what Thussu called the "visual power" of Al Jazeera to influence regional politics, from attempting to broker an accord between Palestinian factions to urging more coordination among Syrian opposition factions fighting to oust the Assad regime (Thussu 2014). After the fall of Hosni Mubarak and Qatar's backing of former President Mohamed Morsi and his Muslim Brotherhood, Al Jazeera launched an Egyptian channel, Mubasher Misr

(Live Egypt), that was accused by the Sisi regime of "serving as the mouthpiece of the Islamist supporters of ousted President Mohammed Morsi" (BBC December 2014). Similarly, the UAE's Dubai Internet City aims to become "a place where innovators and entrepreneurs work, connect and share their vision for a bold new tomorrow", and thus a regional information and innovation hub (Dubai Internet City 2015). These instances demonstrate that the Gulf States consider their media and information investments as strategic resources.

To strengthen their emerging soft power status, the Gulf countries have deployed their oil and gas wealth to market and brand their cities and locales as "strategic destinations" (Balakrishnan 2008) for mega-sports events, prestigious international education institutions, glamorous shopping centres and malls and global capital investments. In the realm of global sports, Qatar's successful bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup Finals demonstrate the country's "supremacies as microstate" whose leaders view wielding their soft power to foster prosperity, peace and security regionally and globally (Brannagan and Giulianotti 2014). At the level of education and knowledge production, the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development seeks to promote education and cutting-edge research to turn the country into "a nation that can be a vanguard for productive change in the region and a role model for the broader international community", according to the Foundation's vision (Qatar Foundation 2015). As part of this strategy, Qatar's Education City and the UAE's Dubai International Academic City have become important magnets for prestigious educational institutions and think tanks, including the Sorbonne, New York University, Carnegie Mellon University and the Brookings Doha Center, among other well-known western-based education establishments.

## The Levant: soft power capitals

The other major group of Middle Eastern countries traditionally includes the Levant (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestinian territories), Iraq and Yemen. Compared to the Gulf States, these countries' resources of soft power have been adversely affected by political conflict and economic hardship. To put this assessment in perspective, one has to remember that, for many centuries, Beirut, Baghdad and Damascus were cultural capitals of the Arabic-speaking and Islamic world. During the Abbasid dynasty's rule, translation, poetry, philosophy and the sciences flourished as Baghdad ruled the then-Muslim world from Tunisia to parts of India (Kennedy 2006). Baghdad's cultural influence experienced a revival during the Baathist regime's rule despite the 1980s Iraq–Iran war. An old Arabic popular saying, "Cairo writes, Beirut publishes and Baghdad reads", captured this cultural influence and the Baathist regime's "ambitions to reposition Baghdad as the capital of Arab cultural production as well as consumption" (Antoon 2010). During this period Arab intellectuals, artists and reporters flocked to Baghdad. Iraq's soft power partially explains the popular opposition in the Arab world to the 1990 and 2003 American interventions in Iraq.

Whereas literary production flourished in mid-twentieth century Iraq, the last two decades saw unprecedented popularity of Syrian historical drama mini-series on Arab television channels, leading the *Washington Post* to dub Damascus as the "Hollywood of the Middle East" (Salamandra 2005). For Arabs, Syria's image became tarnished when the Assad regime's mass atrocities against its people were publicized by the United Nations and global media (the Guardian 2012). The regime has morphed into a pariah

state, with Arab and global public opinion acquiescing to calls for its removal – even by force (e.g. Pollack 2014).

Entertainment industries have cemented Lebanon's position as an Arab pop culture capital where Arab reality television programming draws in millions of Arab audiences and spawns pop music stars (Kraidy 2009). With the threat of civil war behind it, Lebanon's stability makes it an exotic tourist destination and revives its reputation as the "Switzerland of the Middle East" (Augé 2010). In the case of Lebanon, Hezbollah's savvy media operations, including its Al Manar Television network, and its ideology have ensured a steady flow of sympathizers, recruits and supporters for this paramilitary organization. Interestingly, Hezbollah's soft power also emanates from its legitimacy as a force of resistance that does not shy away from military conflicts with Israel, demonstrating that 'hard power' can enhance 'soft power' capabilities and vice versa (Ajemian 2008).

## Northern Africa: leadership attracts

Northern Africa traditionally includes Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. As the largest economic and cultural hub in the Middle East and North Africa, Egypt had unrivaled levels of soft power. For more than 1,000 years the Al Azhar institution, founded in AD 970 as both a mosque and a university, embodied the country's religious influence as a premier centre for Islamic scholarship and theological innovation. Historically, Egypt has been associated in Arab 'consciousness' with the birthplace of the nineteenth-century Arab Awakening or Renaissance (*Nahda*), where the first efforts to introduce European educational traditions, scientific knowledge and other forms of modernity took place (Matar 2014). Egyptian scholars like Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905) and Qassim Amin (1863–1908) were at the forefront of reforming Islamic thought and jurisprudence and calling for national liberation and gender equality in Muslim societies (Hourani 1983). Egyptian soft power manifested itself politically in leader Gamal Abdel Nasser's vision of a common Arab identity and anti-colonial mantle that inspired dreams of pan-Arab unity and the heyday of Arab nationalism. The prolific and steady diet of Egyptian cultural exports, including film, television programs, pop music and the iconic Pyramids, not only nourished Arab citizens' imaginations but captivated the hearts and minds of several generations. The toppling of Hosni Mubarak, following Tahrir Square's massive protests, gave hope to a new dawn for Arab democracy and political reform. However, the formidable political and cultural resources of soft power that legitimized Egypt's regional leadership and enhanced its influence have been eroding due to both domestic politics (e.g. Islamism, terrorism, new authoritarianism) and external pressures from emerging Gulf soft powers.

The other North African countries have had varying re/sources of soft power that emanate from anti-colonial struggles, cultural legacies and/or political leadership. For instance, Sudan's traditional sources of soft power come from its cultural connections to Arab and Islamic states and socio-cultural ties to the Nile basin. Long-raging civil wars, eventually leading to the independence of South Sudan, and international accusations of human rights atrocities and genocide during the Darfur conflict, have significantly diminished its limited soft power resources. Libya's former leader, Muammar Gaddafi, capitalized on his charismatic leadership persona as an anti-colonial 'revolutionary' and the hard power of economic (oil wealth) and military assistance to convince 45 African heads of state to create the African Union in 1999. A group of African tribal leaders proclaimed Gaddafi "King of Kings", acknowledging his influence on African politics (Nolan 2011).

In Tunisia the political leadership of its modern founder, Habib Bourguiba, ensured that the country would remain a model of stability and 'liberal' politics, albeit tinged with excesses of authoritarianism. After the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi, a Tunisian street vendor, sparked popular protests that eventually ousted the country's dictator, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Tunisia has come to represent the birthplace of the 'Arab Spring', thus regenerating the country's supply of soft power. Similarly, the anti-colonial struggle against French occupation, embodied in the "one and half million martyr" revolution, contributed to Algeria's soft power, as seen in its active participation in the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War (Tessler, Konold and Reif 2004).

In fighting religious fundamentalism and radicalization, Morocco has cultivated an influential soft power niche drawing on the spiritual leadership of Mohammed VI, the country's monarch, as the Commander of the Faithful and a proponent of moderate Islam. Over the past decade the country has trained hundreds of imams (i.e. religious leaders and scholars) and dispatched them to African and other Islamic nations to promote a "more flexible, contextual brand of Islam, which stands in stark contrast to Wahhabism" (Rubin 2014). In addition to religious diplomacy, the country's soft power became central to its strategic focus on sub-Saharan Africa as a destination for economic investments and security co-operation (Malka 2013). Whether seeking to broker a peace agreement in Mali or deploying peacekeeping forces in the Ivory Coast, Morocco's efforts herald a new engagement with sub-Saharan Africa to balance out the influence of rival powers and/or reduce the country's economic dependency on the European Union (Tadlaoui 2015).

## Sub-Saharan Africa: "bad news or no news"

With the exception of South Africa, sub-Saharan African states demonstrate how soft power remains largely ignored in the strategic thinking of many developing nations. According to the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Report, most of the region appears to be lagging behind in terms of economic development, social progress and political stability despite its economic resources (MDGs Report 2015). Sub-Saharan Africa is still the land of "bad news or no news" (Hachten and Beil 1985; Kothari 2010), with military coups, civil wars, genocides (e.g. Darfur), famine, natural disasters and epidemic outbreaks (e.g. Ebola) dominating global media coverage of the continent. Despite this bleak economic picture, these states possess soft power capabilities that can improve their global reputations. In terms of sports, African athletes and national teams have won numerous international awards in football and running, as well as other sports that project a different image of Africa (Kersting 2007). African cultural heritage and tourism industries need to be extensively promoted. Some sub-Saharan African states, such as Ghana, are now seeking to improve Africa's reputation and they launched the Brand Africa Forum to create "a positive image of Africa, celebrating its diversity and inspiring its competitiveness" (Brand Africa 2015). Similarly, Nigeria is trying to promote 'Nollywood' – the Nigerian film industry – and the country has organized the Eko International Film Festival as part of its soft power and "cultural public diplomacy" (Bright 2015). The African Union's potential to project a 'united vision' of Africa based on peaceful and shared values, similar to the European Union, would be another ignored soft power resource.

Sub-Saharan Africa has attracted increasing western public diplomacy and a Chinese "charm offensive" (Kurlantzick 2007). The US Defense Department established the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) in 2007 in "an acknowledgment of the

growing strategic and global importance of Africa", which was mainly a response to the security threats emerging from the region, as Ambassador Mary Carlin Yates of AFRICOM explained (Seib and Weil 2008). AFRICOM's engagement in soft public diplomacy and outreach efforts raises questions about the continuum of hard and soft power as well as engendering suspicions about US access to African natural resources (Seib 2009). As a rising world power, China's stated policy of 'noninterference' and important economic investments in the continent have offered a conducive environment to Chinese active public diplomacy and soft power in sub-Saharan Africa, albeit with some resentment from African civil society (Cooke 2009). Moreover, the Chinese political model offers authoritarian African leaders a model of development that emphasizes economic development at the expense of genuine political reform (Gill and Huang 2006).

## Conclusion

In this overview, I argued that political stability and economic development have been key to states' mobilization of soft power and cultural diplomacy abroad. The cases discussed expose the continuum between hard power and soft power, and between tangible and intangible resources of power. I presented several instances of how Middle Eastern and African states have either capitalized on or undermined their nations' soft power abroad. The Gulf States may or may not have a grand cultural public diplomacy strategy, but their status as emerging soft power states appears to be largely sustained by their oil wealth which they in turn use to invest in augmenting their soft power resources. To illustrate, it is difficult to imagine Qatar's soft power and influence without Al Jazeera Media Network, and, by the same token, it is difficult to imagine the existence of Al Jazeera Media Network without windfalls of oil revenues.

Soft power resources can also be accumulated, or dissipated, depending on political stability or lack thereof. The case of Iraq and Syria in the Middle East illustrates how their influence as cultural capitals in the Arab world has diminished due to the upheavals shaking up their political systems. Arab citizens now look to new Arab capitals, such as Dubai, for cultural entertainment. Similarly, most of sub-Saharan African states are beset with economic troubles and political instability that prevent them from developing their soft power resources. Yet the growing strategic importance of this region in the global economy can present an opening for sub-Saharan African states to escape the existing vicious circle and coordinate their cultural public diplomacy activities to project a more attractive image and global outlook.

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# 24

# WHEN SOFT POWER SUCCESS AND 'ATTRACTIVENESS' CANNOT BE SUSTAINED

## Zimbabwe and South Africa as case studies of the limits of soft power

*P. Eric Louw*

Soft power and public diplomacy are about the building of attractiveness. And the building of national attractiveness has become a growth industry, with many governments now even employing nation brand consultants to tell them how to make themselves more attractive to investors, journalists or tourists (see Jansen 2008; Volcic and Andrejevic 2011). Effectively these nation branding consultants are in the business of building soft power, functioning as outsourced public diplomacy. Their work has much to tell us about what underpins the building, maintenance and loss of attractiveness.

### Building attractiveness

If soft power is about building attractiveness, we need to ask ourselves: can we identify what is meant by 'attractive'?

In this regard, the criteria used by the nation branding industry to measure 'attractiveness' (and its opposite, 'repulsion') tells us a great deal about the value system that is dominant in the contemporary world of public diplomacy and soft power. For example, Jansen (2008, p. 121) sees nation branding as "a means for nations to redefine and reposition themselves within the master narrative of globalization". She argues that Olins (1999) and Anholt (2003, 2007) are the key thought leaders of this nation branding phenomenon. Consequently, the assumptions of Olins and Anholt about what represents 'attractiveness' can serve to illustrate what today's soft power values are. These two indexes can serve as useful markers for what soft power players are striving for – FutureBrand (The FutureBrand n.d.) and Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index (Anholt 2003).

The nations ranked most highly by FutureBrand were those that were characterized by political freedom, tolerance and free speech; had stable legal and regulatory frameworks; were environmentally friendly yet technologically developed; provided their citizens with a good quality of life plus good health and education systems; and which had well developed culture, arts and architecture. The nations ranked most highly by Anholt

were open, democratic, treated their citizens fairly and respected human rights; provided a good quality of life and a good work–life balance; and provided a clean environment and an environment that was safe and orderly. So both FutureBrand and Anholt reveal a clear preference for those values dominant in the USA's core east and west coast cities. If FutureBrand and Anholt are to be believed, it suggests that America's soft power machinery has succeeded in getting opinion leaders across the globe to adopt American values, behaviours and standards, or as Anholt and Hildreth (2005) say, Brand America is "the mother of all brands". This suggests that when nations try and improve their "attractiveness", through either public diplomacy or nation branding, it is western (North Atlantic) values that serve as the benchmark.

So what are the implications of this for African nations?

## The challenge for African public diplomacy and nation branding

In May 2000 *The Economist* published an edition called 'The Hopeless Continent'. They were referring to Africa. Effectively *The Economist* was measuring Africa against the nation branding criteria spelled out above, and their conclusion was that Africa did not measure up. In this regard, *The Economist* was giving voice to a widespread discourse then gaining ground in the west called Afropessimism – the idea that instead of developing and progressing since decolonization, independent African countries had instead gone backwards. Clearly, for African states, this Afropessimism discourse is unhelpful from a soft power and public diplomacy point of view.

Interestingly, the deeply negative portrayals of Africa encoded into Afropessimism were to some extent a reaction to an earlier wave of 1960s euphoria generated by African decolonization. When African countries were decolonized it was accompanied by a flood of optimism about African independence, not only in the countries concerned, but also across Europe and North America. Indeed, intellectuals like Basil Davidson and Thomas Hodgkin did much to popularize a sense of high expectations about Africa's future, with Davidson's writings serving to make the nationalist leaders of these new states highly fashionable in the west (Howe 1993). In addition, western journalists popularized the idea that Africa had a bright and prosperous future now that the continent had been freed from rapacious and greedy colonial powers. The 1960s initially seemed to bear out this optimism as the new African states made progress. However, by the 1970s political and economic difficulties began to manifest themselves. Although initially this was blamed on the legacies of colonialism and imperialism, ultimately Afropessimism replaced Afro-optimism, and blame was shifted to Africans themselves. Of course, for African countries the impact of Afropessimism was serious because it served to discourage businesses from investing capital in Africa and eventually also led to aid industry donor fatigue.

The way in which African countries squandered their initial soft power asset (namely the goodwill derived from the decolonization discourse) offers us a telling lesson in the fragility of 'goodwill' and 'attractiveness'. Because each country in Africa is different, the way soft power assets were used and/or squandered has multiple variations across Africa. But by looking at Zimbabwe and South Africa this chapter will be able to discuss examples of both soft power successes and failure. Importantly, these two countries demonstrate how African states have struggled to maintain any 'attractiveness' they accumulated in the soft power arena.

## Zimbabwe fails to sustain its soft power 'attractiveness'

Zimbabwe received its independence from Britain in 1980. This followed the Rhodesian bush war between Rhodesian white settlers on the one side and two guerrilla forces, Robert Mugabe's ZANLA (Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army) and Joshua Nkomo's ZIPRA (Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army). The second phase of this war (1972–9) was deeply polarizing because both sides carried out acts of brutality against those civilians supporting their opponents. In 1979 the USA, South African and Mozambican governments forced the Rhodesians, Mugabe and Nkomo into negotiations. At the time Mugabe was regarded by the USA and Britain as the most radical player because, as a Maoist, Mugabe wanted to rebuild Zimbabwe into a society grounded upon an African peasantry, which necessarily required obliterating the society and economy built by white Rhodesian settlers. Consequently, in the west, Mugabe – whose key backers were communist China, North Korea and Gaddafi's Libya – was someone with little 'attractiveness' and few soft power assets. But then came the 1979 Lancaster House negotiations in London where Mugabe made three concessions that facilitated a negotiated end to the bush war. One was allowing 20 seats to be reserved for white people in the new Zimbabwean Parliament. Second, he agreed to a ten-year moratorium on amending the new Zimbabwean constitution. Third, he agreed to a moratorium on forced land distribution for ten years, agreeing instead to the principle of 'willing seller–willing buyer'. In addition to these concessions, Mugabe began talking about a Zimbabwe that would be shared and built by both black and white people. In this way Mugabe successfully transformed himself and his political party, ZANU–PF (Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front), from 'radical' to 'moderate' (Anon 1980). For the new Zimbabwean state that Mugabe was to lead, this represented an important foundation upon which to build a successful Zimbabwean soft power narrative.

In March 1980 Mugabe became Prime Minister of the new independent state of Zimbabwe. His now moderate image was further strengthened when he incorporated members of the rival ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union) into the new Zimbabwean government. By adopting this moderate stance Mugabe mutated into something of a media darling in the west. In fact, Zimbabwe's independence generated a variant of the sort of 'independence euphoria' generated by 1960s African decolonization. After the brutality of the Rhodesian bush war a new euphoric global media discourse emerged which promised that this new African state was going to be a success, in part because Mugabe was going to lead this nation into a better future where white people and black people were reconciled. Effectively Mugabe was learning to play the soft power game. And as he built his 'attractiveness', so Zimbabwe accumulated soft power assets. One of the consequences of Mugabe turning Zimbabwe into a good news story was a significant flow of European Union aid into Zimbabwe between 1981 and 2000 (Gara 2009, chapter 4). Furthermore, so successful was Mugabe at building Zimbabwean soft power that during the 1980s Zimbabwe was held up as an example to white South Africans of the sort of fruitful future they could enjoy by abandoning apartheid.

But perhaps the best way to illustrate Zimbabwe's soft power success during the 1980s is to examine the global response to the Gukurahundi genocide which took place in Zimbabwe between 1984 and 1987. Long-standing rivalry between Mugabe's ZANU–PF and Nkomo's ZAPU drove this genocide. ZANU–PF was aligned to Mao's China and its support base was drawn from the Shona ethnic group. ZAPU was

aligned to the Soviet Union and its support base was drawn from the Ndebele ethnic group. During the Gukurahundi turmoil an estimated 20,000 civilians were killed by the Zimbabwean military and security police in those areas where ZAPU's Ndebele supporters lived, namely Matabeleland and the Midlands (CCJP 1997). Most of the killing was done by the Zimbabwean Fifth Brigade. This Fifth Brigade consisted of former guerrillas from (Mugabe's) ZANLA army who had been incorporated into the new Zimbabwean army and then trained by North Koreans. The Gukurahundi began when a few disgruntled ZAPU members refused to reconcile themselves with Mugabe's electoral victory. This led to the Fifth Brigade being unleashed upon Ndebele civilians because they were seen to be ZAPU supporters who would provide sustenance to ZIPRA guerrillas. Mugabe's government concluded that this threat needed to be purged. (Gukurahundi is a Shona expression meaning "the early rains that wash away the chaff before the rainy season sets in").

Most of the Ndebele civilians killed were shot in public executions. Yet such had been Mugabe's soft power success in the early 1980s, that while the Gukurahundi genocide was being carried out, Mugabe's reputation as a 'reasonable moderate' remained intact. That the Zimbabwean government managed to keep the Gukurahundi genocide off the global media agenda is testament to the value of having soft power assets. By contradistinction, the South African government's failure to successfully develop soft power in the 1980s led to intense and negative global media scrutiny. So comparing the way the global media treated these two neighbouring states during the same 1980s period serves to demonstrate both the value of building soft power (in Zimbabwe) and the dangers of neglecting to build soft power (in South Africa).

But, ultimately, Zimbabwe was unsuccessful at keeping the Afro-optimism narrative alive. And once the country slipped into the Afropessimism basket, Zimbabweans were to discover the costs of failing to maintain their soft power assets.

It was the implementation of enforced land reform in 2000 that ended Mugabe's 'attractiveness'. Between 1980 and 1999 Zimbabwe had been implementing land reform through the willing buyer–willing seller arrangement (paid for by British aid targeted at land resettlement projects). In 2000 Mugabe's government organized a referendum to adopt a new constitution (aimed at speeding up land redistribution by abandoning the willing seller principle). The new constitution would have allowed compulsory land distribution. But this new constitution was defeated in the referendum. A few days after this referendum defeat, a War Veterans Association (representing former ZANLA and ZIPRA guerrillas and aligned to ZANU–PF) began organizing violent land invasions which drove white farm owners and their farm workers off the land (HRW 2002). At this point Mugabe's image as a moderate collapsed. But this undermined more than Zimbabwe's soft power narrative – it served to deepen the broader Afropessimism narrative so widespread in western policy and business circles. South Africa was especially negatively impacted by the way Zimbabwe destroyed its own soft power assets because both countries had mobilized similar narratives about black–white reconciliation, and both had used the reconciliation narrative to try and attract capital investment and/or aid from the west. And so as Zimbabwe moved from 'attractive' to 'repulsive', South Africa found its own soft power assets being tarnished. Consequently, it should come as no surprise that from 2002 the South African government has been actively focused on soft power concerns and has constructed a machinery geared to rebuilding 'Brand South Africa' and overcoming the negative impacts of Afropessimism.

## South Africa's attempts to turn Mandela's 'miracle' into soft power

The end of apartheid and the creation of a unified nation under Mandela in 1994 was heralded as a great twentieth-century political miracle. Across the globe South Africa was praised as the 'miracle' where black people and white people had chosen to peacefully share the same nation.

The South Africans had hoped that this perceived 'miracle', coupled with Mandela's media darling status, would translate into major flows of western investment into South Africa. But these investments never materialized. Furthermore, South Africa's first bid to host the FIFA World Cup was turned down because of fears that Africans would not be able to successfully organize such a massive event. Effectively, South Africans discovered that despite the 'Mandela effect' they were being impacted by the Afropessimism phenomenon. Effectively the 'miracle' nation needed a more systematic soft power strategy if the 'Mandela effect' was to be turned into tangible benefits.

Consequently, South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki decided to tackle the Afropessimism phenomenon head on, as part of his dream to put Africa on the map and build an African Renaissance. Hence under Mbeki South Africans invested considerable thought into how to build soft power assets. This included

- mobilizing South Africa's Foreign Affairs machinery to promote the idea of an African Renaissance;
- the founding of Brand South Africa as an organization tasked with inventing and selling to the world a successful nation brand;
- Mbeki's (successful) bid to host FIFA's World Cup soccer in South Africa.

Mbeki's letter to FIFA's president, Sepp Blatter, in South Africa's Bid Book gives us an insight into his thinking about soft power, nation branding, African Renaissance and Afropessimism. The letter said:

> The basis of [South Africa's] bid is a resolve to ensure that the 21st century unfolds as a century of growth and development in Africa … This is not a dream. It is a practical policy … the successful hosting of the FIFA World Cup in Africa will provide a powerful, irresistible momentum to [the] African renaissance … We want, on behalf of our continent, to stage an event that will send ripples of confidence from the Cape to Cairo – an event that will create social and economic opportunities throughout Africa. We want to ensure that one day, historians will reflect upon the 2010 World Cup as a moment when Africa stood tall and resolutely turned the tide on centuries of poverty and conflict. We want to show that Africa's time has come.
>
> (Mbeki 2003a)

This letter tells us what Mbeki saw as South Africa's communication problem – i.e. the perceptual and reputational issues that a soft power nation branding exercise would need to try and fix. In one word the problem was Afropessimism – Africa was seen to be the 'problem' continent characterized by poor governance, corruption and a lack of enterprise and entrepreneurship. In 2004, in fact, Jacob Zuma said that South Africa's government had hoped that hosting the World Cup would help eradicate bad stereotypes and Afropessimism (Desai and Vahed 2010, p. 155). For South Africa the key issue was the need for foreign investment. When apartheid had ended in 1994, South Africans had

promoted the 'miracle nation' discourse (Louw and Chitty 2000) with the expectation that selling South Africa as a new miracle democracy would result in large inflows of foreign capital, and South Africa did build considerable soft power kudos from having Mandela as president and from deploying the idea that South Africa was a 'rainbow nation'.

Because the rainbow nation idea complemented the western 'dream' of building multicultural racial harmony, the South Africans specifically branded themselves as the rainbow nation. This 'rainbow nation' brand held up rather well while Mandela was president – but it held up not because South Africa had a soft diplomacy strategy in place, but rather because the global media simply failed to interrogate the realities of South Africa's transformation thanks to the Mandela 'media darling' effect. However, ultimately even the Mandela effect was not enough to prevent the 'miracle' brand from being tarnished by a number of factors. The AIDS denialism of President Mbeki in particular caused major reputational damage. Then followed stories about serious corruption; the failure of the government to deliver services; and xenophobic attacks on African migrants and refugees. Further, it became clear that the new government was struggling to implement its promised nation-building vision and that there was considerable alienation in the white population (Cornelissen 2008, p. 254). This generated the large-scale emigration of white South Africans who created an extensive diaspora across the western world – a diaspora who carried with them stories that undermined both the 'miracle nation' and 'rainbow nation' discourses and which fed into the Afropessimism discourse.

Mbeki's letter to FIFA – which proposed using the World Cup to counter Afropessimism –revealed much about Mbeki's conceptualization of a soft power program. First, it reveals that the South African government's political project was grounded in a 'catch-up' nationalism – it was about black people feeling 'second class', striving to improve their status and 'catch up' with those who were seen to persecute them and look down upon them. As Mbeki said, the stereotype of dark-skinned people was that they were "quick-tempered, emotional, unimaginative, unintelligent, dishonest, and inefficient" (Mbeki 2003b, p. 72). Mbeki (2003b, p. 73) argued that dark-skinned people had a duty to reject these negative stereotypes and to 'define' themselves within the context of building an African Renaissance – the aim of which was to ensure that dark-skinned people could "stand tall as equals amongst fellow human beings" (Mbeki 2003b, p. 73). Mbeki was clearly bothered by negative perceptions of dark-skinned people and Afropessimism and the idea that Africa and Africans were considered 'hopeless' ('The hopeless continent', The Economist, 2000). But in trying to rebrand Africa and counter Afropessimism, Mbeki ironically highlighted the very negative perceptions about Africa that he wished to bury. Even his proposed solution (such as 'African Renaissance' and calling upon black people to 'stand tall') encoded a defensiveness that somehow suggested something might actually be wrong. This meant that Mbeki sent out mixed messages which, in a peculiar way, simultaneously negated and reinforced Afropessimism. This became a feature of the 2010 World Cup – the games did successfully fulfil their planned nation branding role and helped build pride and nationalism inside South Africa, yet somehow they never erased the image of Africa as a 'hopeless continent' as Mbeki had hoped they would (Lepp and Gibson 2011).

A second feature of Mbeki's soft power vision (and the way he conceptualized the 2010 World Cup) was that he explicitly linked South Africa to Africa. Whereas apartheid South Africa saw itself as a 'western state' and hence as 'different' from the rest of Africa,

Mbeki sought to deliberately re-embed South Africa into Africa. Essentially, with the bid letter encoding "heavy inflections of race" (Cornelissen 2008, p. 249), Mbeki's Africanist agenda shone through – for Mbeki, South Africa's hosting of the world cup was geared to promoting 'black pride' which he hoped would feed into a new South African nationalism and drive a continent-wide African Renaissance (which, naturally, he saw South Africa leading).

Third, Mbeki's nationalism was characterized by hybridizing South African black nationalism with Pan-Africanism. Mbeki brought these two together in his call for an African Renaissance – the idea that the transfer of power to black people in South Africa would change not only South Africa, but would also create the conditions for kick-starting the development of the whole of Africa (because South Africa was the one African state with a first world infrastructure and economy).

For Mbeki, hosting the World Cup was about proving that Africans were not hopeless. This was to be achieved by demonstrating that Africans could successfully organize a large international sporting event and by showcasing to the world South Africa's developed and sophisticated cities. Mbeki had three audiences in mind. First, he wanted to convince non-Africans that their negative stereotypes about Africans were wrong. Second, he wanted to sell his 'African Renaissance' idea to all Africans. Third, he assumed that hosting the World Cup would generate pride in South Africa – a pride that he wanted to channel into a new South African nationalism. This new nationalism was race-laden insofar as Mbeki wanted South Africans to see their country as embedded in black Africa – and, indeed, to take pride in this 'African-ness'. Essentially, Mbeki's project was to use the World Cup to show Africa at its best and simultaneously build a South African nationalist pride (grounded in Pan-Africanism).

Once South Africa was awarded the 2010 World Cup, the South African government set about building a large marketing and public relations machinery geared to achieving two goals. Externally the goal was nation branding – i.e. selling South Africa as both a tourist destination and good place for westerners to invest their capital. Internally the goal was nation-building. And so Mbeki established an official nation branding mechanism constructed from a consortium of players from both government departments and the private sector. In 2002 Brand South Africa ('Brand SA') was established, under the leadership of Charlotte Maponya and Happy Ntshingila, as the International Marketing Council tasked with promoting a positive South African image. Brand SA was tasked with developing, implementing and coordinating an international marketing and communication strategy for South Africa, with stress being placed on the need to attract capital investment to South Africa – which meant building a nation brand that counteracted the negative perceptions associated with Afropessimism.

The four audiences of most concern to Brand SA were potential investors (who needed to be persuaded that South Africa was a good investment bet), existing investors (who needed to be reassured about keeping their capital in South Africa), overseas policymakers (who needed to be persuaded about good governance in South Africa) and potential tourists. With regard to these audiences, Brand SA faced the following communication challenges:

- negative perceptions about governance, corruption and service delivery-failures (investors and policymakers);
- negative perceptions about crime (investors and tourists);
- negative perceptions about violence, including AIDS transmitted by rape (tourists).

Brand SA met the challenge by promoting an image of South Africa being at the forefront of building a new kind of Africa (Mbeki's African Renaissance) and focusing on positive images of South Africans reconciling and 'miraculously' working together to build a progressive, democratic and economically dynamic African nation. Of course, Mandela was used as a soft power asset when constructing this narrative of a successful rainbow nation. Effectively, the objectives were about "creating a new Africa in the social imagination" (Czeglédy 2009, p. 281). For the adherents of Mbeki's African Renaissance, building such a new social imagination may have been motivated by a nationalist political agenda, but for the South African tourism industry it was about the practical need to change the international image of Africans as a wild and dangerous people (Lepp and Gibson 2011, pp. 213–14).

A key feature of building a South African nation brand that would overturn the negative perceptions and Afropessimism involved selling the idea that South Africa was a good trading partner, a safe investment opportunity and a safe tourist destination in a globalizing world. Effectively, this involved promoting South Africans as reliable partners (for Europe and America) in a globalizing world. So South Africa had to be made to look economically developed and competent. This meant using the 2010 World Cup to sell the message that "Africans can do it" (Ginsberg 2011, p. 196). Therefore, the messages were crafted to promote the idea of ('miraculous' post-apartheid) racial co-operation which was responsible for the building of a dynamic economic powerhouse capable of successfully hosting the World Cup. In crafting these messages, FIFA and the World Cup organizers went as far as ensuring that the stadiums were carefully positioned to showcase the developed "first world" parts of South Africa and to avoid showing the underdeveloped "third world" parts (Desai and Vahed 2010, p. 156).

FIFA functioned as a partner of Brand SA in selling this idea of African competence. As Aranke and Zoller had noted, FIFA offered a kind of redemption to South Africa – the promise that if backwardness was fixed, then South Africa (and Africa) could be "let into" the world as full partners (Aranke and Zoller 2011). So FIFA condescendingly "took a chance" on South Africa by mounting a form of rescue operation in which Africans were given the opportunity to host the games, but with enormous amounts of FIFA (and western) guidance, management and aid to make sure everything functioned alright (Aranke and Zoller 2011, pp. 143–4). The outcome of FIFA's "civilizing mission" (Ginsberg 2011, p. 197) was to "open up" Africa to neo-liberalism and civilization (Aranke and Zoller 2011, p. 141). Effectively what we saw was the neat coincidence of the interests between FIFA, Brand SA and Mbeki's ('African Renaissance') nationalists. The FIFA model of commercialism meshed neatly with Mbeki's development model (Cornelissen 2008, pp. 246 and 248). As Aranke and Zoller (2011, p. 135) noted, the 2010 World Cup was ultimately about using South Africa to sell a form of multiculturalism and globally oriented nationalism that promoted the globalization agenda. And so the 2010 World Cup ushered Africa in from "the waiting room of history" to "historical normalcy" (Aranke and Zoller 2011, p. 136). Not surprisingly, during the 2010 World Cup ex-USA president Bill Clinton came to South Africa to declare that South Africa was now a normal part of the world because Africans had demonstrated they could host the World Cup as well as anyone else. For Brand SA this must have been a highlight, because what greater endorsement could they want that South Africa was a nation-building project that appeared to be functioning well, and that South Africa had become a modern reliable democratic nation worthy of western investment? The 2010 World Cup had thus served its PR function by successfully

reinforcing the western media's preferred discourse that South Africa was a reconciled well-functioning 'miracle nation'.

The 2010 World Cup also delivered an increased flow of tourists to South Africa (Fourie and Santana-Gallego 2010, p. 12). However, interestingly, tourist market research in the west showed that the World Cup did not dislodge the idea that South Africa was part of the underdeveloped world. Rather what it did was to diffuse the idea that although South Africa was a third world country, it did possess some highly developed parts and it was a country that was modernizing itself (Lepp and Gibson 2011, pp. 223–4). So although Brand SA did not manage to completely counter the Afropessimism discourse, the 2010 World Cup, coupled with Brand SA's efforts, did manage to improve South Africa's global image, reinforcing much of the positive attitude towards South Africa that had characterized global perceptions in 1994 when Mandela became president of what was called the 'miracle' rainbow nation.

South Africa's positive brand remained in place for some two years after the World Cup, with Brand SA continuing its work after 2010 to capitalize on the global perceptual benefits generated by this mega sports event. However, the killing of striking miners by South African police at Marikana in 2012 became a public relations disaster for Brand SA when the global media reported extensively on these killings. This media coverage severely damaged South Africa's global brand by exposing the deep cleavages that had emerged between the black elite created by Mbeki's government and South Africa's huge underclass. Then, in April 2015, an outbreak of xenophobia unleashed a wave of violence against migrants and refugees across South Africa. As a result, the global media carried scenes of mass violence and the images of thousands of foreigners feeling this xenophobia in refugee camps. Both the Marikana killings and the xenophobic violence undermined the positive marketing and PR images sent into the world by the 2010 World Cup because these events exposed some of the realities about the sort of society that was being built in post-apartheid South Africa. With the 'miracle nation' discourse now undermined, the difficulty of rebuilding South Africa's soft power is going to be immense.

Both the South African and Zimbabwe case studies show us how easy it is to squander soft power assets. They also show us the core difficulty confronting Africans engaged in either nation branding or public diplomacy. That difficulty is Afropessimism. If soft power is deemed to be an asset worth having, then Zimbabweans, South Africans and, indeed, their fellow Africans face a long hard struggle to make Africa competitive in the 'attractiveness' game.

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# 25

# NIGERIA, PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND SOFT POWER

*Tokunbo Ojo*

## Introduction

As a subtle element of foreign relations, public diplomacy consists of conscious acts of verbal and non-verbal communication with foreign publics by state and non-state actors. It is aimed at influencing international public opinion and projecting countries' positive images in the global contexts. "It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another" (Cull 2009, p. 19). The platforms of communication range from arts and culture to mass media, tourism and establishment of embassies. Others include "participation in festivals and exhibitions; building and maintaining cultural centers; teaching a language; and establishing local friendship leagues and trade associations" (Gilboa 2001, p. 4). In other words, public diplomacy is a multifaceted communication initiative for mutually beneficial relations with people, non-state actors and governments of other nations (Gilboa 2008, Wilcox, Ault and Agee 1992).

Arguably, it is akin to what Jacques Ellul called sociological propaganda, which is the "sum of the ways in which society tries to integrate the maximum number of people into itself, to unify its members' behaviour according to pattern, and to spread its style of life abroad" (Marlin 2002, pp. 36–7). Thus public diplomacy and propaganda are mutually related, but mutually exclusive in styles (Kelley 2009; Zaharna 2004). The distinctions between communicative missions of both public diplomacy and propaganda are as follows:

> Propaganda deliberately manipulates the communication through a variety of techniques so that some aspect is hidden from the audience and so that the audience feels compelled to accept the message. Public diplomacy, by definition, is just that – open communication in the global communication arena. Because audience is free to accept or not accept the message, persuasion through coercion or control is not applicable. Instead, persuasion is achieved through gaining audience trust and confidence.
> (Zaharna 2004, p. 223)

From these distinctions, public diplomacy is a 'sanitized' form of propaganda with more positive merits for state and non-state actors in the international relation, negotiation

and interaction if it is well-operationalized with clear focus and objectives (Snow 2006; Teicholz, 2002; Taylor 1995). The non-state actors in public diplomacy include transnational business organizations, celebrities and "various individuals, groups, and institutions who engage in international and intercultural communication activities which do have a bearing on the political relationship between two or more countries" (Signitzer and Coombs 1992, p. 139).

Built on trust, friendship and credibility, public diplomacy reconfigures nation-states' locus of communicative power and patterns of communication in the international geopolitical arena. By this, it is a pragmatic shift from the traditional diplomacy of government-to-government relations to a hybrid of government-to-public and publics-to-publics. Hence national cultural resources, people and socio-political institutions are strategic to effective public diplomacy efforts because they facilitate soft power in the geopolitical contexts. Soft power is "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments" (Nye 2004, p. x). In the post-Cold War era, soft power is seen as an alternative to the supremacy of the military power that defined much of the twentieth-century international diplomacy and global relations.

A country gains soft power if there is an attractiveness of its culture, political values and foreign policy to foreign publics (Nye 2004). Culture manifests in the form of arts, literature, education and popular entertainment, while political values are primary principles and actions that underpin the institutions of governance and political behavior in the local and global contexts. Foreign policy is a country's adopted pattern of behavior in relating to other nation-states in the global contexts. In principle, foreign policy is rooted in the nation-state's political values, economic interests, belief system and socio-cultural heritage. Combined together, culture, political values and foreign policy help a country to pursue its national interests in the international arena through the performances of various state and non-state actors in the socio-cultural, political and economic activities in the global contexts.

This chapter discusses the potential roles of cultural resources such as Nollywood[1] and faith-based diplomacy as Nigeria's soft power in the country's aspiration for leadership in Africa and in the global arena. The chapter opens with an overview of Nigeria's public diplomacy efforts in the regional and global contexts.

## Nigeria's foreign policy and the pursuit of soft power

While Nigerian foreign policy has gone through a series of minor amendments in the last 50 years, the policy objectives have not deviated from what they were in the 1960s when the policy was first enacted. The objectives, as articulated in Section 19, Chapter 2 of the 1999 national constitutions, are:

1 promotion and protection of the national interest;
2 promotion of African integration and support for African unity;
3 promotion of international co-operation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations and elimination of discrimination in all its manifestations;
4 respect for international law and treaty obligations as well as the seeking of settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication; and
5 promotion of a just world economic order.

With the exception of the second objective, these objectives are normative defining norms of the international system. However, Nigeria made African integration and unity central features of its foreign policy. The influence and attention that it wants in the international arena can be strategically achieved if it builds its credibility as the African regional leader first. Also, during much of the 1960s until the early 2000s, there were several periods of political unrest, civil wars and conflicts in many African countries. Consequently, it made leadership in the regional and global peacekeeping mission an embodiment of its foreign policy and public diplomacy. "This leadership was most clearly expressed in West Africa through Nigeria's dominance of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)" (Adebajo 2008, p. 10).

It has contributed troops to the UN peacekeeping missions in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East (Obi 2012; Sanda 2010; Okolie 2010; Adebajo 2008). Through its involvement in 40 of the 55 UN peacekeeping missions around the world since 1960, it is the world's third largest contributor of troops to the UN peace mission (Hagher 2011; Agbakwuru 2013). In the past five decades it has spent about $13 billion on peacekeeping operations (Agbakwuru 2013). The dedication to the pursuit of peace has earned Nigeria "a major redeeming point in the global community", which has resulted in an "increasing demand for its personnel" in peacekeeping missions worldwide (Sanda 2010, p. 79). However, the frequent ethnic violence and religious riots within its own borders are a contradiction to Nigeria's public persona of regional and global peacemaker.

Statistically, over a million Nigerians have died in multiple political, ethnic and religious crises that have beset the country since 1967, when the country descended into civil war. The emergence of Islamic terrorist group Boko Haram in the northern part of the country since late 2002 has also resulted in the untimely death of thousands of Nigerians and the destruction of millions of dollars worth of properties in metropolises such as Kano, Kaduna, and Maiduguri. The internal insecurity poses a challenge to the country's fragile democracy, and there is a heightened fear of Nigeria's disintegration before the end of the twenty-first century (Campbell 2010; Maier 2000). The inability to be proactive in peacemaking and conflict resolution in the domestic sphere undermines Nigeria's integrity and efficacy as a regional peacekeeping leader. With the contradictions between its external image of regional peacemaker and its internal division along ethnic, religious and social lines, it is ironic that peacekeeping missions are a cardinal aspect of Nigeria's foreign policy.

## *Public diplomacy and image-laundering efforts*

In projecting a positive image in the international media, Nigeria uses international public relations firms in its communicative engagement with foreign publics. While Nigerian embassies are present in many countries of the world, international public firms from the US, the UK and Sweden are frequently hired to conduct public diplomacy, lobbying and branding for the country in influential political capital cities such as London, Washington, New York, Zurich, Brussels and Paris. Part of the incentive for this 'outsourced' diplomacy is to bypass traditional government diplomacy protocol by building networks of coalition through positive media coverage, representation in the business communities and behind-the-scenes lobbying of elected public officials in governments. In view of these incentives, the Nigerian government is one of Africa's biggest spenders on international image-making (Smith and Faull 2014). Annually, it spends "tens of millions of dollars on registered lobbyists, law firms and public relations companies to get its case across to the foreign governments and media" (Smith and Faull 2014, p. 21).

Although public relations and political lobbying do not translate to effective public diplomacy, it has been the dominant modus operandi of Nigeria's public diplomacy initiatives since the mid-1990s when the government of the late General Sani Abacha spent over $10 million on international public relations and lobbying campaigns (Abegunrin 2003; Mustapha 2008). During the five-year rule of General Abacha (1993 to 1998), the government hired international lobbyists such as former US Senator Steven Symms of the Republican Party and Senator Carol Moseley Braun of the Democrat Party to promote Nigeria's interests in the US congress and abroad (Abegunrin 2003; Cook 1998). Supplementary feature ads, which lauded Nigeria's "political, economic and social stability" (Cook 1998) and branded it as a safe haven for international business investment, were also published in a cross-section of influential western media such as the *Wall Street Journal*. In addition to these, there was a government promotional campaign, "Not in My Character" (Mustapha 2008). The "Not in My Character" PR campaign was designed to dispel the notion that Nigeria is a country of "419 fraudsters" who rob foreigners through email and letter scams. The campaign was a direct response to the CBS news' *60 Minutes* story, which depicted Nigeria as the "most corrupt" nation in the world.

In spite of the good intention to combat the negative image of Nigeria as the country of drug-pedlars, 419 fraudsters and criminals, these campaigns were ineffective because the government lacked political legitimacy domestically (Mustapha 2008). It was a military government that governed with coercion and deployed violence to maintain political order. Since perception is an important element of international reality, the international civil society groups and the diasporic communities' counter-campaigns, which highlighted the government's excessive human rights abuse and embezzlement of public funds, discredited the government's international image-making efforts.

Successive democratic governments' continuous patterns of using international public relations and lobbyists for image-laundering have also been mired in controversies and credibility problems. For instance, there was a backlash against the democratic government of President Goodluck Jonathan's international public relations campaign about a safe Nigeria, following Boko Haram's kidnapping of over 200 teenage girls in 2014 in the northern part of the country. Specifically, the hiring of the US public relations firm, Levick, for $1.2 million turned the tide of domestic and foreign public opinion against the government (Cocks 2014). The Nigerian civil society groups, intellectuals and news media editorialists ridiculed the president's carefully crafted op-ed article on Boko Haram and public safety, which was published in the US-based *Washington Post*.

Generally, the tone and tenor of Nigeria's public diplomacy strategies have always been event-driven and are implemented in the form of crisis communication strategies. In other words, the country's public diplomacy strategies are reactive models of public diplomacy that are designed to disseminate information, react to crises and proactively shape the news discourse around specific events or crises. The downside of this reactive model of public diplomacy is that there is no coherent and conscious engagement to build a long-term relationship beyond the government information dissemination. Consequently, there is no long-tail effect because of the hierarchical one-way communication style and the government's credibility deficit.

Much of the government's credibility deficit is rooted in the country's political culture, which is characterized by electoral fraud, violence and corruption. Particularly, the past and present government's non-commitment to anti-corruption initiatives and political transparency foster a long-standing perpetuation of insincerity and mistrust, which pose a barrier to the Nigerian government's image-making efforts and the believability of its

messages. The lesson here is clear: credibility and trustworthiness are key constructs in public diplomacy and the pursuit of soft power. In the absence of these two key constructs, the likelihood of successful public diplomacy initiatives is minimal (Melissen 2005; Gass and Seiter 2009).

## Nollywood and cultural resources for soft power

Since reputation and credibility are integral elements of public diplomacy, the growing global attraction of the Nigerian movie industry (Nollywood), literature, sporting icons and Nigerian Pentecostal churches can enhance Nigeria's global status and soft power pursuit (Hagher 2011). First, the attraction to these cultural elements and features produces less politically laden outcomes because they are more embedded within the structural framework of civil societies and educational institutions than the government, institutions and diplomatic embassies in other countries (Nye 2011). To this end, the cultural features, history and politics represented in literary texts of writers such as Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe and Chimamanda Adichie, whose works are essential reading texts in the international development and English literature courses in several post-secondary institutions across the globe, provide an introduction to the cultural diversity and heritage of Nigeria in the global public space.

Second, the widespread global following and popularity of these cultural-based resources make them essential cultural–sensitizing tools in relationship-building in public diplomacy. As Szondi (2009, p. 302) notes, "cultural relation is the best way to change negative or false stereotypes as they have deeper impact and carry more credibility than other forms of reputation management." Against this background, Nollywood movies, which are fast becoming Nigeria's number one export after oil and gas, are pivotal vehicles for the cultivation of mutual understanding and trust for the 'take-offs' of public diplomacy. With a monthly subscription fee of less than $20, Nollywood movies are streamed on several websites in the US and Canada. They are available on Netflix in North America and on speciality cable channels in the UK, South Africa and Kenya. In addition to this, several retail and corner stores sell Nollywood movies across Europe, North America, the Caribbean and Africa. As an industry, Nollywood generates an annual revenue of $500–800 million and provides jobs for about one million Nigerians (Dalby 2014). Its potential market value is estimated at about $3.2 billion (Dalby 2014).

The global visibility of Nollywood as a centre of cultural production has inspired the revitalization of movie industries in Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Uganda and South Africa (Krings and Okome 2013). As a cultural industry, it is a concrete example of globalization from below, which is epitomized by the contraflow of media products. Some of its movies, in particular the high-budget movies, are usually premiered at international movie festivals such as the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). Such global presence allows for a connection and relationship with the foreign public. Recounting the Nollywood phenomenon in Barbados, Bryce (2013) noted that Nollywood movies have indirectly supplanted popular American TV soap operas such as *Days of Our Lives* and *The Young and the Restless* on the Barbadian popular culture scene. The movies are immersed in the local culture to the point of fostering a new form of business venture for local entrepreneurs. In this regard, "several people have rented small spaces in malls, selling them exclusively for 5 Barbadian dollars (US $2.50)" (Bryce 2013, p. 227).

For overseas audiences, Nollywood presents "a face of the other Nigeria that is seldom seen in the west" (Hagher 2009). The movies' themes generally capture the fragmented

plurality of Nigerian society where there is no unitary or static socio-cultural, political and spiritual identity. Likewise, through the prism of the everyday realities of common people and the complexity of Nigeria's linguistic, political and cultural diversity, the movies frequently project and articulate the thickness of the indigenous African culture and modernity that are often missing in western popular culture's cinematic narrative of Nigeria and Africa at large. "The Afromodernity presented in Nigerian video films is forged equally out of a belief in magic and witchcraft, as of belief in Christian deliverance; out of village life and traditional custom, as of city life with all its modern times such as luxurious cars, fantastic mansions, and global technologies; out of opulent African attire, as of European designer clothes" (Krings and Okome 2013, p. 5). These cultural appeals constitute an on-screen cultural pan-Africanism, which paradoxically is entertaining and at the same time an attraction for the audiences (Becker 2013).

Since narratives are the currency of soft power, the movies' morally conscious storylines on various socio-cultural issues and family- and community-oriented themes have always been well-received by audiences in other countries, particularly by Caribbean migrant communities in Europe and North America. Georgia East, a reporter for the South Florida *Sun-Sentinel* newspaper, captured Nollywood's popularity and transformative effects in South Florida thus:

> They've never walked along the dusty roads of Lagos, Nigeria, or set foot in an extravagant mansion in Ghana. But fans of African movies now being sold in South Florida say they find themselves glued to their screens because in so many ways, the faraway continent feels so familiar.
>
> (East 2007)

Where the dominant approach of public diplomacy is mainly about selling countries to foreign publics, Nollywood tells the world about Nigeria, its people, and its national cultural richness and values. The socio-educative element of the Nollywood movies makes them more palatable in this sense. They grip people's hearts and minds through the portrayal of "fantasies, dreams, fears, doubts, hatreds and enthusiasm of a country (*Nigeria*) that is so large that much of the rest of the continent seems to be able to find itself in there somewhere" (Barrot 2008, p. 9).

Information and knowledge in the entertainment genre do have positive effects on the politically inattentive public when it comes to the understanding of political crises, socio-cultural issues, foreign affairs and diplomatic relationship (Baum 2002, 2007). For example, *Half of a Yellow Sun*[2], which premiered at TIFF in Toronto, Canada, in 2013, examined the complexity of inter-ethnic relationships in Nigeria and the country's 1967 civil war (popularly known as the Biafran War). The Biafran War is an aspect of Nigerian political discourse and history that is often overlooked or deliberately glossed over in the Nigerian school curriculum. But the movie fictionally shed a light on the country's dark secret and broke the political taboo around the subject of civil war in the popular discourse. As one of the movie's star actresses, Genevieve Nnaji, said in 2013 in an interview with George Stroumboulopoulos, the host of one of Canada's most popular radio and television radio cultural entertainment shows, the *George Stroumboulopoulos Show*:

> I learned a lot about the past from this present movie that I did … I learned a lot about our struggles, especially as easterners. I am from the East, we're called Igbo tribe and were greatly involved in the war. You do realize there were a lot of

> restrictions that aren't there now. And as children we weren't told – and I think people, our parents, tried to shield us from the truth that they faced.

Following the movie premiere abroad, the Nigerian government banned the screening of the movie in public theatres in Nigeria on the grounds that it could incite political violence. However, the public backlash that trailed the initial decision forced the government to publicly inform Nigerians that it had not banned the movie, but only wanted "the distributor to expunge or edit some clearly stated objectionable aspects of the movie" (Vanguard 2014). In spite of the government's misgivings, this case shows the potency of creative socio-political and cultural expression in dialogue and people-to-people diplomatic communicative engagement, while challenging the culture of censorship and silence on certain subject matter within a society. In general, the emotional connection that the movie established with actresses/actors and audiences aroused a new level of curiosity about and understanding of the country's fractured nationhood and political history.

From the 1950s until the 1980s Nollywood's forebear, Alarinjo theatre (otherwise known as Yoruba travelling theatre), played an instructive role in creating cultural arts exchanges between Nigeria and several countries in Europe and West Africa. Through their various international tours and public performances of Yoruba folkloric plays and musical drama at international festivals[3], the Alarinjo drama troupes of Duro Ladipo, Hubert Ogunde, Oyin Adejobi and others made Nigerian oral culture popular with foreign publics and influenced the careers of a generation of western scholars who began to study Nigerian literary genres and the orality of Yoruba culture. Among these renowned western scholars are the late Ulli Beier of Germany and Karin Barber (now at the University of Birmingham, UK), who joined the cast of Oyin Adejobi's theatre group. From both cultural and intellectual perspectives, Alarinjo theatre remains "one of the most vigorous, widely popular and thriving theatre traditions in modern Africa" (Jeyifo 1984, p. 1). The interpersonal nature of the stage performance of Alarinjo theatre groups, coupled with intellectual and scholarly production from academic and cultural institutions abroad, are part of the myriad of global social contacts that have had immense positive value for Nigeria in the public consciousness in the western hemisphere. The affinity developed by Alarinjo theatre, which is still being sustained in the public imagination through the curriculum of African Studies in universities across the world and the growing establishment of Yoruba Studies programs in some American universities, provides a context for Nollywood movies to thrive as cultural currency of soft power in the mediated public diplomacy of the twenty-first century.

Based on its aura of reputation and trust in cultural expression, Nollywood is Nigeria's soft power resource. The potency of Nollywood movies as soft power tools is evident in the large number of people that are reached through multiple channels such as film festivals, YouTube, school curricula, retail stores, airlines' on-air entertainment packages and speciality cable TV channels. Nollywood's soft power currency values are the outcome of this evolution from everyday life experience and the continuous emphasis of philosophical meanings of triumphal victory of good over evil in its movies. By mobilizing resources from the daily socio-cultural experiences of common people, the industry makes everyday Nigerian lifestyles and cultural norms naturally appealing to local and foreign publics without being entrapped in the government-induced manipulative images or propagandistic message of 'what Nigeria is'. This is further enhanced by the growing synergy with Hollywood in which some Hollywood and American TV stars such as Lynn Whitfield are featuring in Nollywood movies.

This synergy affirms the importance of Nollywood as a soft power tool. It facilitates the transculturation of Nigerian cultural idioms and values into the global 'image banks' in the "yellow New York taxis and the landscapes of Los Angeles", Geneva, Toronto, Paris and other major cities of the world (Hepp 2015, p.130). Similarly, exposure to the Nigerian way of life and traditions enhances the Hollywood stars' and producers' knowledge base. The knowledge base and comfort level developed from the partnership create familiarity with Nigerian oral-based stories, folktales and literature. The 2015 adaptation of the Nigerian novel *Beasts of No Nation* into a film by the Emmy-winning director Cary Fukunaga is an illustrative example of this enticement to Nigerian high culture (i.e. literature, art, history) and low culture (i.e. popular culture – movies, music and entertainment genre).

In a nutshell, through sheer forces of collaborative partnership, mass consumption and entertainment pleasure, the subliminal images and messages of Nigerian public life and socio-cultural values such as family ties and communalism, are entrenched in global discourse and the public imagination by Nollywood movies. All these have direct and indirect socio-political effects. For instance, it creates a receptive environment and cognitive mental readiness for Nigeria's foreign policy goals and national brands to flourish abroad if the government actively pursues international cultural exchange and tourism to Nigeria from the 'common people' in countries such as France[4] where Nollywood is a widely accepted cultural brand.

### *Faith-based diplomacy for soft power?*

The phenomenal growth of Nollywood also coincides with the rising profile of Nigerian Pentecostal churches in the global arena. Taken together, without getting overly politicized, Nollywood and all these cultural resources are all crucial instruments for building overseas cultural relations because they are more credible than other forms of reputation management. With branches in almost every continent of the world, Nigerian Pentecostal churches are challenging hegemonic dominance of American evangelical churches in a new wave of faith-based diplomacy, and inspiring societies abroad with their vibrant brand of Christ-centred Christianity and gospel music. For instance, the attractiveness of the gospel teaching of Pastor Enoch Adejare Adeboye[5], the general overseer of the Redeemed Christ Church of God (RCCG), has drawn several non-Nigerian and western political leaders to become frequent attendees at the church's monthly 'Holy Ghost Service' in Nigeria and the 'Festival of Life' abroad.

These Nigerian Pentecostal churches, particularly the RCCG, are also increasingly becoming influential gathering-places for international and domestic political leaders when canvassing for political support during election periods. The image of David Cameron, the British Prime Minister, on the podium with Adeboye in one of the RCCG's UK international gospel events, 'Festival of Life', in 2015 made news headlines in the UK and Nigeria (The Guardian 2015). It was also an instant hit in the Twittersphere and on the Google search engine. Given that the timing was close to the keenly contested UK general election of 2015, the widespread dissemination of media images and cellphone videos of Adeboye praying for the British Prime Minister at non-orthodox traditional British churches was symbolic. Inherent in this symbolism was the respected set of values and pervasive influence of Nigerian churches in the UK's diasporic black communities, which constituted an important voting bloc for Cameron's re-election. In pragmatic terms, while Cameron's fellowship in a Nigerian church testifies to the significance of the Nigerian evangelical Christian movement in national and international political scenes, it also

shows the resourceful soft power values embedded in faith-based institutions when it comes to relational aspects of public diplomacy. Though there are inherent vulnerabilities such as competition for attention, influence and supremacy among different religious sects, the principle of peaceful existence that underpins various forms of religious belief aligns well with Nigeria's foreign policy goal of being a regional and global peacemaker.

As the same time as faith-based diplomacy can enhance Nigeria's soft power in conjunction with Nollywood, misuse of it can undercut whatever soft power gains come with it, especially with the domestic realities of religious tension between Christians and Muslims in the country's northern areas. Therefore, as Nigeria reviews its foreign policy agenda for the twenty-first century, its public diplomacy strategies should also chart a new course and take into consideration the newer realities of engaging the foreign public.

## Conclusion

As this chapter outlines, mobilization of cultural resources and faith-based diplomacy will be strategic in building trust, credibility and relationship in the comity of nations. To this end, projecting image and engaging symbolic gestures such as peacekeeping alone do not equate to credibility, but "building trust and perceptions of goodwill by establishing relationships is also essential" (Gass and Seiter 2009, p. 162). Cultural products such as literature and films are valuable tools in cultivating a long-term relationship with the foreign public, based on cognitive cultural socialization of the foreign readers into Nigerian culture, political values and history through literary appreciation for the country's cultural idioms, norms and features. The socialization of diverse generations of foreign populace into diplomatic relationships through Nollywood and other cultural resources improves the prospects of creating an attractive, positive national image and obtaining desired outcomes in public diplomacy initiatives (Nye 2004; Pigman 2010).

## Notes

1 Nollywood is the name for Nigeria's movie industry. It is the world's third largest movie industry after Hollywood and Bollywood.
2 The movie is an adaptation of Chimamanda Adichie's 2007 award-winning novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun.* The movie, which costs $8 million, is considered the most expensive Nollywood-produced movie to date (Soffel, 2013).
3 These international festivals included the Commonwealth Festival and the Berlin Arts Festival.
4 Air France named Kunle Afolayan, one of Nollywood's leading directors and actors, as its cultural and brand ambassador in the summer of 2015.
5 In 2009, the US-based *Newsweek* magazine named Adeboye one of the world's 50 most influential people.

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# 26

# PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND SOFT POWER IN ALGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

*Laeed Zaghlami*

## Introduction

When it comes to describing, explaining, analysing and assessing the role and contribution of public diplomacy and soft power to Algeria's foreign policy, it is necessary to refer to the historical, political, economic and cultural contexts of the country in order to gain a better understanding of their evolution. In fact, the basic values and principles that continue to guide Algerian foreign policy have their roots in the revolution against French colonial rule that began in 1830. A series of acts of insurrection, resistance, opposition, uprising and riots boiled over in 1954 into popular revolution. The revolution having been concluded by a cease-fire on 19 March 1962, Algeria's independence was proclaimed on 5 July 1962. Algerians paid a high price in the blood of 1.5 million freedom fighters and in psychological trauma. But, importantly, it has enabled the Algerian people to reclaim their dignity, independence and pride after 132 years of colonization and deprivation of freedom.

It is important to recall that the Algerian revolution had a worldwide impact, sympathizers from all over the world expressing emotional, ideological and political admiration and support for its freedom fighters. To cite but a few examples, history still remembers when, in 1956, John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Zbigniew Brzezinski, then students, brandished an Algerian flag on the streets of Vienna in clear support of the revolution. One year later, an influential member of the Kennedy family publicly and unequivocally announced his support for the independence of Algeria, an announcement which infuriated and angered France that considered this to be direct interference in its internal affairs (Malek 1995).

The international support and solidarity that the Algerian revolution attracted gave inspiration to revolutionaries in Spain and Portugal, who were fighting dictators; and political movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America, that were struggling for independence from European colonial powers. Later, it was the Portuguese president himself who signed in Algiers the independence accord of former Portuguese colonies Angola, Mozambique and Cap Verde.

Today integrity, respect for inviolability of frontiers and maintaining a good neighbourhood are key principles of Algerian foreign policy and are at the core of Algeria's political and diplomatic actions. Secrecy and discretion have been the main characteristics of

Algerian diplomacy in the past and linger today (Malek 1995). Algeria strives to develop a society based mainly on social justice, free access to education and democratic exercise of political power. Internationally, Algeria has demonstrated full and unequivocal support for liberation movements, defending the right of self-determination for countries still fighting for independence and freedom. The country has launched a program of global decolonization diplomacy led by supporters of liberation movements who are eager to offer political and military support. South Africa, Zimbabwe, Sao Tomé and Principe were some of the countries that benefited from Algerian civilian and military logistics. In sum, Algiers became a revolutionary 'Mecca' for African leaders (Malek, 1995).

## Public diplomacy and soft power in Algeria's foreign policy

### *Public diplomacy concept in the Algerian context*

It is worth noting that the notion of public diplomacy is relatively familiar to political and diplomatic actors in Algeria, unlike the notion of soft power that remains confined to the academic sphere. Algerian public diplomacy has been reconfigured, without consideration of the notion of soft power, after dramatic changes to the Algerian political system when it progressed from a single-party to a pluralistic system. The constitution of 1989 marked an important shift in national politics as it initiated the spread of new democratic values, allowed the creation of political parties, and gave rise to a media explosion, associations and social movements. There have been changes in the nature of politics, and civil society, that has been silent and voiceless for so long, has now emerged into the open (Charef 1995).

The power of attraction, soft power, should be an important complement to economic and military power in Algeria. After all, Algerian diplomatic action is based on the premise that the country's image and reputation abroad are related to its performance. Public diplomacy should involve partnering publics abroad but should also include "a strong participatory governance character" at home, that gives legitimacy and credibility (Chitty 2007, 2011, p. 255). Algeria strives to gain citizens' legitimacy and credibility through democratic elections, political participation and media pluralism (Charef 1998). However, the main dimensions of news management, strategic communications and relationship-building, that are the basis of an effective public diplomacy, are still not fully met. In fact, the communication deficit inherited from the aforementioned secrecy and discretion culture, an 'obsession with security', a 'revolution rules' mentality and a single party system, are still prevalent despite over 20 years of democratic experience. Omertà (code of silence) and a culture of discretion exist intellectually and practically and these may take a while to fade away (Charef 1998).

### *Soft power concept in the Algerian context*

Public diplomacy is an important tool in the use of smart power (Melissen 2005). Smart power is a judicious combining of elements of soft and hard power (Nye 2011). Smart public diplomacy requires an understanding of the roles of credibility, self-criticism and civil society in generating soft power. The main aspects of soft power as attractive power of culture, ideas and values continue to be undervalued (Chitty and Dong 2014). Algeria, as already mentioned, has still to learn how to use soft power in attracting followers or agreement around norms and institutions that will have the effect of producing desired attitudes or policies.

Algeria continues to follow the norms of traditional discrete diplomacy rather than engage in soft power-based public diplomacy. Its soft power that rests on its culture, values, youth and policies has been partially overlooked in its public diplomacy. Algeria seeks to build a positive international image through its contribution to the resolution of the Malian conflict and its attempt to make a similar contribution in Libya. Algeria is also currently heavily involved in the struggle against global terrorism, as will be described in the course of this chapter, in order to win the hearts and minds of people around the world. The pertinent example of this is Algeria's contribution to the resolution of the Malian conflict and its attempt to make a similar contribution in Libya. As smart power combines hard and soft power resources, this may be considered a smart power strategy.

## *Algeria's foreign policy principles*

### *Main principles and values*

Official documents (Algeria's constitution of 28 November 1996) states that foreign policy reflects the reality of its internal situation. Its particularities and specificities, rooted in the historical and ideological heritage of the revolution, are mainly based on the following principles:

- full and unequivocal support of liberation movements in the world;
- clear support of self-determination process for countries still under occupation;
- support for the principle of non-intervention in countries' sovereignty and internal affairs;
- advocacy and adherence to diplomatic tools for conflict resolution;
- respect of the inviolability of frontiers inherited from colonisation.

### *Structures and institutions involved in the foreign policy conception*

The Algerian constitution (November 1996) formally stipulates that the president has full authority in conceiving, making and implementing foreign policy, based on contributions from different structures and institutions such as the military, Constitutional Council, National Assembly (parliament), National Council (senate) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The latter is the executive instrument of foreign policy through its normative attributions; activities and reports based on analysis of the political situation; conception and coordination of different actions; and preparation of conventions and treaties. Embassies, consulates, cultural centres and special presidential envoys take part in decision-making processes. Besides, other public and political institutions such as the National Institute of Global Strategic Studies are solicited for contributions and advice. They may also suggest analysis of different strategies on international relations, security and defence topics. The Committee of International Human Laws is solicited to provide information and data on human rights that consolidate and enrich the process of deliberation and decision on some issues.

### *The president's constitutional role in foreign policy decision-making*

As stated in the Algerian constitution, the president has the constitutional right to appoint the Minister of Foreign Affairs, ambassadors and other representatives as well as special

envoys. He also has the decisive and ultimate role in determining foreign policy guidelines and actions. However, in practice internal and external factors have very often challenged this role. Some internal factors are related to the president's personality; in terms of charisma, authority, competence, education, historical legitimacy and the nature of the political system in place, whereas external factors are linked to the international political situation, social tensions, economic crises, security issues and military conflicts.

### *First foreign policy crisis of independent Algeria*

Inspired by the revolution in the first years of independence, Algerian authorities initiated ambitious development programs to build up a democratic society based on social justice, economic growth and free access to education and health. However, personal feuds, regional identity questions and leadership crises led to conflicting and divergent political positions. The 'enigmatic death' of the first foreign minister of independent Algeria was one of the consequences. This was followed by a series of latent crises and conflicts that led to the 'pacific topple' of President Ahmed Ben Bella on 19 June 1965 by a revolutionary council chaired by Colonel Houari Boumediene.

Boumediene having imposed military supremacy over political leadership, Algeria fell under a military presidency in 1965. Therefore, hard power (strong fist) as an approach has been at the heart of the regime and is even its essence. The notion of soft power played no role in the recent historical context, especially for those in power who strongly believed in the military approaches. After all, they had successfully used force, violence and military action to gain Algeria's independence from France. Negotiations with French authorities were supported by Algerian military coercion and supremacy on the ground that forced France ultimately to accept direct talks and agree to a ceasefire and independence for Algeria.

## Algeria's nation and revolution branding

### *Algerian revolution as a soft power asset*

Following its achievement of independence, Algeria saw itself as being entitled to offer support to political movements in other countries in their decolonization process (Shepard 2006). The success of the Algerian revolution itself generated soft power and emphasised the attractiveness of winning freedom and independence. In fact, Algeria advocated a worldwide branding and promotional campaign to demonstrate to the world that military action is the only alternative left to people under occupation to recover their independence. This action was productive and was arguably perceived positively as many African countries recovered their independence from colonial powers in the 1960s (Balibar 1997).

### *New world economic order*

Internationally, Algeria's main diplomatic actions consisted of advocating self-determination rights for countries under colonization and supporting the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). As such, the country succeeded in organizing, in September 1973 in Algiers, the fourth conference of heads of states and governments of the NAM. It was an opportunity for participants to draw up a draft declaration on the New World Economic Order (NWEO) that was being called for in global economic negotiations.

Algeria's president benefited from that conference by promoting his image among world leaders (Balta and Rulleau 1978).

The political and economic principles of NWEO were to enable third world countries to recover sovereignty and authority over their natural resources, end despoiling of these resources by developed countries and compel developing countries to negotiate fairly on global economic issues. It was Boumediene himself who, in April 1974, claimed before an extraordinary session of the United Nations a complete reformation of international relations and a fair sharing of planetary resources for world prosperity. Unfortunately, Algerian demands were met by fierce opposition from developed countries that persisted in maintaining their supremacy and control of economic resources. Nevertheless, the process of nationalization and re-appropriation by the third world countries of their resources began to take shape. Thus the United Nations organization embarked on a long negotiation process through the Group of 77 and other international agencies to launch global economic talks based on equity and fairness rules (Bouzidi 1999).

### *Political and economic 'romanticism'*

Nationally, Algeria launched a process of re-appropriation of its politics, culture, education and nationalization of its economy and industry. It advocated a socialist ideology with the intention of recovering national identity through development by delivering education, health, social and economic opportunities to citizens. The Algerian National Liberation Front proceeded to unite society under a one-party system. Also, ambitious economic, social and education development programs were launched in attempts to ensure the country 'took off' economically. In the end, the political and economic development programs faced a wide range of challenges that disabled their implementation. The lack of a genuine democratic and pluralistic political system, illiteracy and mismanagement discouraged many partisans of what was called "the political and economic romanticism" (Bouzidi 1999).

### *Sovereignty and decolonization diplomacy*

Under Houari Boumediene's authority, Algeria upheld sovereignty and strongly advocated non-interference, resisting foreign influence by launching a series of revolutions in culture, industry and agriculture. The main aim of the revolutions was to build a new country with a new "Algerian Man" (Ibrahimi 1973), and also a well-performing industrial sector and self-sufficiency in agriculture. In the mid-1970s Algeria actively participated within the UNESCO commission calling for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) to balance the one-way flow of information from north to south (MacBride 1980). The USA, Great Britain and Singapore withdrew from UNESCO as a result; that was the "burial" of the project for lack of political will and financial support (Masmoudi 1973).

During Boumediene's reign, Algeria saw itself as a fervent supporter of world revolution in opposition to US imperialistic and western capitalistic powers (Malley 1973). The country was publicly opposed to US "intervention in many parts of the world advocating the widely shared international legal and political norms of self-determination of peoples" (Malley 1973). Algeria's emphasis on sovereignty and its opposition to foreign intervention are core principles of its foreign diplomacy. So is its support for decolonization

and self-determination. In sum, a battle of ideas and values was waged with capitalist and imperialist powers by President Houari Boumediene (Balta and Rulleau 1978).

## Algeria's foreign policy under democratic transition

### *Democratic values and press freedom*

The constitution of 1989 sparked off a democratization process. Political parties were no longer forbidden, the private press flourished and pluralist elections were launched – ending years of one-party monopoly and socialist ideology (Malley 1973). President Chadli Bendjedid's era (1979–92) was more relaxed and subtle compared to that of his predecessor Houari Boumediene. For the first time in the recent history of Algeria, Chadli Bendjedid, accompanied by his wife, paid the first official and historic presidential visit to the USA – a country considered as the former imperialistic world power – where he met President Ronald Reagan. Earlier, he welcomed, in Algiers, George Bush, then director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain also paid a state visit to Algeria. A process of softening the social, economic and political climate began with president Chadli Bendjedid, who is considered to be the "father of democracy" in Algeria (Boubakir 2012).

### *Bouteflika's personalized foreign policy*

Concentrating foreign policy-making within the presidential remit means also focusing greatly on the president's personality and charisma in international relations. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika has demonstrated different skills and talents, his personal political history being rich with diplomatic experience, and has given Algerian diplomacy his personal touch. His conception of the foreign affairs ministry is quite pragmatic and different to that of his predecessor. In an interview to Al Arab Newspaper Qatar 2008, Bouteflika affirms unequivocally "For me, it is a question of confidence and trust, therefore, I tend to replace professionalism and competence with confidence and personal relations". Algeria's foreign policy, as already mentioned, is mainly based on realist principles, and those who are not aware of or are ignorant of these may consider Algerians to be peacemaking angels (Chaib 2005).

Bouteflika advocates a foreign policy that carries the lofty values generated by the Algerian revolution; national reconciliation, cooperation, regional integration and promotion of peace and security. Although some constitutional constraints have to be considered, Bouteflika's long-lasting experience as Foreign Minister from 1965 to 1978 placed him in a position to privilege external at the expense of internal actions. Thus in his first two years of presidency he visited 32 states to promote Algeria's message of peace, security and reconciliation. He also participated in hundreds of conferences, forums and meetings. The visits may be considered as soft power campaigns to end the country's diplomatic isolation following years of violence and terrorism (Majda 2005). He has assigned to the country's foreign policy a series of objectives based on his personal vision and perception of the world. He has set up priorities with fundamental aims and interests; national defence, civil defence, economic development and military strength, also support for regional integration (Chaib 2005). He publicly maintains a fierce opposition to colonialism and an insistence on the preservation of the country's vital internal aims, political objectives and regional and international goals. His aim is to assign a key role to Algeria in the world political system as a peace-builder, peacemaker and peace supervisor (Chaib 2005).

## *Algerian soft power agenda in the Malian conflict*

### *Malian conflict in brief*

Mali has witnessed multiple crises since its independence from France in the 1960s; the internal political, economic and social situation has been a source of great concern. The northern region, inhabited mainly by a Tuareg population, has been in conflict with the south and with the central government in Bamako about issues related to power sharing, religion, language, ethnicity, race and skin colour. France as a former colonial power still plays a pivotal and major role in the present situation in Mali. It has launched a 'serval operation' to fight terrorism with 'technical' support from Algeria that allowed the French to fly their troops over Algerian territory. French soldiers are still present in the country and analysts described the French presence as a hard power approach while Algeria has been 'subcontracted' to implement what may be considered as a soft power policy and lead the supervision of rounds of negotiations to resolve the Malian crisis. In the end, Algeria succeeded in bringing different factions back to the negotiating table and brokering a peace agreement in Algiers that was formally signed in June 2015 in Bamako, Mali, by all factions.

### *Algeria's geostrategic dimensions*

Algeria has implemented a soft power approach when compared to France's hard power manifested by its military operations on the ground. That soft power asset has been exercised through the use and implementation of some of Algeria's geostrategic dimensions. Considering the geographic dimension, Algeria is the largest country in Africa after the split of Sudan, with 2,382 million square kilometres and a population of close to 40 million inhabitants; it has an active 1,400 km-long frontier with northern Mali (CIA World Factbook n.d.). In respect of the social dimension, the Tuareg population is an element of common identity between the two countries, although the Tuareg population is spread across four other countries; Libya, Mauritania, Niger and Burkina Faso. In the case of the security and political dimension, Algeria has been fighting against terrorism and calling for criminalization of ransom, and this has been implemented in the Algiers mediation process, which separates North Mali inhabitants' social, economic and cultural demands from terrorist groups as represented by Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the Movement for Unity [or 'Oneness'] and Jihad in Western Africa (MUJAO) and other organizations. In the economic and financial dimensions, Algeria has participated in developing the northern region through financing some projects such as the construction of wells for water; the building of training centres, medical centres and hospitals; the annulment of some debts; and advocating goods exchanges and transactional approaches. This enables Algeria to play a positive role in the process of developing the northern region of Mali. Finally, in terms of the military and security dimension, Algeria has offered training sessions for military and security forces who will be integrated into the national army of Mali after the disbanding of all armed militias and groups as called for in the Algiers draft agreement.

### *Algeria's mediator and facilitator role*

Historical and diplomatic weight has enabled Algeria to be a facilitator and a reliable moderator. Algeria's active diplomatic initiatives have been used in support of Malian

cohesion and integration since 1991. Algeria managed to broker ceasefire agreements in 2006 and also during the two troublesome years before the final June 2015 agreement was concluded. As a natural mediator, Algeria presents no threat or interference to the sovereignty of Mali; furthermore, it contributes to creating better political conditions for a successful reconciliation between different Malian factions through a *rapprochement* of points of view and positions.

Algeria has been leading an international mediation group in the Malian crisis, alongside delegations from the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and some neighbouring countries. It secured a role as facilitator and moderator, then welcomed different factions onto its soil and hosted talks in secret. Afterwards, it has been able to contribute to public negotiations because of its neutral and positive approach of remaining equidistant to conflicting parties. Also, Algeria managed to resume political, sociological, anthropological and cultural links between different Tuareg tribes and populations (Saij 2014).

### *Algeria as a net exporter of peace, security and stability*

Algerian mediation came at the express and insistent demand of Malian president Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta (Lamamra 2015). Based fundamentally on non-interference and non-intervention principles, Algeria's foreign policy has entitled it to gain trust and confidence from all Malian parties. Having a modest experience in dealing with international conflicts through international mediation, Algeria has played positive roles in many crises and conflicts in the world. In 1975, during the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) summit, it managed to supervise a peace agreement between Iran and Iraq. In 1980, Algeria succeeded in resolving diplomatically the US–Iran hostage crisis after 445 days of captivity of the US citizens in Tehran. In 2000, Algerian president Bouteflika, in the presence of US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, sponsored the agreement that brokered a long-lasting peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

In the Malian conflict, Algeria has supervised several public rounds of negotiation in the presence of a diplomatic team led by the polyglot foreign minister Ramtane Lamamra. It is under his authority that Algerian diplomacy develops multiple approaches; political, economic and cultural diplomacy accompanied by economic investment in Mali. I had the opportunity to attend some of the 'Algiers negotiation rounds' and objectively I have noticed the mediation skills and potentialities of diplomats from Algeria, as the main supervisory group, and also of diplomats from the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, the USA, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and other neighbouring countries. In sum, Algeria has spent a considerable time building up its soft power capabilities, which has finally entitled it to become a "net exporter of peace, security and reconciliation in the world" (Lamamra 2015).

## Algeria's soft power potentialities

### *Educational students exchange scheme*

Educational exchange programs function as one of the mechanisms of the broader phenomenon of soft power (Atkinson 2010). One of the most effective mechanisms for the dissemination of democratic ideas is international educational exchange. Student

exchange programs are seen as possible transnational channels of norms and ideas. As such, since the 1970s Algeria has offered thousands of scholarships to its own students to study in the developed world; the USA, the United Kingdom, Europe and the Arab countries. Equally, it hosted educational exchange programs and offered scholarships to students from African countries and the Arab world with the ultimate goal of providing Algeria's strategic engagement in a battle of ideas and values in fighting imperialism, illiteracy and underdevelopment.

Houari Boumediene launched ambitious educational programs by offering study opportunities to millions of Algerians to learn and to regain their dignity and freedom. Further, thousands of them, generally drawn from poor social classes, as a result of Boumediene's genuinely democratic and free educational system, were offered scholarships to study in the USA, the United Kingdom and the continent of Europe. Unfortunately, only a handful of them were given possibilities to advance economically and socially. The rest were either kept marginalized or did not return. Today, those who did not return are leaders in international companies operating in several countries around the world. Also, similarly, little was done in terms of contacts, lobbying and cooperation in respect of former foreign students who were enrolled at Algerian universities. Back home, many of them have, in fact, successfully occupied senior positions in their respective countries; especially in Africa as presidents, ministers, ambassadors, professors, engineers, doctors and so on.

### *Humanitarian and emergency aid*

When it comes to humanitarian and emergency aid, Algeria tends to rush quickly to supply food and logistics, notably to Africa. Niger, Mali, Mauritania, Western Sahara and Chad are very often the recipient countries of this aid. Similarly, the country offers shelter to refugees from Mali and Western Sahara. Also, during the 2015 earthquake that hit Nepal, Algeria sent emergency aid plus a group of expert firemen to Kathmandu to provide help and support.

### *Football as a popular soft power asset*

Football is earning worldwide popularity. FIFA, the international football federation association, is even larger, with over 205 members, than the 194-member United Nations. In Algeria, the "footballisation" of society is a social reality that is hard to ignore (Zaghlami 2010). Football is not only the most popular sport but it has become an opium; sports arenas have become not only spaces to express political views and opinions but also to escape from everyday hardships and difficulties. For these reasons, authorities in Algeria have been putting all their weight, including political weight, behind the national squad, as they hope to gain political dividends in the form of public support and loyalty (Zaghlami 2010).

Since its first participation in the football World Cup in 1982, Algeria has placed football high on its soft power agenda. Still in popular memory and imagination is the victory of the Algerian squad against Germany, 2–1, in the Spanish city of Gijón. In 1986, only four years after Algeria joined the tournament, I was a student at Surrey University in the United Kingdom. I was surprised to find that some English boys still remembered details such as the names of members of the Algerian team that beat the Germans. To me it was a clear indication that football can exert

soft power on the hearts and minds of people throughout the world. Other participation of Algerian squads in the World Cup – in Mexico (1986), South Africa (2010) and Brazil (2014) – are perceived as having been excellent opportunities for Algeria to build up soft power.

### *Cultural and tourism potentialities*

Culture action and tourism promotion are still lagging behind; both Algerian culture and Algeria as a tourist destination are mostly neglected (the latter more than the former) and have not exercised enough attraction despite some sporadic actions and promotional measures. Thus Algeria as a tourist destination remains strangely unknown in comparison with neighbouring Morocco and Tunisia. However, in the cultural field Algeria has organised some international activities; it has held an Arab and Islamic culture session as well as other European and African cultural festivals. It also organized an Algerian cultural year in France and provides religious scholars as preachers for the Mosque of Paris and its affiliated mosques throughout France.

Culture is not considered in Algeria as being an important asset of soft power and influence. With a limited budget allocation, its deployment is therefore quite constrained and limited to some cosmetic and temporary actions and events. But what is more noticeable is that the Algerian audience is a heavy consumer of foreign cultural products and television sitcoms, mainly Turkish ones. So, instead of encouraging and promoting rich local popular and national culture, authorities tend to neglect to a great extent the cultural potentialities that exist in various segments, fields and regions of this vast country (Zaghlami 2010).

### *Soft power of media pluralism and diversity*

Although the Algerian media landscape is pluralistic, with 145 newspapers and 30 private television channels, its soft power and influence remain hypothetical, as these media still lack independence, credibility and professionalism. Thus political interference and commercial and financial constraints are the hidden obstacles to media diversity and pluralism. Instead of espousing public service values, some local media have excelled at manufacturing propaganda through manipulation and distortion of truth. Only a coterie of newspapers strives to secure high standards of impartiality and independence.

### *Terrorism and security diplomacy*

The fight against terrorism is one of the main international actions that Algeria has pursued since the 1990s. Having faced it alone for a decade, the country is committed to a large-scale struggle against terrorism. As an active member of the global forum to fight terrorism, Algeria has advocated both military and diplomatic solutions. On the one hand, it is using hard power assets to wipe out the terrorism phenomenon. It steadfastly opposes payment of ransoms and has criminalized such practices. On the other hand, it has extended its fight against religious extremism and all forms of radicalization by inviting scholars and experts to debate and suggest solutions. Also, Algeria is the host of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, which undertakes research and develops proposals on terrorism prevention.

### *Soft power versus hard power*

Combining the use of soft power and hard power is a difficult exercise in today's conflict-ridden international environment. Algeria, as a country that suffered years of diplomatic isolation in the 1990s and fought fiercely against terrorism, is now promoting freedom, peace and security as its present soft power values. Although the country does not excel in soft power cultivation, it strives to reduce alarm about its hard power policy of excessive military spending on building up its arsenal (Adimi 2012).

Actually, it is an awkward exercise to adopt a soft power approach in a hostile and unfriendly international environment (Adimi 2013). Though decision-makers, politicians and diplomats alike, advocate soft power policies, they do so without realizing what such policies would really mean in terms of impact on their actions. In the end, if soft power requires considerable human tact, expertise and exercise of intellect, it is clearly observed that in Algeria, for historical, emotional and even political reasons, decision-makers who inherited freedom won through military revolution still favour hard power and the use of the 'strong fist' to deal with sensitive security issues instead of advocating the diplomatic approach, despite Algeria's successful mediation in the Malian crisis. Revolutionary culture and socialist ideology are still vivid in the minds of those who suffered colonization and humiliation under the French. The same is true for others in Algerian society who share similar feelings and sentiments. Thus it may take years to see the country shifting gradually to a soft and more flexible solution that is based solely on the virtues of public communication, negotiation and deliberation.

## Conclusion

Globalization, technological digitization, public diplomacy and soft power concepts have gained global prominence. However, it is hard to promote soft power approaches when others are determined to pursue their national interests by being ready to launch military offensives. But Algeria, as has been shown in this chapter, learnt from its revolution, and again in the 1990s when she fought alone against violence and terrorism. So the country tries to combine the appropriate use of both soft and hard power.

In the Malian crisis, the country has been building up soft power potentialities and assets to convince different belligerents to ratify a peace agreement. In its fighting of terrorism, the country seems determined to wipe out all sources of fanaticism, radicalism and violence. On this issue, Algeria has been investing in the international arena to convince other countries of the need for the criminalization of ransom. It also supports efforts to develop distinct definitions for terrorism and resistance that differentiate between the two.

While international actors rely increasingly on soft power tools to achieve peaceful and productive relations in the context of world politics, economics and culture, many countries tend to amplify their voices through the greater use of hard power. So how should a state react to and deal with such a paradoxical situation? The answer may arise out of common sense; current struggles against transnational terrorism should be struggles to win people's hearts and minds. After all, over-reliance on hard power alone is not the path to success, and public diplomacy should be used as a tool in the smart power arsenal (Nye 2011). Equally smart public diplomacy requires a better understanding of the roles of credibility, self-criticism and civil society in generating soft power. The smart power concept is the rational approach to place together hard and soft power resources in

order to achieve desired outcomes on the world stage. Ultimately, smart power is the ability to use the right combination of both soft and hard power depending on the national and international context.

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## SECTION VII

# Central and South Asia

# 27

# CENTRAL AND SOUTH ASIA

## An overview of soft power prospective (section overview)

*Dalbir Ahlawat*

### Central Asia: mapping soft power

The soft power domain of the Central Asian region encompassing Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan was pioneered by Russia in the post-Soviet era. Russia's need for augmenting and exercising soft power cannot be gainsaid given its perceived challenges in the wake of the 'implosion'. Of them, the most critical, admittedly, was US unilateralism in eastern Europe. The policy measures it initiated to meet these challenges, according to Vladimir Putin (2012), entail a "matrix of tools and methods … by exerting information and other levers of influence".

Joseph Nye developed the concept of soft power in the specific context of the western liberal framework. However, for a big power like Russia the basic source of its strength was reposed not in democratic governance, human rights protection, liberal economy and separation of religion and state but in multi-models of democracy that proffer a kind of global humanistic perspective having bearing on humanism, progress and human spirit. Furthermore, Russia considers the role of Orthodox Church as central to governance. Thus 'moral politics' carries more soft power than any form of western liberal paradigm.

To give credence to soft power, Russia constituted the Russkiy Mir Foundation (2014) to strengthen sovereign democracy as well as cross-cultural loyalty with those who share Russia's sense of honour and spiritual freedom; it also created the Rossotrudnichestvo to promote humanitarian cooperation with foreign countries and strengthen its network with compatriots living overseas. Moscow also developed a mass media network to nurture the 'historic unity of people' as well as to reflect the 'objective reality' of Russia's vision and mission. Furthermore, the Russian International Affairs Council (2015) developed coherency between the government, business and civil society. The term 'soft power' formally entered the Russian political lexicon in 2010 but impetus was added by the 2013 Foreign Policy Concept (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013) in which soft power was defined as "a comprehensive toolkit for achieving foreign policy objectives building on civil society potential".

In contrast with restrictions on entering the EU, a visa-free mobility within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) has been initiated for citizens of member states. Russia attracts around three million workers from the CIS, in addition to 10–12 million illegal

migrants from all across the world, mainly because of the prevailing high wages. Russia has become the most attractive destination not only for individuals but also for the CIS countries which receive over $25 billion annually in remittances. In addition, abundant gas reserves and advanced technological edge makes CIS states dependent on Russian supplies and subsidies. This attracts the neighbouring countries as Russia keeps them warm in winter and runs their industries throughout the year (Lough 2011). In the wake of the global financial crisis that gripped the US and the EU, Russia came to the rescue of its neighbours by entering into joint ventures and Customs Union. Besides, the Russian language exercises a cementing role as it enables Russia to share its historical legacy and thereby rejuvenates the spirit of unity. Furthermore, the Russian Orthodox Church plays a crucial role in imbibing morality with identity. Patriarch Kirill, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, uses the term *russky* as a spiritual identity that transcends national borders and unites by civilizational affinity rather than by parochial geographical or ethnic precepts.

Is Russia successful in its attempts to build soft power? It is difficult to evaluate on the basis of descriptive indicators such as religion, ideology, culture and language. Russian overtures towards its diaspora and the role of the Orthodox Church in the region are considered as intervention in the internal affairs of the neighbouring states. Moreover, Russia's actions in Ukraine (Crimea), Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia) and Chechnya indicate that to pursue its national interest hard power remains at the helm of affairs. In comparison to the US, Russia has a long way to go in order to acquire the "ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments" (Nye 2004, p. x). However, considering its geostrategic construct and CIS's developmental challenges, Russia is heading for a mutually interdependent partnership through NGOs, the Orthodox Church, the mass media and lingual and cultural affinity reinforced by employment opportunities, preferential energy prices and subsidies. Yet to win hearts and minds, as Nye (2004, p. 13) would say, "Smart power is neither hard nor soft. It is both".

Excepting Russia, other Central Asian countries are in very rudimentary stages in respect of developing soft power. Dependent as these countries have been on Russia for so long, they have limited access to avenues for enhancing soft power. Their geostrategic proximity, lingual affinity and common cultural heritage with Russia have, at best, drawn limited Russian attention and capital investment. However, the region's proverbial weak political traditions and institutions, together with endemic regional instability and ethnic conflicts, drug trafficking and radical Islam, decisively place these countries at a disadvantage in respect of augmenting soft power.

## South Asia: soft power potential

Comprising Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, south Asia shares historic roots, religious traditions, cultural and social values. Except Afghanistan, all countries of the region trace their antecedents from Indian civilisations and follow splintered branches of Hinduism or adapted Islam. Based on its size, geostrategic location, cultural legacy, democratic traditions, economic strength and hard military power India is being touted as a pivot by its neighbours.

*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (world as one family) is an all-encompassing Sanskrit phrase arising from India's universalist composite culture which succinctly portrays India's aspirations and spirit for inclusiveness while respecting diversity in the global family. No wonder that India has been a fertile ground for the blossoming of world religions and a

facilitating force for the birth of new religions. In the modern era, too, India has demonstrated its effective use of soft power, against the colonial powers for instance. Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, India achieved independence by sheer use of persuasive tools such as non-violence and civil disobedience.

India's post-independence years coincided with the scourge of the Cold War that convulsed global order. Instead of joining the Cold War rigours, India steadfastly steered its attention and resources towards the maintenance of durable world peace and hard-earned freedom through its own time-tested policy of non-alignment with a prime focus on nation-building, decolonization and disarmament. Its impact was instant and immensely rewarding as no fewer than 120 countries joined the Non-Aligned Movement. However, India's soft power credentials were put to the test in these early years in conflicts with China and Pakistan. Although India supplemented its soft power with hard power against Pakistan, it nevertheless engaged expansive China through the exercise of soft power by invoking the ancient Indian diplomatic principle of *panchsheel* (Ministry of External Affairs 2003).

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) functions as the apex agency to project India's image abroad. Today the ICCR has set up 35 cultural centres and 77 Chairs of Indian Studies overseas to promote Indian culture more robustly. At the instance of India, the UN General Assembly recently passed a resolution, co-sponsored by 170 member countries, to declare 21 June as the International Yoga Day, underscoring a new input to India's soft power. Furthermore, the setting up of the Public Diplomacy Division in the Ministry of External Affairs in 2006 added a new instrumentality to explore and exercise soft power. Other innovative initiatives include: branding India, with catchphrases like 'Incredible India' expounded by the Ministry of Tourism to attract publics to witness India firsthand; the Make in India program, which aims to attract investors to avail of India's opportunities in a booming economy; and the Ministry for Overseas Indians, set up to cater for the needs and welfare of overseas Indians and to forge closer links. Over the years, India's 20 million-strong diaspora has emerged as a dependable platform that represents India abroad besides promoting India's interests internationally. Together, annual remittances generated by overseas Indians to the tune of $70 billion provide an invigorating boost to the Indian economy. Besides, the century-old Bollywood not only gets the credit of being the largest film industry in the world, but also its reach has proved truly proverbial and global. No less is the popularity of the Indian cuisine, yoga and herbal healing that attract millions of foreigners annually.

India established its credentials as a role model neighbour by being a facilitator of peaceful transition to democracy in bordering Nepal, extending sustained support to Bangladesh in strengthening its democratic institutions, harmonizing the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka and taking timely action in the Maldives to avoid a dastardly coup. No less significant are India's contributions to the region's economic development, building hydro-electric projects in energy-deficit Bhutan and Nepal, resolving through arbitration a maritime boundary dispute with Bangladesh, constructing 50,000 houses and an airport in Sri Lanka to facilitate the rehabilitation process and, to crown it all, extending $2 billion for the reconstruction of war-ravaged Afghanistan (Ministry of External Affairs 2015). In common goods, India's contributions range from setting up a South Asia University and a satellite and communication network for south Asia to furthering its domain in information technology in the neighbouring countries.

There is no gainsaying that India possesses considerable soft power resources arising out of its universalistic composite culture, strong democratic traditions and continued

effort at espousing the cause of the developing world. In its global outreach, a number of instances project India's positive image. The most recent relates to the contentious issue of the US's signing of the civil nuclear agreement; Australia, while revoking its previous stance, made a U-turn to supply uranium. Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott (2014) categorically justified that "India threatens no one" and "is … friend to many". Yet some critics are of the view that India's exercise of soft power has attracted limited success. The returns are not commensurate with the volume and visibility of the use of soft power. To substantiate, the trust deficit experienced by India's neighbours includes specific instances such as its role in the liberation of Bangladesh, the despatch of an Indian Peacekeeping Force to Sri Lanka, the gridlock status of the boundary dispute with Nepal and Bangladesh, the intrusion into the Maldives' domestic political crisis and so on. As a result, India's neighbours in the region became disillusioned; obviously they have begun looking elsewhere for other alternatives (Wagner 2010, p. 338).

Be that as it may, the efficacy of soft power admittedly depends on a number of factors. Of these, evolving a tradition of public diplomacy is a key ingredient for the effectiveness of soft power. No less important is the full utilization of the soft power toolkit. On both counts India is inching forward. In the coming years it has "strong cards in the arena of soft power" to "further its foreign policy goals" (Mohan 2003).

Given disparate and modest levels of political–economic development and lack of adequate resources in south Asia, countries like Bhutan, Bangladesh, the Maldives and Nepal in the region have very limited access to a soft power toolkit. At best they have attracted modest development aid and joint projects from India. Although Sri Lanka is an attractive tourist destination, its current political imbroglio, triggered by the endemic internal ethnic crisis, has placed it at a disadvantage in respect of evolving soft power resources. A major source of attraction for all the countries of the region is their link with their diaspora and remittances to the home country. Pakistan, carved out of the Indian sub-continent and characterised as a 'pure Islamic state', has a culture, civilizational roots and affinity which are admittedly with Islamic countries. However, its alliance partnership is with the west. Of late, following its detonation of nuclear devices, it no doubt became a state worthy of attention. However, undependability as an alliance-partner, be it with the west or the east, harbouring terrorists and making a distinction between good and bad terrorism raises serious misgivings about Pakistan's soft power stance.

One country in the region whose soft power credentials are abysmally negligible is Afghanistan. A variety of factors, internal and external, such as, importantly, domestic internecine ethnic dissensions, drug trafficking, falling prey to 'radical' Islam and, above all, intermittent superpower incursions, have greatly hampered and abridged Afghanistan's ability to nurture soft power.

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# 28

# INDIGENIZING SOFT POWER IN RUSSIA[1]

*Yelena Osipova*

## Introduction

Introduced in 1990 by Joseph Nye, the concept of 'soft power' refers to the ability of international actors to influence the behavior of others by getting them "to want what you want", essentially by changing their behavior (Nye 1990). A key means for international actors to wield soft power is public diplomacy – actors' direct communication with foreign publics – which demonstrates an actor's culture and political values, and imparts norms and values that can make them more legitimate in the eyes of the intended public (Nye 2008). In the post-Cold War unipolar world, soft power seemed to provide a convenient formula for moving away from the analysis of coercion or payment-based 'hard power' towards a form of influence that relies on appeal, attraction and persuasion. Despite its ostensibly American-centric nature, the concept has gained popularity internationally among leaders who were keen to capitalize on the promise of soft power (Hayden 2012; Pamment 2012). As Gary Rawnsley (2012) put it, soft power became "the latest fashionable catch-all term that all governments must claim to do" to keep up with the times. This is particularly the case for states such as Russia that want to achieve global recognition and a significant role in regional and world politics.

This chapter looks at how the Russian government has adopted the concepts of soft power and public diplomacy, reinterpreting and reconceptualizing them in ways that reflect the country's re-emerging foreign policy assertiveness and desired role in global affairs. It briefly outlines the major strands in Russia's official discourse on the subject, provides examples of the government's attempts to wield soft power in practice, and offers brief evaluations of these efforts.

## The concept

After the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union, the 1990s proved to be disastrous for Russia politically and economically, as well as in terms of international standing. It was only in the mid-2000s that President Vladimir Putin, who had by then consolidated power at home, turned his attention abroad and set out on a more assertive foreign policy course. Russia's political leadership recognized that the country's image

had suffered greatly, which not only hampered its ability to attain foreign political objectives, but also made it difficult to inspire trust and attract much-needed foreign investment (Lebedenko 2004; Feklyunina 2008, 2010; Dolinskiy 2013).

Equally important were the 'Color Revolutions', which spread like wildfire in the former Soviet region and reverberated throughout the decade to reemerge in the form of the 2009 Moldovan crisis, the anti-Putin protests in Russia in 2011–12, and most recently, the Ukrainian upheaval. The Kremlin viewed these events as American expansionism and selective regime change, and as examples of the success of American soft power. Indeed, the Russian government effectively interpreted soft power as a tool to expand US influence abroad at the expense of others' interests. In this case, the US and NATO were seen as disregarding Russia's interests at home and proximate areas abroad (Putin 2012; Kosachev 2012; Kulikov 2013; Ponomareva 2013). To counter such advances, Moscow opted to wield its own soft power to balance and – where necessary – oppose the American effort.

This approach is reflected in many of the official statements and foreign policy concept documents issued by Moscow. These documents suggest that Russia wants a multipolar world order and is willing to actively resist what it sees as America's encroachment by enhancing its own soft power and public diplomacy programs (OPRF 2012; Kremlin 2013, 2014b; Lukyanov 2014). Perhaps the most telling indication of this approach came in the 2008 Foreign Policy Concept – also repeated in the revised 2013 edition – which stated:

> Russia will seek to ensure its objective perception in the world, develop its own effective means of information influence on public opinion abroad, strengthen the role of Russian mass media in the international information environment providing them with essential state support, as well as actively participate in international information cooperation, and take necessary measures to counteract information threats to its sovereignty and security.
>
> (MFA 2008, 2013)

This interpretation became even more prominent after the 2013–14 events in Ukraine, which Russia saw as a direct western assault on its key interests in the region (Kremlin 2014b). Moscow, therefore, perceives western soft power as a threat, recasting Nye's originally liberal concept in terms of its own neorealist outlook, necessitating more assertive balancing by Russia, both in terms of traditional realpolitik and through what the Kremlin sees as the modern modes of warfare: soft power and public diplomacy.

## Identity and overall objectives

The collapse of the Soviet Union created "an ongoing identity crisis" in Russia (Marshall 2011), as well as an inferiority complex that made defining clear foreign policy objectives difficult (Tsygankov 2014). These factors were further accentuated by western emphasis on Russia's 'defeat' in the Cold War, as well as the Russians' perception of a constant presence of Russophobia in the west (Clunan 2009; Marshall 2011; Tsygankov 2009, 2014; Kosachev 2014). However, with Putin's presidency, Russia has outlined a set of broad strategic objectives that center around the achievement of a legitimate and influential global actor status, maintaining autonomy and prosperity, and greater integration with the states of the former Soviet Union (Wallander 2007). The ambition to create an opposition front to American liberalism has become equally significant as Russia strives

to establish alternative political and cultural standards and challenge the unipolar world order on multiple fronts at once (MFA 2010; OPRF 2012; Kosachev 2012; Kulikov 2013). This also explains why Russia has become much more active in promoting alternative organizations and projects such as the Eurasian Economic Union or the BRICS.

Moscow has also focused on campaigns that promote understanding of Russian politics and culture and cultivate an objective image of the country abroad (Avgerinos 2009; Simons 2014). Many of the public diplomacy institutions and programs created and supported by the Kremlin were ones re-formed and revitalized from the Soviet times and represent attempts at borrowing best practices from others – primarily the US and some prominent European examples – in international broadcasting, cultural and language promotion, as well as branding and public relations (Feklyunina 2010; Saari 2014). There are also more specifically Russian approaches to wielding soft power, mostly centering around the reestablishment of contacts and mobilization of Russians and Russian speakers abroad and the promotion of an alternative cultural, moral and civilizational pole in the world to attract those unhappy with western liberalism (Osipova 2014; Laruelle 2015).

## Content and practice

### *Information and image-making*

The informational aspect of public diplomacy and soft power has been on top of the Kremlin's agenda, with budget allocations steadily increasing for Russian news agencies aimed at challenging what they see as American hegemony around the world (Orttung and Walker 2014; Quinn 2014; Rawnsley 2015). The most prominent example is the RT television network (formerly Russia Today). Launched in 2005, RT aims to provide "an alternative perspective on major global events, and [acquaint] an international audience with the Russian viewpoint" (RT 2015). The network started with English-language broadcasts and has now expanded to broadcasting in Arabic and Spanish. It employs a large number of foreign reporters, attempting to reach potential audiences in their native language and accent, and has earned popularity and great notoriety around the world with coverage that is often seen as blunt and controversial (Gessen 2014; Rawnsley 2015). RT has claimed to be among the most popular foreign news channels in the US, Canada and the UK, and in 2014 reported that its broadcasts reached 700 million viewers in 100 countries worldwide (RT 2012, 2014). Yet it is unclear whether these numbers correspond to actual viewership or whether they have any impact at all on perceptions of and interest in Russia.

RT's programming and coverage spans a broad spectrum of issues and genres, ranging from documentary-like programs to coverage of hard news in Russia and around the world. However, RT has been accused by foreign leaders and media alike of manufacturing and manipulating information and news coverage, particularly in conflict zones (Spiegel 2014; Schreck 2014). The network has also been criticized for focusing on critical reporting in the US and western Europe while ignoring similar issues in Russia itself (Rawnsley 2015). With no regard to perceived credibility, legitimacy, or actual effect in terms of changed perceptions and opinions of Russia abroad, RT continues to prioritize getting out its 'alternative message' and increasing the number of potential viewers reached by its broadcasts.

Another major actor in the informational sphere is the Sputnik international news agency, launched in November 2014 to replace Rossiya Segodnya, which, in turn, was

based on the consolidation of former RIA Novosti news agency and the Voice of Russia radio in late 2013 (Sputnik 2015). Dmitry Kiselyov, a conservative TV host and an avid Putin supporter, was appointed as head of Rossiya Segodnya and in his first meeting with the staff told them that "love of Russia" was going to be integral to the information agency's editorial policy (Arutunyan 2013; AP 2013).

The stated mission of the news agency reads:

> Sputnik points the way to a multipolar world that respects every country's national interests, culture, history and traditions. Sputnik tells the untold. The agency is uniquely positioned as a provider of alternative news content and a radio broadcaster.
>
> (Sputnik 2015)

Just like RT, Sputnik's major objective is to challenge the "aggressive propaganda promoting a unipolar world" emanating from the US (Hooper 2015). As of August 2015, Sputnik provided news feeds in English, Spanish, Arabic and Chinese, and produced multimedia content and radio broadcasts in 29 languages for audiences around the world.

Another notable project within the information sphere is Russia Beyond the Headlines (RBTH), financed by *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, the Kremlin's official newspaper. RBTH produces 30 different editions of supplements in major newspapers around the world – including, among others, the *Washington Post*, the *Daily Telegraph* and *Le Figaro* – published in local languages in print and online as well as on the RBTH website (RBTH 2015). Although the project does not shy away from controversial issues, its major emphasis is usually on 'softer' subject matter. The goal seems to be to provide further contextualization and background on current affairs, along with beautiful photographs and facts about the country. Unlike RT and Sputnik, RBTH has been significantly more complex and nuanced in its coverage, and has attempted to incorporate perspectives and views that might not fully agree with the Kremlin's line. Yet it is narrowly focused and its association with the Kremlin impacts its credibility, which limits its potential reach and effectiveness.

The Russian government has also utilized other information tools and techniques to improve its image and promote its message. In 2006, in preparation for the G8 summit hosted by Russia in St Petersburg, Moscow hired global public relations agency Ketchum to ensure ample positive coverage of the event and enhance the perceptions of Russia around the world (Finn 2008; Feklyunina 2010). Over the years this partnership continued and both the Kremlin and Gazprom, the state-controlled energy giant, maintained contracts with Ketchum amounting to $29.5 million and $32 million respectively during the 2006–14 period (Sedakov 2014). The PR firm was charged with advocating on behalf of Russia and promoting the country "as a place favorable for foreign investments" (Elliott 2013). In September 2014 it was reported, however, that Gazprom was not going to renew its Ketchum contract, and that the Kremlin would follow suit, because of an American and NATO information war against Russia that rendered the company's work useless (Sedakov 2014).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has itself developed an active presence on the internet, utilizing social media to directly reach out to global audiences. It started its official Twitter accounts in Russian and English in the summer of 2011 and its Facebook account in early 2013. Since then it has encouraged its missions and representations abroad to maintain an active presence on various social media, reaching more than 380 accounts on platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Sina Weibo (MFA 2015).

The individual embassy and consulate accounts are managed locally while the main MFA ones are managed by its Information and Press Department based in Moscow. Over three years the MFA has become an active social media actor, posting commentary and linking to news stories that support the official government narrative. This has been even more significant since 2014. Throughout the conflict in Ukraine, the Russian MFA utilized social media to respond to criticism, provide comments for the media, promote its own version of events and attempt to control the narrative (Twiplomacy 2014; Johnson 2014). Although its success in terms of changing perceptions and attracting hearts and minds is questionable, the MFA has managed to establish itself as a loud voice in the digital domain and has ensured the presence of the Russian perspective in the global information stream.

Within the informational component, it is also important to mention the government's commitment to organizing mass events to celebrate Russian culture and its history and achievements over time. These efforts are meant to inform and impress the world as much as inspire nationalism at home. The May 9 Parades, that celebrate the anniversary of the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany in World War II, are a prominent example. As Elizabeth Wood notes, Putin has made World War II into the central historical event of the twentieth century for Russia, one that "underlies the unity and coherence of the nation, gives it legitimacy and status as a world power" (Wood 2011). The Victory Parades have thus become major annual events that are not only a show of power and military capability, but are also meant to remind the world and the region about the achievements made in that period (Wood 2011; Sieff 2004).

Similarly significant events are the 2014 Winter Olympics, the 2016 International Ice Hockey World Championship and the 2018 FIFA World Cup hosted by Russia (Kremlin 2014a). The Kremlin spent about $50 billion on the Sochi Olympics, but the expense was considered justified in light of the potential soft power gains and the expected tourism revenues in the longer-term (Basulto 2014; Russia-Direct 2014). Nevertheless, the Sochi Olympics did not bring about a sustained soft power gain for Russia, not only because of the events in Ukraine that immediately followed it, but also because of all the charges of corruption and the spotlight it shone onto domestic political, economic and human rights issues (HRW 2014; Nemtsov and Martyniuk 2014). Given the questionable long-term outcomes for its international image and Russia's current economic troubles, it is unclear how tenable or successful the upcoming events in 2016 and 2018 will be, and whether the public will support other large spending ventures.

### *Culture, exchanges, and 'compatriots abroad'*

Cultural diplomacy is another key aspect of Russian soft power. Culture has played a major role in Russia's attempts to impress the outside world since imperial times, yet it became an even greater component during and after the Soviet years, when the cultural sphere emerged as a supposedly apolitical domain where Cold War rivals could maintain a relationship (Barghoorn 1960; Gould-Davies 2003). Activities include, among others, cultural performances, art exhibits, educational exchanges and, more recently, promotion of the Russian language, which became a way through which Russians hoped to attract and appeal to foreign publics (Kosachev 2012; Bovt 2013; Torkunov 2013). An equally important component in this regard is the idea of *Russkiy Mir* – the 'Russian World' – composed of *inter alia* ethnic Russians, Russian speakers and those who identify with the Russian culture abroad (RusskiyMir 2015; Laruelle 2015). The cultivation of the

'Russian World' and support of compatriots living abroad have become major points in Russian public diplomacy and soft power discourse as the Kremlin realized the potential of extending its influence through these channels (MFA 2013, 2014b; Laruelle 2015). The Russian language provides an opportunity for foreigners to get more closely acquainted with Russia, its history and culture; for those already identifying with it, it helps to reinforce and further strengthen that bond.

The most prominent actor in this field is Rossotrudnichestvo – the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation – established in 2008 (Rossotrudnichestvo 2015b). The agency's primary task is to establish "an objective perception of modern Russia" (Rossotrudnichestvo 2015a). In line with Russia's overall foreign policy objectives, Rossotrudnichestvo's primary focus is on former Soviet territories, because of their existing historical and cultural ties with Russia, as well as the presence of large ethnic Russian and Russian-speaking communities in those countries. The objective of this approach is to recreate a shared cultural, linguistic and political space, which contributes to the process of regional reintegration, with Russia at its core (Bugajski 2004; Vapler *et al*. 2010; Kosachev 2012).

As of 2015, Rossotrudnichestvo maintains a network of 61 Russian Centers of Science and Culture and 22 representatives in embassies around the world (Rossotrudnichestvo 2015a). It lists nine key spheres of activity that can loosely be grouped into three major areas: cultural/linguistic promotion, educational visits and exchanges, and international development. Thus, for example, Rossotrudnichestvo helps organize bilateral years of culture, and its centers host various events highlighting Russian history and culture. What is more, many of the centers provide Russian language classes for about 19,000 children and adults a year (Rossotrudnichestvo 2015a). The agency also provides various forms of support to Russian schools and teachers of the Russian language abroad.

In 2008, Rossotrudnichestvo, together with the Ministry of Education and Science, was put in charge of recruiting and overseeing the education of 10,000 foreigners in Russian institutions of higher education who were to be paid for by the government – a substantial increase from the 3,000 scholarships established in 1995 (RussiaGov 1995; RG 2008). In 2013, this number was increased to 15,000, and in April 2015 the Agency requested a further increase to 20,000 (RussiaGov 2013; Kiseleva and Chernykh 2015). Rossotrudnichestvo also organizes recruitment for individual Russian institutions and hosts various academic conferences, educational and job fairs in its Centers of Russian Science and Culture (Fominykh 2014; Rossotrudnichestvo 2016).

The share of students from former Soviet republics studying in Russia has increased significantly since 2008, which reflects a prioritization of the region and redistribution of the quotas by the government (MOS 2014; Fominykh 2014). Potentially, an additional reason for this is the low performance of Russian institutions of higher education in international rankings, as they are not competitive with institutions of more attractive countries (Baranov 2012; Torkunov 2013). Yet another significant problem with Rossotrudnichestvo's management of these educational opportunities is the lack of transparency within the application and selection process, raising concerns about corruption and nepotism (Krutikov 2014).

The third broad area of Rossotrudnichestvo's activities is humanitarian cooperation and development. It is important to note that the understanding of the term 'humanitarian' in Russian refers to activities in the non-political and non-economic sphere, i.e. to cultural ties, cross-civilizational dialogue and other forms of cooperation (Zonova 2013).

In May 2013, Putin signed an order transferring the mandate of international development from the Ministry of Finance to Rossotrudnichestvo, which was accompanied by a promised budgetary expansion from about 2.5 billion rubles (about $80 million) in 2013 to 9.5 billion rubles (about $300 million) by 2020 (Chernenko 2013). The Kremlin also revealed plans to significantly increase Russia's international aid spending by 2020 (ITAR-TASS 2014; Chernenko 2014).

To solidify this further, in April 2014 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a new Concept Document outlining "The Russian Federation's State Policy in the Area of International Development Assistance" (MFA 2014a). The document defined development broadly, including issues such as assistance in case of disasters, technological and direct financial aid, and more long-term projects in social and human capital development. The Concept Document also listed "strengthening of a positive image of the Russian Federation and its cultural and humanitarian influence in the world" among its primary objectives (MFA 2014a). Thus the official discourse as well as the legal provisions were streamlined to make development into a better-functioning tool of international influence, which was supposed to overtly promote Russian economic as well as soft power interests (Birichevskiy and Safranchuk 2013). However, as of 2015, it is unclear where Rossotrudnichestvo is headed and whether the plans for an increased role and financing will actually come to fruition. Rossotrudnichestvo's budget has not been increased as promised in 2013 (MOF 2014). On the contrary, as Russia's economic woes increased and its budget experienced a 10 per cent cut across the board, Rossotrudnichestvo, too, saw its budget decrease and priorities reoriented from development to Russian language promotion (Subbotina 2015).

Beyond Rossotrudnichestvo, there are also a number of smaller actors involved in the overall effort. They mostly comprise semi- and non-governmental organizations that work on the ground with partners and diasporic organizations in other countries. The most prominent of these are the three foundations established under the broader structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The first and oldest among these organizations is the Russkiy Mir Foundation, established in 2007 and charged with promoting the Russian language and culture abroad, supporting teachers and various diasporic initiatives. The word *mir* in Russian simultaneously means community, peace and world, encompassing the mission of the agency "to promote understanding and peace in the world by supporting, enhancing and encouraging the appreciation of Russian language, heritage and culture" (RusskiyMir 2015). The Gorchakov Foundation for Public Diplomacy was established in 2010 to focus on educational, scientific and short-term exchanges, establish ties with compatriots and enhance civil dialogue and partnerships with corresponding organizations abroad (Gorchakov 2015a). The Gorchakov Foundation partners with educational institutions at home and abroad, facilitates visits of foreign experts to Russia and of Russian professionals and academics abroad, and organizes various international conferences and academic/educational events both in Russia and other countries (Gorchakov 2015b). The third organization is the Foundation for the Support and Protection of the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad. Established in 2012, this foundation's mission is to protect the rights of members of the diaspora and expatriates in foreign countries by promoting social justice, the protection of minority rights and civic education abroad. It trains Russian lawyers living abroad, and provides grants and subsidies to existing firms and organizations that deal with supporting Russian minority or individual rights in their respective countries (PravFond 2015). As in the case of most other public diplomacy

programs, these organizations focus primarily on the former Soviet sphere and eastern Europe, where most of Russian "compatriots" are currently located.

## Conclusion

Since the mid-2000s, Russia has been experiencing rapid economic growth, accompanied by a more assertive foreign policy and an ambitious role in international affairs. The Kremlin saw its preferences and key strategic interests disregarded by the west – particularly in its immediate region – and it seems to have chosen soft power as a significant tool for resisting western encroachments and establishing its own influence abroad. Despite having been a major priority for the Russian government throughout the past decade, public diplomacy is most likely to see a substantial decline in its significance in the near future, at least beyond Russia's immediate neighborhood, not only because of the economic hardship currently experienced by the country, but also because of a visible shift to the viewpoint that most of Russia's efforts in the west are futile. This might primarily affect projects in the fields of development, exchanges and education. In light of the primacy of the informational/media component in the Russian conceptualization of public diplomacy and its perceived cost-effectiveness, international broadcasting, information agencies and digital diplomacy will likely dominate the Russian effort to wield soft power around the world. In its proximate region, however, Russia is also likely to emphasize active work with compatriots and sympathizers, trying to establish effective networks of support and influence within foreign countries and areas of interest. While these efforts might result in some success among publics where Russia is already seen in a more positive light, their overall outcome will remain uncertain so long as Russia's international credibility keeps eroding and others keep perceiving a threat – whether real or imagined – from Moscow.

## Note

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# 29

# BOLLYWOOD ENABLING INDIA AS A SOFT POWER?

## A critical overview of pros and cons of post-critical assumptions

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### Introduction

This chapter critiques the existing school of thought that characterizes Bollywood as India's flagship soft power, basing this assertion on limited and often contradictory perspectives drawn from postmodern and post-critical theories. This study not only elaborates on inherent shortcomings in this lopsided approach but also argues that Tollywood (the Telugu film and television industry) is more deserving of being nominated as India's flagship soft power asset, taking India's deeper culture and tradition into consideration. Engaging the three important definitions that Nye (2011) offered for soft power and interpolating them with the discussion of heritage and contemporary soft power sources in Ch. 1 (See Tables 1.1.1.4 and 1.1.1.5), this study is primarily grounded in the modernist/foundationist (Bauman 1991; Smith 2001) perspective of cultural theory.

It was in fact Nye who suggested Bollywood as a possible candidate for being India's flagship soft power asset (Nye 2005; Athique 2012, p. 114). Nye does not profess expert knowledge of Indian cinema and his nomination of Bollywood need not be taken as irrefutable. Nevertheless, after Nye's identification of Bollywood as a possible key soft power resource for Indian cultural diplomacy (Diwakar 2006), many scholars hastened to produce a meta-theorization of Bollywood as a soft power asset.

Tharoor (2008), a former UN diplomat and writer, has argued that a range of India's fine arts and culture – that includes yoga, cuisine, sports and Bollywood cinema – would serve to tell a different but captivating story to the world. Much of the meta-theorizations of Bollywood as soft power relied on an understanding of culture in its broadest sense. This included films first, with themes about the Indian diaspora; second, earning significant revenue in US dollars; and third, offering a wide-angle picture of India's technological, infrastructural and consumer cultural transformation, showing its fine-tuned alignment with globalization. Nonetheless, these factors of theorization promoting Bollywood as soft power are fundamentally flawed, and raise four issues that are central to the theorization itself.

The culture- and tradition-related issues are as follows:

- The culture and tradition portrayed by Bollywood films does not reflect the historical depth of traditional Indian culture and values (Murthy 2015).
- The moniker 'Bollywood' (see Rajadhyaksha 2003, 2013) is a highly contested one, and does not represent Indian cinema in its cultural breadth (Murthy *et al*. 2015).
- Tollywood (the Telugu film industry) incorporates rich cross-cultural and traditional Indian values that range from the past into the era of post-globalization, and it is therefore reasonable to consider it as a potential flagship soft power resource for India (Murthy *et al*. 2015; Murthy 2012).
- Films espousing core traditional values, incorporating fine art as well as traditional crafts[1], need to be present in an industry for it to be eligible for consideration as the Indian flagship soft power resource (Murthy 2014).

The remainder of this chapter seeks to throw light on these issues and demonstrate how Tollywood rather than Bollywood draws on heritage culture in the form of core values, high cultural art and traditional crafts whereas Bollywood depends more on contemporary culture.

## Culture as a principal referent for soft power

Nye's (2011) definition makes it clear that culture is central to the thesis of soft power. Here, culture implies traditional values (See Table 1.1.1.4 for tangible *and* intangible sources under heritage and contemporary categories). Noted analyst Raja Mohan (2003) argues that ancient Indian spiritualism, buttressed by yoga and propagated by *Gurus* (Masters), has spread across the globe over centuries earning for India a reputation as a source of light and wisdom. Thussu (2013) offers a vivid account of how ancient spiritual values and traditional culture, especially Buddhism, contributed immensely to the collective wisdom of the world (p. 10). As noted earlier, Tharoor (2008) placed enormous emphasis on India's cultural assets, its cultural heritage that was carefully preserved and passed down to the present over millennia. Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (2011) said that the grandeur of Indian classical traditions has earned applause and appreciation around the world.

These statements center on India's ancient, rich and varied culture as embedded in the *Upanishads* and epics. These scriptures employ a unique logical approach based on the *Advaita Darshanam Siddhanta* (school of non-duality) in formulating humanist concepts such as *ahimsa* (non-violence), *samadarsha, samabhaava* (a view that sees all living beings as equal that is superordinate to caste, creed, color and gender segmentation) and *vasudhaika kutumbakam* (a view of the whole planet as a single family). Further, the character of Bollywood has undergone a drastic change in the context of globalization (Rajadhyaksha 2013). The presenting of Bollywood, that today emphasizes Indian diasporic popular culture, in tandem with classical cultural traditions, creates a dissonance and detracts from the soft power of the latter.

What one understands from the foregoing is that the advocates of India's soft power by and large rely on this ancient country's richest and most ancient traditional systems of education, yoga, martial arts, Kama Sutra, family, etc.; its philosophies, such as *Sankhya, Nyaya, Vaiseshika, Mimamsa, Jyothisha* (astrology), *Chandas* (prosody), etc. and its culture as seen in festivals, functions, ceremonies, temple traditions (*Aagama Sastras*) and *Yagnyas* (rituals involving fire and ghee) as well as fine arts. Against this backdrop, it is pertinent to examine how different scholars defined 'culture' in literature.

According to Tylor (1920, 1871, p. 1), culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society". The *Cambridge English Dictionary* states that culture is "the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time". Geertz (1973, p. 89) advocates "cutting of the culture concept down to size, therefore actually insuring its continued importance and defines a semiotic concept of culture" as "webs of significance". He distinguishes analytically between "the cultural and social aspects of human life" and sees culture as an "ordered system of meaning and of symbols, in terms of which social interaction takes place, while social system is the pattern of social interaction itself" (p. 144). Therefore "cultural structure and social structure are not mere reflexes of one another, but independent and interdependent variables", states Geertz (p. 169).

According to Fornas (1995), culture is the necessary interplay between contextualized creative practices and ordered sets of symbolic forms. The modern hermeneutic–semiotic concept of culture has been created in a dialogue between the humanities and social sciences in which the narrow and the broader concepts have met and modified each other (Fornas 1995, p. 137).

Bauman (1991) argues that modernity is the beginning point of any culture today. Modernity, according to Bauman, is an ordered system of way-of-life that also brings into existence legitimated oppressive hierarchies, laws of regulation and structured societies that remove individual insecurities. All schools of thought – whether they are Indian or Marxist or any other western philosophical thought or any '-ism' – will fall under this definition of modernity. This construction is also called modernist/foundationist, referring to the earliest primordial cultural hierarchy. In the course of time, this modernity will open up new ways of thinking and living, as no social system is absolutely perfect and rigid as such for long. The complexities of life in social interaction will automatically lead to structural changes in culture as predicted by Fornas (op. cit.).

As such, modernist/foundationist society can also be called a structuralist society that claims to regulate society by virtue of laws in order to bring harmony and peace to members. Structuralist societies and their rules and regulations claim universal acceptance and validity of their values, culture and traditions, as most of them are drawn from religious texts, philosophical traditions and observances (both in the east and the west). In other words, modernist/foundationist societies stake a claim to bringing order into human conduct through rationalities, ideologies, principles and values (Smith 2001). Furthermore, they establish binaries of opposition as part of cultural conventions and signs in social systems (Smith 2001).

While there are digressions from modernist/foundationist society to 'postmodern' society, there is no consensual definition for postmodernism as of now. Many scholars consider 'postmodernism' as synonymous to 'post-structuralism', though there are as many who argue against this conflation. The primary contention of postmodern scholars is that 'modernist/foundationist' societies founded on structuralist patterns have failed to afford egalitarian justice to subjects, and thus have turned into feudalistic/capitalistic/patriarchical structures (Bauman 1991). Postmodernism has led subaltern and feminist groups to recourse to decisions that display tendencies of claiming situational rather than universal validity and justice for actions (Smith 2001).

*The Oxford Dictionary* (online) has described postmodernism as: follows: "A late 20th-century style and concept in the arts, architecture, and criticism, which represents a departure from modernism and is characterized by the self-conscious use of earlier styles

and conventions, a mixing of different artistic styles and media, and a general distrust of theories" (The Oxford Dictionary n.d.). Bauman (1989) has argued that postmodernity is related to consumerism. Sundaram observed that by the late 1960s, the 'great divide' of modernism and mass culture in the west was successively destabilized by pop art, counterculture and new strategies of hybridity and cultural citation (Huyssen 1986). But the "post modern condition" that flourished through the 1990s was said to have imploded in the decade after 2000 (Sundaram 2013, p. 4).

Bollywood films that are lionized by both Indian policymakers and Bollywoodized academics are replete with postmodernist culture and appear under the post-critical theoretical framework of Bollywood/Bollyworld (Kaur and Sinha 2005, p. 313; Athique 2005) that reflects simulated western culture, architecture and lifestyles to a greater extent than it does Indian heritage culture and values.

## Bollywood as soft power: contradictions

Indian heritage culture and values are not easily accommodated in Bollywood postmodern films that carry the values of consumerism as discussed above under 'Culture as a principal referent for soft power'. The questions to ponder over are as follows. Do Bollywood films, shot in the post-globalization era, serve merely as entertainment for the global Indian diaspora or do they connect them to Indian heritage culture? Are these films indeed capable of enabling members of the diaspora to act as agents of Indian soft power in influencing the policies of their countries of residence in favor of India? If so, what cultural values are the Indian diaspora abstracting from these Bollywood films in projecting Bollywood soft power – postmodernist forms that simply promote multidimensional consumerist culture or modernist/foundationist forms that convey Indian heritage culture and values?

Raja Mohan (2003) observes that Bollywood has done more for Indian influence abroad than the bureaucratic efforts of the government. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government of 1998–2004 seemed to view Bollywood as a transmitter of timeless Hindu values, while the Congress Party (2004–14) saw contemporary Indian film as an advanced avatar of India's rich syncretic culture (Athique 2005, p. 118). In both cases it is diasporic audiences, argues Athique, that are positioned as instruments of soft power in their own right, capable of influencing both Indian and western societies (p. 118). The idea of promoting Bollywood as soft power has thus been endorsed explicitly by successive governments, with India's then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (2011) stating that India's soft power is becoming of primary importance in the expansion of India's global footprint. On the other hand, Hymans (2009, p. 234) argues that "India remains a minor soft power in the contemporary world as it has bypassed the soft power ambitions of its founding generation of leaders such as Gandhi and Nehru".

The works of Thussu (2013) and Schaefer and Karan (2013) refer to the box office revenue of Bollywood films in post-critical terms to justify Bollywood's value as a soft power resource. Indeed, Bollywood exports not only attracted the larger diaspora spread across 110 nations, but also drew massive crowds from other cultures to its entertainment extravaganza. Therefore, Bollywoodized academia held the view that just as Hollywood has been a key soft power resource for the US to influence international relations and win in public diplomacy with other countries in the world, Bollywood is also going to be an 'enabling factor' in shaping international relations and public diplomacy in India's favor. However to conflate the 'consumption culture' of Bollyworld with soft power from

post-critical perspectives using criteria such as 'marketing, distribution and collection' at the box office; and from its attractiveness to the Indian diaspora; or in terms of the post-modern nature of Bollywood films[2] (Athique 2012; Rajadhyaksha 2013; Schaefer 2013; Schaefer and Karan 2013; Thussu 2013), is to stray from the spirit of Indian 'culture', ethos and values.

It is not clear as to why Bollywoodized scholars[3] failed to assess these films' ability to transmit Indian heritage values and culture despite their knowing that soft power largely relies on these. In fact, it is postmodern films that have been big revenue earners; these films have themes pertaining to the ethics and compulsions of western life. Furthermore, there is an apparent contradiction in the speeches of Tharoor (2008) and Manmohan Singh (2011). While they emphasize ancient Indian values on the one hand, on the other they advocate Bollywood (especially its latest films – post-1990s) as a major Indian soft power resource (Murthy 2015).

This is precisely what Wagner (2010) pointed out when he stated that India's Bollywood failed to offer a 'cultural model' as an alternative to the Hollywood model. The kind of postmodernism found in the latest Bollywood films raises another fundamental question: has India, in the post-globalization phase, undergone such radical transformation of its ancient culture and value system? In a chapter entitled "India's soft power: prospects and its limitations", Wagner (2010) describes Bollywood as a quasi-dream fabric. Blarel (2012) notes that "Bollywood films compared to Hollywood do not reflect or promote a universal model for political and cultural development, and therefore should be seen as mere entertainment". He describes Bollywood as weak soft power.

Contradictions in the very selection of the moniker 'Bollywood' to represent Indian soft power (diasporic) further deepen the current confusion as to which culture and value system Bollywood advocates. The latest Bollywood films, reflecting post-globalization changes undergone by the Indian value system, culture and traditions, disconnect the diaspora from India's ancient, noble and grand native culture. Rather, these films tend to fuse or homogenize the diaspora with European and American culture of their countries of domicile. Postmodernist Bollywood cinema does not depict Indian culture as an ideal 'cultural model' that might be a 'soft power' asset in tilting western opinion in favor of India.

Nye (2011) would have expected India to present through Bollywood a model of soft power based on its age-old value systems and traditions, but the present meta-theorization goes against the grain of this. Five gradations, called 'make-ups', are identified by Chitty for soft power (Ch. 1). Of the five – composition, conclusion, conciliation, cosmetics and concoction – the first one, composition, refers to core heritage and contemporary values and style of communication of message content (Ch. 1). He considered this as the first make-up. These values are the core values with which society identifies or of which it is made up (Nye 2011). Chitty further states that these may be "treasures from the past, whether architecture, art, literature, language or some other aspect of culture, which may be in passive or active states – heritage soft power" (Ch. 1).

The latest discourse on the term 'Bollywood', a derivative of 'Hollywood' (see notes in Murthy, 2015), is all the more self-defeating. While the moniker 'Bollywood' has had a long existence and is considered as synonymous with the Hindi film industry in north India, Rajadhyaksha (2013), a noted film scholar and post-critical theoretician, has argued for restriction of the use of the term to Hindi films produced after the 1990s (i.e. after India ushered in the forces of globalization). Thus post-globalization Bollywood Hindi cinema symbolized the economic and technological transformation undergone by

India after the 1990s. Subsequently Rajadhyaksha used the term Bollywood to refer to the exportable popular culture largely meant to satiate the Indian diaspora (2013, p. 41).

In other words, the Bollywood films produced after the 1990s portrayed the western cultures and lifestyles that India's metropolises have gradually begun to adopt. With the change of settings from India to overseas locations, new elements entered Bollywood films. These included characters living abroad being played by actors; bikini-clad women dancing to western music; narratives about love triangles (*Kal Ho Na Ho* 2003), multiple marriages and live-in relationships (*Kabhi Alvida Na Kehna* 2006); and the portrayal of premarital sex as a basic right of both spouses. Expanding on Rajadhyaksha's theorization of Bollywood as an exportable industry and coupling it with the discourse on transformation of Bollywood as a soft power, Thussu (2013) writes: "These diaspora oriented films did extremely well in the overseas market even though the receipts collected in this market are subject to international taxes and diasporic audiences represent a small fraction of the total number of viewers for Indian films" (p. 135).

If the term 'Bollywood' encompasses an entire cultural industry as suggested by Rajadhyaksha in the latest refinement of his earlier definition (2013), one would expect some references to Tollywood films and their contribution to diaspora or soft power. No references are to be found to Tollywood in any of the works of Bollywoodized academia. Indeed, the Telugu film industry, a legitimate twin of Hindi cinema since the talkies era (1931), continues to preserve ancient Indian values and cultural and traditional systems by virtue of its ability to produce films of multiple genres in several languages (Murthy 2013). In fact, in the last two decades the synergy of the Telugu film and television industry has immensely contributed to the cultural renaissance of the Telugu diaspora (Bhat and Bhaskar 2007, pp. 104–7). Tollywood is in a strong position to vie with Bollywood for being considered India's flagship soft power asset.

## Tollywood: a flagship resource as soft power

Telugu is a regional language spoken by approximately 850 million people who reside in the Indian states of Andhra and Telangana. Prior to 2 June 2014, Telugu-speaking people had only one state, namely, Andhra Pradesh. After division into two states – Telangana and Andhra Pradesh (residual) – Telugu people now have two Telegu-speaking states as the north Indians have multiple Hindi-speaking states. Telugu language, culture and heritage are exceedingly rich; the government of India has declared Telugu as one of India's classical languages, having as it does a 3000-year-old literary tradition. It is the only language in India having both meter and structure in the prosody of its poetry. Nicolo Di Conti described Telugu as the "Italian of the East" because it sounds so mellifluous. Eminent Tamil poet Subrahmanya Bharati praised Telugu, coining the collocation *Sundara Telingi* (beautiful Telugu) in his famous paean on national integration. The Telugu population is widely spread over India and the world, constituting the second-largest Indian diaspora (more than 20 million) both in the US and the UK.

Tollywood invests several times more in films and produces more films than does the Hindi film industry (Kohli-Khandekar 2013, p. 161). Its cross-cultural approach in making films in several languages simultaneously has obscured from Bollywoodized academia its combined investment in film production. Murthy (2013) earlier not only elaborated on Tollywood's multicultural approach, but also showed how the Telugu film industry invested heavily in making films in all other major languages, such as Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada. For instance, the latest release of *Baahubali – The*

*Beginning* (2015, directed by S. S. Rajamouli), was produced simultaneously in Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Hindi. At about $15 million, this production received one of highest investments in the Telugu film industry. On its release worldwide, it has grossed over $90.5 million.

The Telugu diaspora connection with Tollywood dates back to the 1960s, when early immigrants to the US formed associations or small groups to watch Telugu films carried to the US from India by kith and kin. By the 1980s, members of the diaspora started making films, portraying the lives of Telugus living abroad (e.g. *Padamati Sandhya Raagam* 1987). Bhat and Bhaskar (2007) have provided a vivid description of how members of the Telugu diaspora sought to reaffirm their identity as Telugus through establishing and listening to Telugu Radio, watching Telugu films, founding Telugu caste and language associations, and starting Telugu film and cultural websites. The Telugu diaspora encouraged films of all genres that reiterated modernist and conventional values.

Even the latest film, *Baahubali – The Beginning* (2015), is not a postmodern film that promotes consumer culture. It is a folk story, but its filmization completely availed itself of modern technology, especially graphics, and is on a par with Hollywood in terms of technical expertise. Rajamouli's earlier film *Magadheera* (*The Heroic Man* 2009) also grossed huge earnings. In the last decade, a number of Telugu films starring Balakrishna, Venkatesh, Pawan Kalyan, Mahesh Babu, etc. grossed the highest earnings in the overseas markets, but none of these films belong to the postmodern ethos. Films that gross the highest revenues, including the latest one that stars Mahesh Babu, *Srimanthudu* (*A Wealthy Man* 2015), was produced simultaneously in three south Indian languages and preserves the ancient rich cultural values of India in general and of south India in particular. This pattern of Tollywood productions of retaining traditional and religious values while conveying socially relevant messages is in stark contrast with Bollywood postmodern films.

Tollywood's performance challenges the myth that only Bollywood postmodern films' gross takings are high abroad due to their identification with the lifestyles of diaspora (see Table 2.7.29.1). Bollywood's themes relating to the diaspora overseas locations for the entirety of films are cited as major reasons for success.

But, without adopting any of the above as part of the narrative, Tollywood gross takings abroad have been steadily increasing since 2009 and have paralleled the gross takings

*Table 2.7.29.1* Revenues of top ten Bollywood films at global box office

| *Film* | *Year* | *UK* | *N. America* | *Rest of World* | *Overseas Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *My Name is Khan* | 2010 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 11.1 | 19.2 |
| *Three Idiots* | 2009 | 2.8 | 6.5 | 6.0 | 15.3 |
| *Kabhi Alvida Na Kehna* | 2006 | 3.8 | 3.2 | 3.6 | 10.7 |
| *Om Shanti Om* | 2007 | 2.7 | 3.6 | 3.7 | 10.0 |
| *Dhoom 2* | 2006 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 3.6 | 8.5 |
| *Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi* | 2008 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 4.1 | 8.4 |
| *Veer Zaara* | 2004 | 3.8 | 2.9 | 1.4 | 8.2 |
| *Kabhi Kushi Kabhie Gham* | 2001 | 3.6 | 3.1 | 1.3 | 8.0 |
| *Jodha Akbar* | 2008 | 2.1 | 3.4 | 2.0 | 7.5 |
| *Don* | 2006 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 2.5 | 7.4 |

*Source*: http://boxofficeindia.com, viewed 20 April 2016, figures in millions of US dollars.

of Bollywood postmodern films (see Table 2.7.29.2). Almost all the films included in Table 2.7.29.2 are highly traditional in the narrative of the stories/themes, and reinforce age-old religious and cultural values. Further, Tollywood is credited with the production of a spectrum of genres that Bollywood has never experimented with (e.g. *Magadheera* [2009] is a fantasy film combining socio-folk genres; *Eega* [2012 – *House Fly*] is a socio-scientific fantasy). Similarly, the multi-star film *Manam* (*Ourselves* 2014), the last film starring veteran actor and Dadasaheb Phalke awardee, the late Akkineni Nageswara Rao, is a complex story about reincarnation (*punarjanma* – rebirth – which is a belief based on the *Upanishads*). The film was a great success both in India and abroad, winning several awards and grossing $1.5 million. *Magadheera* and *Eega* are also based on the theme of reincarnation.

Telugu films directed by Adurthi Subba Rao (1912–75), Kadiri Venkata Reddy (1912–72), Vedantam Raghavaiah (1919–71), Gudavalli Ramabrahmam (1902–46), Kasinathuni Viswanath (popularly known as K. Viswanath; 1939–present), Bapu (1933–2014), Jandhyala Subramanya Sastry (1951–2001), Vamsi (1956–present), Dasari Narayana Rao (1947–present), K. Raghavendra Rao (1942–present) and K. Balachander (1930–2014) not only revolve around social issues that have dogged Indian society for over six decades, but also present ancient Indian cultural and traditional values (Murthy 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015). Within this sociological and philosophical framework, these eminent directors have sought to enlighten Indian audiences with paths to inclusiveness, addressing the concerns of young people, women and adults (Murthy 2014). Viswanath's films *Sankarabharanam* (1979) and *Saagara Sangamam* (1983) have greatly helped to revive

*Table 2.7.29.2* Revenues of top 14 Tollywood (Telugu) movies at global box office 2011–15

| *No.* | *Title of the Film* | *Year* | *Studio* | *US & UK Revenue* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | *Baahubali – The Beginning* | 2015 | Arka Media Works | 8.1 |
| 2. | *Srimanthudu* | 2015 | Mythri Movie Makers | 2.6 |
| 3. | *Attarintiki Daredi* | 2013 | Reliance Entertainment, Sri Venkateswara Chitra | 1.9 |
| 4. | *Seethamma Vakitlo Sirimalle Chettu* | 2013 | Sri Venkateswara Creations | 1.6 |
| 5. | *Dookudu* | 2011 | 14 Reels Entertainment | 1.5 |
| 6. | *Manam* | 2014 | Annapoorna Studios | 1.5 |
| 7. | *Aagadu* | 2014 | 14 Reels Entertainment | 1.4 |
| 8. | *Race Gurram* | 2014 | Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Productions | 1.3 |
| 9. | *1: Nenokkadine* | 2014 | 14 Reels Entertainment | 1.3 |
| 10. | *Baadshah* | 2013 | Parameswara Art Productions | 1.2 |
| 11. | *S/O Satyamurthy* | 2015 | Haarika and Hassine Creations | 1.2 |
| 12. | *Eega* | 2012 | Vaarahi Chalana Chitram | 1.0 |
| 13. | *Temper* | 2015 | Parameshwara Art Productions | 1.0 |
| 14. | *Gabbar Singh* | 2012 | Parameshwara Art Productions | 1.0 |

*Source*: https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_highestgrossing_Tollywood_(Telugu)_movies, accessed on 23 August 2015, figures in millions of US dollars.

interest in classical arts among Indian youth in India, with millions once again rushing to learn classical music and dance (Baskaran 1991).

Telugu cinema is an industry leader in India in producing and directing epic films based on the *Ramayana, Mahabharata* and *Bhagavatam* and films about folklore (Murthy 2012, 2013). Telugu cinema, even today, continues to produce and direct films based on epics and on the lives of Telugu saints (*Annamayyah* 1997; *Sri Ramadasu* 2006; *Sri Rama Rajyam* 2011; *Pandurangadu* 2008).

Backed by Ramoji Film City (RFC) in Hyderabad – the 'World's Largest Film Studio Complex' according to the *Guinness Book of World Records* – Tollywood is the richest film industry in India (Shanti 2010). Aside from RFC there are many other large studios – Annapoorna Studios, Saaradhi Studios, Padmalaya Studios and Rama Naidu Studios – that have world-class infrastructure that allows the shooting of films with Hollywood production values. The film processing laboratories (such as Prasad Labs), the graphic and animation subsidiary software units, and the idyllic locales in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana make Tollywood an attractive choice of location for film shooting not only for Telugu language productions but others as well. The contributions of the Telugu television industry, with 54 Telugu channels (the highest number in any Indian state) in general and ETV for programmes like *Paaduta Teeyaga – Americalo Raagasaagarika* and *Swaraabhishekam* (both being shown in the UK and the US since 2014) in particular, to the cultural renaissance of the Indian diaspora should also be noted.

### *Classical music traditions: Carnatic music exuded from Telugu Saints – Annamayyah, Ramadasu and Tyagaraja*

The world repertoire of music would be seriously deficient if one failed to mention the fundamental contributions of Carnatic music, which is primarily an expression, in Telegu, of the devotion of holy saints. These saints are described as *Vaaggeyakars* (whose spoken words instantaneously turn into mellifluous *keertan*, a form of devotional music, enacted in praise of their beloved deity.

A fifteenth-century saint, Annamayyah of Tallapaka village (now located in Cuddapah district of Andhra Pradesh), orally composed and sang nearly 33,000 *keertans* about his favorite deity, Lord Sri Venkateswara. The sixteenth-century saint Ramadasa of Bhadrachalam composed and sang more than 20,000 *keertans* in praise of Lord Sri Rama and his holy consort Seeta Devi. A seventeenth-century saint, Tyagaraja of Tiruvayyar, composed about 50,000 *keertans* in praise of Lord Rama. Tyagaraja and his disciples, Shyama Sastri and Muttuswami Dikshitar, who together are called the Holy Trinity of Music, perfected the Carnatic tradition of music. The Telugu film industry has been prolific in using the Carnatic musical tradition. As such, Tollywood films, perpetuating Indian cultural values and traditions as they do, are exportable cultural products that could very well replace Bollywood as India's flagship soft power asset.

## Conclusion

This chapter questions the current meta-theorization of Bollywood that gives Bollywood the status of flagship soft power asset. First the chapter engages with Nye's definitions of soft power (2011) and Chitty's (Ch.1) definition of public diplomacy which recognizes "the diasporic nature of populations" vis-à-vis heritage and contemporary sources. Centering on this premise, the chapter examined whether Bollywood films, described as

postmodern exportable cultural goods (Rajadhyaksha 2013; Thussu 2013), really convey Indian heritage to the diaspora. Many policymakers and Bollywoodized academics place ancient Indian heritage on a par with contemporary culture such as exportable Bollywood films. They fail to note the contradictions in suggesting that Bollywood films may carry the universalist and assimilationist values in India's heritage.

Further, the chapter examined the hollowness of postmodern Bollywood films; they do not offer a universal political and cultural model (Wagner 2010; Blarel 2012). The present study showed how the Telugu film industry not only performed very well in the global cinema marketplace, but also reinforced traditional Indian values and culture in connecting with Telugu diaspora without resorting to producing postmodern films. The chapter further dealt with the contribution of the Telugu film industry to art forms such as classical Carnatic music and classical *Bharatanatyam* dance (Murthy 2014; Murthy 2015; Murthy *et al*. 2015). Tollywood's multiculturalism, its ability to produce multiple genres ranging from fantasies to folk tales via epic/*puranic* themes (Murthy 2013), and their success in the global marketplace, very much qualifies it as a strong contender for the position of India's flagship soft power asset. The present assumption that Bollywood should be the flagship Indian soft power asset needs to be re-examined.

## Notes

1 Core value systems are based on *Upanishadic* scriptures and epics and other iconic texts; fine art includes classical Indian dance, music, painting, poetry and sculpture; traditional crafts include weaving and wood-carving.
2 Postmodern films break down the cultural divide between high and low art and often upend typical portrayals of gender, race, class, genre and time with the goal of creating something that does not abide by traditional narrative expression.
3 Rajadhyaksha (2003) described the academics who argue that Bollywood is synonymous with Indian cinema as Bollywoodized scholars.

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# 30

# SEDUCED BY BHUTAN'S PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS

*Bunty Avieson and Kinley Tshering*

> We must aim for contentment and happiness. Whether we take five years or 10 to raise the per capita income and increase prosperity is not going to guarantee that happiness, which includes political stability, social harmony, and the Bhutanese culture and way of life.
>
> King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, Financial Times (1987)

Bhutan is like a pebble between two boulders – a small, landlocked kingdom of just 720,000[1] citizens, sandwiched between the world's two most populous countries, India and China. Historically China and India have shared intellectual exchanges in law, philosophy and politics: between the fifth and twelfth centuries, Chinese scholars and monks studied at the famous international Buddhist university, Nalanda, in eastern India, and Indian monks also visited China (Thussu 2013, p. 10). Situated between two such dynamic civilisations made Bhutan both strategically important (Penjore 2004, p. 109) and a 'cultural junction', whereby its people benefited from the ideas flowing in both directions (Ura 2009, p. 62).

Bhutan has never been colonized, making it an anomaly in the Himalayan region where other Buddhist kingdoms – Sikkim, Tibet and Mustang – have been subsumed by India[2], China[3] and Nepal[4]. It is a testament to the masterful use of soft power by a succession of Bhutanese kings and leaders that the small nation has navigated these geopolitical realities to live harmoniously with its superpower neighbours and emerge into the modern world as a united, culturally vibrant, independent democracy. Over the past century the monarchy has provided cohesion and stability and, more recently, created an alternative paradigm for development, which has benefited the country and contributed significantly to the international narrative of Bhutan. The Fourth King Jigme Wangchuck, who reigned from 1972 to 2006, determined that Gross National Happiness (GNH) was a better measure of his country's 'wealth' than the economic-focused terms of Gross Domestic Product. He reasoned that for progress to be beneficial it also required good governance, sustainable socio-economic development, cultural preservation and environmental conservation. In March 2014 United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon

explicitly supported Bhutan's GNH philosophy, saying that the world needed a new economic paradigm to address 'gross global happiness' (UN 2014).

GNH, which draws from the Buddhist notion of interdependence, provides Bhutan with a degree of moral authority in international discourses, which is arguably soft power at its most impressive. According to Joseph Nye: "Seduction is always more effective than coercion, and many values like democracy, human rights, and individual opportunities are deeply seductive" (2004b, p. 34).

Joseph Straubhaar made the valid point that nation branding works best when a nation isn't *trying* to brand itself and soft power arises from cultural products that have naturally evolved, often encouraged by governments for nationalistic reasons (2014). Bhutan's GNH philosophy and its monarchy are two examples of highly effective soft power that have evolved out of the cultural and socio-political needs of the country, while also contributing to an international narrative of the country as ethically motivated, progressive and spiritually prosperous.

## Situating Bhutan

Bhutan is the last Mahayana Buddhist kingdom, situated at the eastern end of the Himalayas, covering about 46,500 square kilometers, though some borders with China remain under dispute (Economic Times 2014). Throughout its history Bhutan has acted both as buffer and strategic objective to its giant neighbors, and it has fought wars across both borders, specifically Tibet and Mongolia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and British India in the nineteenth century. When China invaded Tibet in 1949, Bhutan chose to align with modern India, signing the Indo-Bhutan treaty that same year and turning decisively away from China (Galay 2004, p. 98; Pelden 2014).

India offered to its smaller neighbor considerable economic and defense assistance (Galay 2004, p. 94). Over intervening decades the India–Bhutan relationship has flourished, initially signed by Nehru and the third king of Bhutan, then nurtured over successive generations by the strong friendship between the Ghandi family and successive kings of Bhutan.[5]

Bhutan's history is often framed in terms of its relationship with its two larger neighbors, but that is not the whole story (Karma Phuntsho in Pelden 2014). Small states are mostly ignored within international relations discourse and on those limited occasions when they are examined, the categorization of states as small is always a relative comparison (Galay 2004, pp. 90–1; Goetschel 1998, p. 84) and seldom is it seen as an advantage (Penjore 2004, p. 108). But small states are not just large states writ small: their objectives, means and systemic functions are qualitatively different. The size of a state does not necessarily determine its strength, and great powers may well suffer from internal fragility (Väyrynen 2013, p. 42).

Bhutan's size can be considered one of its strengths, allowing it to function, in many ways, as a large extended family with the monarch at its head, acting as a benevolent father figure (Avieson 2015, p. 58); citizens have more leverage over decisions that affect them (Norberg-Hodge and Gorelick 2004, p. 97) and the impacts of change can be traced and addressed more quickly than is possible in larger societies (Avieson 2013, p. 338).

Bhutan is an ethnically pluralist society of 19 different native languages (van Driem 1994, pp. 87–8) which first became a cohesive nation in the seventeenth century. Until the 1960s, Bhutan existed in self-imposed isolation, resisting dilution of its culture from outside while reinforcing its own national identity[6]. As a result, this small nation-state has

enjoyed great cultural resilience and demonstrates the first of Nye's three 'key sources' of soft power, which are culture, political values and foreign policies. Nye defined culture as the set of values and practices that create meaning for a society (2004a, p. 11).

Bhutan's culture was specifically and systematically 'created' as a form of nation-building by the highly revered 'Father of Bhutan' Zhabdrung Rinpoche, a spiritual leader whose legacy is evident in every facet of Bhutanese life. He is also the forerunner to both the monarchy and the notion of happiness as a national goal.

## The Zhabdrung – creating a culture

Modern India draws on Mahatma Gandhi's creed of non-violence as a form of soft power, just as contemporary China draws on Confucian values of social order (Chitty 2010, p. 190; Thussu 2013, pp. 39–66). The philosophies of these two great visionaries continue to provide the moral underpinnings of their respective societies. This resonates with the experience of Bhutan and the all-pervasive influence of the nation's founder, Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel Rinpoche.

Zhabdrung (meaning 'at whose feet one submits') Rinpoche ('precious jewel') was born in Tibet and recognized as the reincarnation of a famous, highly accomplished monk. He was abbot of a Tibetan monastery in Ralung near the Bhutanese border until a local ruler challenged his authority and he fled for his life. He arrived in Bhutan in 1616, aged 22 (Fischer and Tashi 2009, p. 21). At the time of his arrival the country was largely lawless, riven by violent internecine tribal feuds as well as constant battles with tribes from over the border in Tibet.

> After the manner of the proverbial big fish eating the little fish, vicious men rose up to fight and kill one another. Escorts were needed to go from the upper part of a village to the lower. The rich robbed the poor of their wealth and homes, and forced them into involuntary servitude. Family feuds, fighting, and injury went on unabated. 'The Wang fighting the Dgung', and 'Fighting between the large and small factions' were common sayings, as enemy factions reduced the country to splinters.
>
> (Ardussi 2006, p. 5)

The Zhabdrung set about 'taming' these wild, violent communities. As the reincarnation of a revered Buddhist leader, he had the spiritual authority to do so. In just three decades he established new social laws for the general population, founded a unified government and imposed law and order. He deliberately and systematically created new Buddhist-inspired cultural practices as a means to unify the various ethnicities, with their different languages and customs, into one harmonious nation.

The Zhabdrung designed a new national aesthetic in architecture and built seven distinctive Dzongs in strategic corners of the country, which served as fortresses, housing monks and soldiers side by side (Fischer *et al*. 2009). He established a two-fold system of rule where the monk body and the state administration were separate, parallel entities with himself at the top (Ardussi 2006, p. 6).

He designed and introduced a national dress for citizens and a complex hierarchy of coloured shawls and boots to denote official government positions and social ranking. The King and Je Khenpo (head of the monastic body) wear yellow shawls; elected members of parliament wear orange; the national assembly and national council members wear blue; Dashos, which are people who have been recognised by the king for dedication

to the nation, wear red shawls; judges wear green; and ordinary citizens wear white. They tie them in a specific way, creating a specific number of points, and drape them from left shoulder to right. Etiquette demands the wearers bow and cover their mouths in the presence of superiors. The depth of the bow and whether the bower touches his knees or toes depends on status. For formal occasions the men wear boots with different-coloured insets to match their shawls.

The Zhabdrung also created new religious festivals, called *tshechus*, and choreographed monk dances telling stories of Buddhist heroes. Whole communities would gather from nearby valleys at the district Dzong to watch, creating what Françoise Pommaret called an early "media event", contributing to a shared sense of nationhood (Pommaret 2006, p. 2).

The Zhabdrung created a code of law for his ministers and, like any government, needed to communicate these new laws to the people. He used the familiar medium of stone walls, which had been part of daily life in Himalayan Buddhist communities for centuries. Traditionally they carried Buddhist messages: *Om mani padme hum*. The Zhabdrung wrote *The Golden Yoke of Legal Edicts*, a code of behaviour for his ministers, and had it chiselled into stone panels, then put on public display outside Punakha Dzong (Ardussi 2006, p. 15). They are still there today – messages set solidly in stone, vividly carved in gold lettering, serving to connect the citizenry of Bhutan across time and space. They communicated a single, unifying message from the government to the people. While few of the citizenry would have been able to read the edicts for themselves, nevertheless they were a public declaration of the new rule of the nation. They were as symbolic as they were informative, providing what Benedict Anderson called "an imagined political community" (Anderson 1983, p. 6).

The Zhabdrung also established codes of behavior for the citizenry, which arose out of monastic practices in Tibet, but he developed them further[7]. The codes are called *tha damtshig* and *driglam namzha*. *Damtshig* are Buddhist vows taken by a nun or monk when they are initiated into *tantric* practices. The prefix *tha* adds a sense of moral limitation and gives it a range of social meanings (Phuntsho 2004, p. 569). *Tha damtshig* covers the whole gamut of individual behavior, from respecting superiors to being honest and maintaining social harmony, as well as striving to be conscious of one's own state of mind. In Bhutan, to embody *tha damtshig* is to tame one's natural human impulses – like anger and jealousy – into a way of behaving that accords with Buddhist teachings (Whitecross 2012, p. 74).

*Tha damtshig* is not an easily defined concept. Rather, it is simultaneously an ideal to be striven for and an embodied practice, demanding full awareness of one's social status and the actions of body, speech and mind, thereby linking it with good manners. At its core is a deep sense of social responsibility and reciprocity (Phuntsho 2004, p. 570). Bhutanese people learn from an early age that these are the values of their society and they take pride in them as part of their national identity.

The government published a distilled, simplified version of *tha damtshig* as a set of rules for Year 10 and 11 students in a text book called *Bhutan Civics.* Students are taught **not** to do the following:

1 kill, commit theft or robbery
2 have wrong faith[8]
3 go against the wishes of parents
4 be disrespectful to elders, learned men and leaders

5 foster evil thoughts towards family and friends
6 refrain from helping your neighbours
7 be dishonest
8 follow bad examples
9 be greedy and selfish
10 foster evil thoughts in others
11 be late in refunding (repaying) your debts
12 cheat
13 segregate human beings into rich and poor, high and low
14 listen to wrong (evil) advice
15 be deceitful
16 lose patience or be short-tempered.

(Royal Government of Bhutan 1999, p. 51)

By internalizing *tha damtshig*, a Bhutanese citizen learns how to negotiate his or her way through life and be a productive member of the community (Whitecross 2012, pp. 74–5). These social laws for the general population created cultural and social cohesion.

> He suppressed all robbery, banditry, and other malicious behavior including disrespectfulness, lack of compassion, ungratefulness and disregard for fear and injury caused to others. By these [acts of the Zhabdrung] the entire country became peaceful and prosperous; it was like a proverbial Era of Good Fortune.
>
> (Ardussi 2006, p. 13)

The Constitution of Bhutan, which was signed and adopted in July 2008, formalizes these social rules of the Zhabdrung and explicitly reminds citizens of their moral obligations to each other. While the US Bill of Rights grants a series of individual rights to its citizens, such as to peaceably assemble, to keep and bear arms (US Bill of Rights n.d.), by contrast the Bhutanese constitution approaches civic life from the Buddhist view of interdependence, bestowing on citizens a series of responsibilities; for example, a person shall have the responsibility to provide help, to the greatest possible extent, to victims of accidents and in times of natural calamity; a person shall have the responsibility to safeguard public property (Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008).

The Zhabdrung used soft power to unite the warring tribes of Bhutan under one single national identity. He created the Bhutanese aesthetic that continues to thrive today in forms of dress, architecture and cultural practices, as well as the social norms that underpin the society. According to the Fifth King: "Our People have lived as one small family, true to the ideals of the Zhabdrung and the foundations of a unique and special Bhutanese identity" (Wangchuck 2012).

The Zhabdrung died in 1651, but such was his importance to the stability of Bhutan that his death was kept secret for 50 years, with the citizenry being told that he had entered a 'strict retreat'. His aides continued to issue edicts in his name, officially announcing his death in 1705. His representative, the 10th Desi Mipham Wangpo, formalized the Zhabdrung's view of happiness as the goal of government in the 1729 Legal Code: "If the government cannot create happiness (*dekid*) for its people, there is no purpose for the government to exist" (Ura *et al*. 2012, p. 6).

The death of the Zhabdrung left a leadership void, which was filled by the 57 *Desis* (local secular leaders). This proved to be divisive and by the late eighteenth century the

nation had reverted to a loose confederation of valleys frequently in battle with each other and neighbouring states (Fischer and Tashi 2009, p. 32). This troubled state continued until Bhutan installed its monarchy.

## The Kings of Bhutan

> The first king was elected by the people to protect them from each other as human society was influenced by greed. As human behaviour deteriorated, society needed an authority mandated to discipline people. In Buddhist societies this took on a benevolent role.
>
> (*Kuensel*, editorial, April 26, 2008)

On 17 December 1907, Bhutan voted to create a hereditary monarchy, with Ugyen Wangchuck, the most powerful and respected of the warring *penlops* (governors), as First King. Wangchuck had helped in the famous Younghusband Expedition into Tibet and for his services had received a knighthood from Britain (Fischer and Tashi 2009, p. 36).

The citizens reunited once again under the new monarchical system and for the next century, while the rest of the world underwent seismic geopolitical upheavals and fought two world wars, each successive king concentrated the country's resources on nation-building. Bhutan's self-imposed isolation focused the country inward, consolidating its own culture.

First King Ugyen Wangchuck improved internal communications, established education outside monasteries and started trade with India. Second King Jigme Wangchuck reduced land and other taxes to improve the welfare of the people. He established schools, opened dispensaries and upgraded mule tracks to improve communication. Third King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck abolished serfdom and re-distributed land to benefit the common people. He joined the Colombo Plan in 1962 and the United Nations in 1972, building a national highway that connected east to west and introducing telephone lines and Bhutan Post (Royal Government of Bhutan 1990, pp. 57–67; 1991, pp. 9–93; 1996, pp. 1–94).

When Fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck assumed the throne in 1974, he invited foreign dignitaries to his coronation, marking the end of absolute isolation. His 34-year reign continued the five-year development plans begun by his father, introduced television, newspapers and the internet, and conceptualised the philosophy of Gross National Happiness. In 2008 he devolved royal power to the first democratically elected government and handed the raven crown to his son, accelerating the process of modernization as the nation moved from an era of basic infrastructure development "to the age of information" (Dorji 2010, p. 150).

Fifth King Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuck signed the Constitution of Bhutan on 18 July 2008 and said that the power the Bhutanese people had bestowed on the monarchy was now bestowed on the people of Bhutan (Pek-Dorji 2010, p. 150).

"The kings have followed a path of smooth and gradual modernization. Wielding absolute power, they maneuvered the country along the thin line between development and the preservation of Bhutan's unique cultural heritage" (Gallenkamp 2010, p. 2).

For modern Bhutanese people, the monarchy in Bhutan is seen as a symbol of peace and unity and plays an important role in "defining the Bhutanese identity" (Dorji 2010, p. 159). The five kings achieved a fine balance of "tradition and modernity" (Kinga 2010,

p. 145). They are at the centre of the Bhutanese "system" and guardians of both the constitution and Gross National Happiness (Pek-Dorji 2010, p. 165).

As well as performing a unifying role domestically, monarchies can be particularly effective in an international context for political and economic outcomes. The British government described Queen Elizabeth II as "a unique soft power and diplomatic asset" and "an unsurpassed Ambassador for the UK overseas" (House of Lords 2014, p. 77). This is equally true of Bhutan's monarchy, which plays a significant role in establishing and maintaining international relations. The historic visit by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in 1958 with his daughter, Indira Gandhi, laid the foundation stone of the Indo-Bhutan Friendship, which is still very strong and has developed over successive generations into warm interfamily friendships. Sonia Gandi and her children Rahul and Priyanka attended the coronation of the Fifth King in 2008 and Rahul was the only international dignitary to be invited to the royal wedding as a personal guest (Times of India 2011).

The Fifth King is also much feted by the people of Thailand and his visit in 2006 is credited with boosting the number of Thai tourists (Dorji 2009). Similarly, after a state visit to Japan in 2011 tourism numbers rose (Japan Today 2011). And when the international media report on a visit by Bhutanese monarchy it is often framed in terms of 'happiness'.

"Everybody loves happiness … The Bhutanese king and queen, visiting Japan last month on their honeymoon, glowed like happiness personified" (Hoffman 2011).

## Gross National Happiness

While the Zhabdrung had identified happiness as the goal of government in the seventeenth century, and it was later formalised in the Legal Code 1729 (Ura *et al*. 2012, p. 6), it was the Fourth King who developed the idea into an official measure of his country's progress and wealth. When the Fourth King assumed the throne in 1974, having been schooled in India and Britain, he understood life outside his own isolated country and the differing worldviews of developed economies. Armed with this knowledge, he believed Bhutan would be better served by resisting such influences. He talked about a different path to development, based on Bhutan's own cultural values, which had developed under the Zhabdrung's leadership and reflected the country's Buddhist roots.

According to Dr Karma Ura, President of the Centre for Bhutan Studies, Gross National Happiness is primarily concerned with the interdependence of all things. No one and nothing can exist independently of everything else.

> GNH encourages individuals to see all things as interdependent with all other things. In order to achieve collective happiness, the principle of interdependence needs to be taken on by everyone. Members of a GNH society would cultivate a third eye, which can elevate our vision beyond individual self-interest to address the happiness of all, as a collective goal. The third eye metaphorically represents our potential to see all things as interdependent across time and space. Equity is central to GNH. The perception of happiness that doesn't take into account the needs of others' happiness is irresponsible and egocentric, and the pursuit of such happiness is likely to be unethical … the whole of development is a progress in relationships, not of individuals.
>
> (Ura 2008)

In 1987 the Fourth King gave a rare interview to the Indian-based correspondent for London's *Financial Times*. It was the first time outside the country that he had expressed his views regarding this alternative paradigm for development: "We are convinced that we must aim for contentment and happiness. Whether we take five years or 10 to raise the per capita income and increase prosperity is not going to guarantee that happiness, which includes political stability, social harmony, and the Bhutanese culture and way of life" (Elliott 1987). The *Financial Times*, whose readers were bankers, economists and businesspeople across Europe, ran his interview on the front page of the magazine section under the headline "The modern path to enlightenment". The date was 2 May 1987. Around the same time, Hollywood was making the movie *Wall Street* in which wealthy banker Gordon Gekko (Michael Douglas) gave his famous "Greed is Good" speech.

> Greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right, greed works. Greed clarifies, cuts through, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit. Greed, in all of its forms; greed for life, for money, for love, knowledge has marked the upward surge of mankind.
>
> (*Wall Street* 1987)

The attitudes expressed in the film, released in December 1987, reflected the economic rationalist view that prevailed in developed countries at that time. The Bhutanese vision of Gross National Happiness was its antithesis, which is perhaps why the king's ideas received so much international attention.

The Fourth King and his royal government established a framework of four 'pillars' – economic development, environmental preservation, cultural preservation and good governance. Instead of economic development as the objective, it became just one pillar of success. By changing the objective to happiness, economic development became a means rather than an end in itself. Considering all development through the prism of Gross National Happiness was a way of institutionalizing at government level the values that the Zhabdrung had formalized at the civic level when he created the *tha dramshig* and *driglam namzha*.

The Fourth King gave the Centre for Bhutan Studies the task of creating metric indicators to measure the success or failure of progress under these pillars and in 2008 the government adopted a new GNH index to set benchmarks and track policies. They included nine 'core dimensions' – psychological wellbeing, time use, community vitality, culture, health, education, environmental diversity, living standards and governance.

> Gross National Happiness is not an unfulfilled promise to confer happiness on citizens as it is sometimes perceived. In fact, it is not even about the concept of happiness, a misconception that has led to some skepticism about GNH. Gross National Happiness is the responsibility of the government to create an environment in which citizens, as understood in Buddhist practice, can find happiness within themselves.
>
> (Dorji and Pek 2005, pp. 7–8)

The international economic community has been paying attention to Bhutan's GNH philosophy. In 1998, Prime Minister Jigme Y. Thinley presented it to the Asia-Pacific Millennium Summit in South Korea as an alternate development paradigm. In 2004 he hosted the first international GNH conference in Thimphu, which was followed by

conferences in Canada, Bangkok, Japan and Brazil. In 2008 Prime Minister Thinley was invited to explain Bhutan's development philosophy to world leaders at the United Nations in New York. This produced a new thread of development discourse, which resulted in UN Resolution 65/39, which places 'happiness' officially on the global agenda (Rawnsley 2012). The UN declared 20 March 2012, as the first annual International Day of Happiness – an achievement described as "a major triumph for Bhutan's soft power", not least because Bhutan is one of the least developed countries in the world. "The fact that GNH has been adopted by the UN, and that governments, policy-makers and policy-relevant thinkers are talking about happiness demonstrates the success of Bhutan's soft power capacity. Bhutan has been able to persuade the world over the last forty years that GNH is worth noticing" (Rawnsley 2012). Economists Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen and Jean-Paul Fitoussi called Bhutan's GNH philosophy "noteworthy" (Stiglitz *et al*. 2009). Bhutanese National Council MP Sangay Khandu believes such international attention and respect is the direct result of Bhutan taking its GNH philosophy into the world:

> For a poor country without the economic might to persuade support or military muscle to convince concurrence, GNH definitely has been our only significant contribution, lending enough 'presence' for support or anything else. Now that it has happened, it is more likely Bhutan has a wider net of supporters. We cannot help but imagine how else would anyone be interested in what we have to say or that such a small country even exists. It is in my opinion because of Bhutan's 'soft power'; this GNH that has allowed us to share the world stage when it comes to conservation efforts and providing the world with an alternative development paradigm.
>
> (Khandu 2012)

## Conclusion

Soft power works best when it arises naturally out of cultural practices that have evolved as a result of domestic circumstances. In Bhutan the founder of the country, Zhabdrung Rinpoche, laid the seeds for Gross National Happiness in the 1600s, a philosophy that has been furthered developed by Bhutan's rulers – the successive Kings who ruled throughout the twentieth century and, more recently, the elected governments of the twenty-first century. Grounded in Buddhist principles of interdependence, GNH provides a moral counterpoint to the economic narrative that has dominated global discourse. GNH, as formalized and taken into the world by the Fourth King, has proved to be an example of soft power at its most seductive. The monarchy itself also serves as a form of soft power, internally creating a feeling among the citizenry of belonging to one large 'family' while externally presenting an appealing public 'face' to the world, forging links that transcend national relationships.

## Notes

1 www.Bhutan.gov.bt.
2 1976.
3 1949.
4 Late eighteenth century, with the King being formally dethroned by Nepal in 2008.
5 The relationship between the two countries, while always dynamic, came under pressure in 2013 when New Delhi perceived a threat in the relationship developing between Prime Minister Jigme

Y. Thinley and Beijing, and withdrew fuel subsidies to Bhutan just before the country held government elections (Parashar and Datta 2013). Prime Minister Thinley was ousted and India was accused of breaking with protocol and interfering in Bhutan's domestic affairs (Kumar 2013; Krishnan 2013; Thinley 2014). Friendly relations were restored when Prime Minister Narendra Modi chose Bhutan for his first foreign tour, one month after being elected in May 2014 (Economic Times 2014).

6 There was a period of civil unrest in the 1980s when the government introduced new citizenship rules. Around 100,000 people, predominantly southern Bhutanese known as 'Lhotsampas', whom the government considered ethnically Nepalese, fled Bhutan as refugees. While more than 80,000 have been resettled in other countries – the US, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark and Canada – this continues to be a cause of tension in Bhutanese–Nepalese relations (SACM 2014).

7 There is some scholarly discussion as to whether the *driglam namzha* originated with the Zhabdrung in the seventeenth century or were merely formalized by him (Phuntsho 2004; Whitecross 2012).

8 Also referred to as holding "wrong views", which means holding the view that one is self-existing and eternal.

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# 31
# INDIA AND CHINA
## Soft power in an Asian context

*Kishan S. Rana*

### Introduction

Since Joseph S. Nye advanced this concept in 1990, 'soft power' has become a popular buzzword, used in apt and inept fashion; it has entered common parlance. Some find the notion elusive, producing more confusion than clarity. That is an extreme reaction.

A great unending drama is played out in Asia, in the way its two large and populous states strive to shape their future, through actions that are both in parallel and radically different. They are joined by Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the US as the other major influencer states in Asia; Europe is a factor, even if a rather diffused one, more of an economic than a political force. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is the other key player. States such as Thailand and Vietnam are important regional poles.

### Nature of soft power

Joseph S. Nye wrote of 'soft power' in his book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (1990). This was subsequently elaborated in *Soft Power* (2004). He said: "power comes in many guises and soft power is not weakness. It is a form of power, and the failure to incorporate it in our national strategy is a serious mistake … Seduction is always more effective than coercion, and many values like democracy, human rights and individual opportunities are deeply seductive" (Nye 2004, p.x). In March 2008 Nye added: "Governments sometimes find it difficult to control and employ soft power, but that does not diminish its importance" (Nye 2008, p. 95). It is this deployment of soft power that poses a real challenge. Does this only preoccupy the great powers?

Prussia's King Frederick the Great likened diplomacy without arms as akin to "music without instruments". The word 'power' evokes and leads directly the notion of exertion of some form of compulsion; 'soft power' is often viewed as an antipode. In reality, soft power involves rather different subsets of influences, some of them very subtle and slow-acting, e.g. attraction, emulation, persuasion and enticement. Are these captured in the word 'power', or should we think of some other word? How about 'charisma'? It is interesting that Nye does not speak directly of 'image' or 'country brand', although this is implicit.

Should we, then, speak of 'national charisma' or 'country influence'? Alas, the 'soft power' horse, un-gated by Nye, has already bolted; no one will now buy these alternatives.

A consultancy, Ernst & Young, produced a "soft power index", covering "rapid growth markets", based on 13 variables.[1] In the 2012 report China is placed at the top with 30.7 points in the index, followed by India at 20.4. Others that follow: Russia, 18.0; Brazil, 13.4; Turkey, 12.9; South Africa, estimated at 10.3.

## India: soft power policy and instruments

In mid-2006 the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) established a 'Public Diplomacy Division' (PD), adding to its 50-plus functional and territorial divisions. In 2010 this PD Division went into active mode; in 2014 it was merged with the External Publicity Division, but remains proactive. Yet India lacks a strategic communications policy, as noted TV journalist Barkha Dutt observed in a closed-door speech on 3 September 2013. Tight apex-level policy harmonization, of the kind prevalent in China, simply does not exist in the Indian system; even modest 'voluntary' coordination, comparable to the 'Public Diplomacy Boards' in France and the UK (which are chaired by the respective permanent heads of the foreign ministry), has not been tried out.

One observer comments: "The initiative stems from a realization that India's reputation in its 'near-abroad' is not as good as it might be, and it partly reflects a new elite enthusiasm for technological solutions to political challenges" (Hall 2012, p. 1091). My assessment is that an understanding of international trends and a realization of the role played in foreign affairs by publics, abroad and at home, has driven this policy. But these new public diplomacy actions have not been preceded by a thorough examination of the options at a decision-making level. No comprehensive policy report on public diplomacy exists, even as an internal document.

What are the Indian soft power actions in its public diplomacy? First, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), created in 1950, is the prime agency for two-way cultural exchanges. In recent years it has stepped up installation of cultural centers abroad; in 2013, it ran 35 centers; it had planned a total of 50, but faces a budget shortage; the ICCR declares that the aim is "to expand its reach and promote India's 'soft power' abroad".[2] Second, separately, the Department of Culture runs bilateral exchange programs with over 70 countries, and is also the main Indian partner in the organization of multi-dimensional cultural 'festivals' and other targeted activities in select countries that take place over a year or several months.[3] Third, MEA's PD unit addresses domestic audiences on foreign affairs issues, especially university students and audiences located outside the capital (senior officials and retired ambassadors speak each year at dozens of university campuses; it sponsors many conferences on foreign policy. Fourth, the foreign policy process has been opened up by releasing old documents to the National Archives, New Delhi, for public access; archival collections on neighboring countries have been published by AS Bhasin with official support. Oral history accounts of retired ambassadors are being published.[4] Fifth, using information technology, MEA launched itself on available platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and the like, investing in punchy video documentaries and other material, not overlooking the print media.[5] Sixth, a series of track two dialogue discussion groups have been established with over 30 foreign countries, many without official funding. Seventh, both the ICCR and the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) have also stepped up their outreach, conference organization and publication programs (MEA 2012–13, pp. 162–7). These are fine actions, but

they are not coordinated, be it the official TV network Doordarshan, All India Radio, tourism, business or investment promotion agencies.

## China: soft power policy and instruments

China's public diplomacy addresses both domestic and foreign audiences, as in India. "The Chinese government has long claimed that foreign policy must be an extension of domestic policy and that diplomacy must serve domestic politics" (Wang 2008, p. 260).

At policy-making levels, under its unified government–party system, China achieves high coordination. The key agencies are: the Central Publicity Office and the International Department of the Party; the Information Office and the Foreign Affairs Office under the State Council; the Ministry of Culture; the Office of Chinese Language Council International (known as *Hanban*) which is under the Education Ministry; and, of course, the Foreign Ministry (Jakobson and Knox 2010, pp. 5–6; Wang 2008, pp. 264–5). The seven-member Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is the country's highest decision-making authority; in practice, the Central Foreign Affairs Leading (Small) Group (FALSG) oversees foreign policy issues.[6] FALSG is supported by the Central Foreign Affairs Office, whose Director is perhaps the most powerful individual on foreign affairs issues after President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang.[7] The Politburo invites scholars to make presentations on emerging issues; public diplomacy and soft power issues have probably figured.[8] This has produced a calculated policy to project soft power, and large investments. But, this said, there is also evidence that behind the opacity of the Chinese system, top-level internal coordination poses problems, as shown in the creation of a new mechanism at the 3rd plenum of the CCP Central Committee in November 2013, including a new security commission.

A major difference in the cultivation of soft power and PD is that Beijing has approached this through a deeper and sustained examination of its objectives than New Delhi. This has resulted in significant differences in the level of attention, the resources deployed and policy implementation. In the tradition of communist parties, the CCP has always had a major 'propaganda' department (in English translation it was renamed 'Publicity Department' some years back).[9] Management of information, and tight monitoring of image, domestic and external, has been integral to the Chinese political system. Public diplomacy is built into the country's DNA.

The pursuit of PD in its modern incarnation began with a lecture delivered to the Chinese Foreign Ministry by Professor Wang Yiwei in September 2003; in March 2004 the PD Division was established at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) "to guide and win the understanding and support of the public for foreign policies", in the words of Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing (Wang 2008, p. 260). Thus domestic PD, in addition to the pursuit of external objectives, was front and center. That same year, addressing Chinese ambassadors at their annual meeting, President Hu Jintao spoke of pursuit of a "peaceful and stable environment and a good-neighborly and friendly surrounding environment" and added to this a need for "an objective and friendly publicity environment"; this was the first time that such a publicity environment was adduced as a major goal for Chinese diplomacy (Wang 2008, pp. 263–4). In his 15 October 2007 speech at the seventeenth Congress of the CCP, President Hu spoke of increasing China's soft power through cultural enhancement for reasons of national cohesion and overall national strength (Paradise 2009, p. 658). Academic debate on soft power is fairly open, with views divided; a former Chinese diplomat called it "a condescending approach and a notion

created by Western powers" (Wang 2008, p. 658). But it seems safer to go with the conclusion that the consensus among scholars is that China needs soft power to become a global power (Young and Jeong 2008, p. 460).

## Soft power actions

Let us consider some concrete actions taken by India and China in terms of the actions taken to project soft power. We see from China's actions that it is far ahead of India, but in some areas India does better; India is well ahead on some basics.

How does the world, and Asia in particular, see India and China? The BBC's Global Scan Report for 2013 declared that, tracking 22 countries, China was seen in "mainly positive" terms by 42 per cent of respondents and "mainly negative" by 39 per cent; the figures for India were 34 per cent and 35 per cent respectively (BBC, 2013). The report was headlined: 'Views of China and India Slide in Global Poll, While UK's Ratings Climb'. The Pew Research Global Attitudes Project places the worldwide perception of China as 50 per cent favorable and 36 per cent unfavorable; comparable figures for the US are 63 per cent and 30 per cent. We noted above the Ernst & Young soft power index that ranks China ahead of India.

*Table 2.7.31.1* Comparison of soft power actions of China and India

| *China* | *India* |
|---|---|
| 1. Cultural centers | |
| 1.1 China's 'Confucius Centers' are implanted in foreign universities, jointly run by two sides, focused on teaching the Chinese language. This is innovative and risky. Similar 'Confucius Classrooms' are established in schools. The first Confucius Center (CC) was established in 2004 and numbers have grown in meteoric fashion. *Hanban* (Confucius Institute Headquarters, Beijing, working under the Ministry of Education) declares that "by August 2011, 353 Confucius Institutes (at university level institutions) and 473 Confucius Classrooms (at high schools), had been established in 104 countries and regions in the world". China is spending up to $10 billion on this program.[13] | 1.1 The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) runs India's overseas cultural centers; they bear different names, depending on the location, which may detract from a single brand image, though I am not sure if that is a serious deficiency.[14] Critics say that this official Indian effort has been "lacklustre and wayward" (Rahman, 2010), but a deeper issue is limited resources, modesty of ambition in framing the activities of these cultural centers and overconcentration on the diaspora. |
| 1.2 A goal of 1,000 CCs by 2020 seems over-ambitious. Language teaching does not usually satisfy the receiving institution; the latter's hopes for wider academic exchanges have been disappointed. Prominent academic institutions have refused to install CCs and, since 2013, several have been closed after public controversy. | 1.2 Indian cultural centers follow a traditional format. Costs now inhibit expansion; even the goal of 50 seems difficult. |

| *China* | *India* |
|---|---|
| 2. Culture promotion | |
| 2.1 Chinese performing arts span the globe, aided by the fact that cultural promotion takes place not only out of the People's Republic of China (PRC), but also from Hong Kong and even Taiwan. Unlike India, Chinese artists also present western classical music. But its reach for events not sponsored by state or provincial entities is less than India's. | 2.1 Indian dance and music have reached takeoff; artists reach out to foreign audiences through their own initiative, sometimes also taking the help of western impresarios and not depending on official sponsorship. Bollywood performers command large foreign audiences as well, sometimes crossing beyond diaspora. One weakness in India's cultural activities is the long-standing refusal to link these with economic promotion, which is used not only by China but also by other countries such as France, Germany and the UK. |
| 2.2 China has extensively used the festival model, sending out art exhibits across the world to blockbuster events and taking advantage of recent archeological excavations. Also innovative partnerships have taken place, such as China and Italy exchanging exhibits over a period of five years. | 2.2 In April 1982, with its year-long 'Festival of India' in the UK, India invented the model of a sustained, multi-dimensional projection of a country's cultural personality, which included performing artists, exhibitions, cinema and lectures. That was further refined with another year-long festival in the US in 1985–6, where local communities, the diaspora and friends of India were allowed to piggyback on the official 'Festival' with what were called 'associated events' using the rubric of a common logo and theme narrative. |
| 3. Exhibitions | |
| 3.1 China is far ahead of India in building new museums, and has understood the key role they play in attracting tourists and burnishing the country's image. The National Museum in Beijing, reopened in 2012 after major reconstruction, is today the world's largest museum and features stunning displays. | 3.1 There is scant evidence of similar actions in India, although the National Museum in New Delhi and other key entities have undertaken some modernization. Virtually no new heritage museum of high standing has been established in India in the past 50 years. |
| 4. Cinema | |
| 4.1 The Chinese cinema idiom has gained some mainstream international acceptance, although numbers are smaller. China imposes a tight quota on the number of foreign films that can be screened, although pirated DVDs flourish at rock-bottom prices. Films made in mainland China do not, with some exceptions, command global attraction; unlike India, the Chinese diaspora does not act as a multiplier for these films or for its TV serials. But one difference compared with India is that its films have now successfully crossed over to global audiences. | 4.1 Both are major film producers, with India much ahead in annual output (around 1,000 films are produced per year in Bollywood).[15] Only a fraction reach the west, but Indian movies and film stars are highly popular in much of Asia, including non-traditional countries such as Japan, Korea and Germany. Some Indian films now find mainstream audiences in China; *PK* earned over $10 million in its first week in China in March 2015.[16] After Prime Minister Modi's May 2015 visit, the two countries drew up a program for the joint production of films. |

*Table 2.7.31.1* (*cont.*)

| *China* | *India* |
|---|---|
| 5. TV and radio broadcasts | |
| 5.1 China launched its global TV channel a couple of years ago, a slick product aiming at wide appeal but with wholly Chinese content. CCTV, the agency implementing this, has broadcast centers in several countries, producing their own content and using local nationals as the 'face' of the TV channel. Some estimate the annual cost at several billion dollars. | 5.1 India's official TV network, Doordarshan, is under-resourced and has a much smaller external footprint. On 12 August 2014 it announced a new arrangement with the official German network Deutsche Welle for the latter to provide both up and down links for Indian broadcasts to reach audiences in Europe, North Africa and west Asia. |
| 5.2 No assessment available for viewership of CCTV or real impact in foreign countries. | 5.2 Where India scores is through its private TV channels, their blend of soap opera, dance and music shows and, to a lesser extent, its news networks that appeal to the diaspora and other audiences in much of Asia and other parts of the world. |
| 6. Social media | |
| 6.1 Since China prohibits Facebook and Twitter (though many Chinese know how to circumvent the prohibitions), China is not an active user of international social media, which inhibits its international use of these tools. Chinese equivalents thrive within the country, but have no international impact. | 6.1 India is now a savvy user of social media. The Ministry of External Affairs is among the most active of foreign ministries, despite a miniscule PD budget of barely $6 million. Example: 100 official accounts with one million followers; YouTube channels with 12 million views; a unique smartphone app with more than 100,000 downloads that integrates mission outputs and MEA on a single platform (as a guide to the nearest Indian passport office); an India–Africa digital platform with 200,000 followers links young Indians and Africans. |
| 7. Education diplomacy and aid | |
| 7.1 In May 2013, CNN reported that the number of foreign students in China was about 290,000 in 2011 (60,000 in 2001), adding, "The push for foreign students is a deliberate strategy by the Chinese government – through investment in scholarships and facilities – to foster a greater understanding of their culture and language globally, and expand Beijing's 'soft power,' academics say".[17] It adds that by 2020 China hopes to attract 500,000 foreign students. According to the China Scholarships Council, over 25,000 foreign students were recipients of scholarships.[18] Chinese public universities charge differential fees for private foreign students; this is an incentive to find places for them. China is affordable; typical annual academic fees for foreigners are $4,000; the cost of living is low compared with the west. | 7.1 In sharp contrast, India has no official policy to attract foreign students, even while around 2,500 scholarships are offered under different government-funded programs for foreign students. ICCR, which has always had a special responsibility in this area, estimates unofficially that the number of foreign students in India is around 30,000.[19] On the plus side, private Indian universities attract a significant percentage of students; some have set up medical and engineering colleges in the Gulf, Malaysia and Nepal. Indian schools such as Delhi Public School and Mayur have used a franchise model to work with schools in foreign countries, especially in the Gulf region, attracting Indian diaspora and others. |
| 7.2 China has offered 100,000 technical aid placements for training foreign experts. Its aid program is at least ten times that of India. | 7.2 India offers about 25,000 training slots for foreign experts. Its smaller aid program has a better comparative impact, as it does better at technology sharing and, unlike China, employs locals in the execution. |

| *China* | *India* |
|---|---|
| 8. Tourism inflows | |
| 8.1 Foreign tourists are not only an important source of earnings, but also an indicator of 'attractiveness', a builder of 'connections' and a soft power multiplier. Tourist inflow hinges on hard assets – infrastructure, facilities, service quality and availability – as well as soft features that include reputation and a sense of personal security for the visitor. China received 55.6 million foreign tourists in 2014; earnings from tourism were $56.9 billion.[20] | 8.1 The number of foreign tourists visiting India in 2014 was 7.46 million, while total earnings were $19.6 billion.[21] This indicates a higher per tourist earning figure for India, compared with China and most other tourism destinations, perhaps because the average stay of foreign tourists in India is higher than the norm. |
| 9. Diasporas | |
| 9.1 China's 35 million diaspora has grown further, with over 1 million new migrants in both Africa and Latin America. South-east Asia is a concentration point. Mainly engaged in business, they are major contributors to Foreign Direct Investment inflow. | 9.1 India's diaspora across the world is over 25 million; the numbers in Asia are much smaller than China's. For India the diaspora is a significant consumer of Indian films, music and other cultural offerings, acting as a core audience that 'infects' mainstream communities and thus acts as a culture multiplier. Top professionals occupy positions as global company CEOs and high executives, enhancing India's profile. |

*Source*: From authors.

## *India and China in Asia*

Over the millennia, the civilizations of India and China have interacted with each other and have produced cross-currents and eddies that reached most countries in Asia, directly or through third countries intermingling with the indigenous genius of the people of each land. It is possible to sketch a kind of boundary line in south-east Asia, demarcating rough limits of the civilizational influence of each of these two countries, i.e. what have been called the 'Indic' and 'Sinic' worlds. The arrival of Islam was the third major element, affecting the cultural identities of the south-east and east Asian nations. For example, Cambodia is seen as marked by Indic influence and Vietnam shows a Sinic legacy. Indonesia is mainly Islamic, but also bears many traces of an earlier Indian connection, not just in Bali with its Hindu population. At another level, the India–China interplay over the past 2,500 years is also visible in the transmission of Buddhism from India to China and thence to Japan, Korea and Mongolia. But if we research historical connections in soft power receptivity, we do not find conclusions that are relevant today; it seems better to look to each country and its culture as a complex product, not reflecting a predetermined orientation towards either India or China.

How is China perceived in Asia? A 'China threat' surfaces from time to time, be it in the context of Beijing's position on issues such as the South China Sea dispute that involves several of its neighbors, or in relation to geopolitical and geoeconomic issues. Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew wrote: "The Chinese know that they are the biggest boy in the neighborhood and that, as they grow in power, they can expect more respect for their rights from their neighbors".[10] As the world's second biggest economic entity, with the

largest armed forces, China is an *arrived* world power. In sum, we might say that China is admired, respected and slightly feared even if this is not always stated openly.

What of India? With a lower hard power capacity, India does not arouse apprehension except among its smaller immediate neighbors. India's relations with most of them are in significant improvement, in a process that began a few years back, accelerated by Prime Minister Modi's 'neighbors first' policy. The India–Pakistan relationship seems stuck in a kind of suspension, even though the democratically elected Nawaz Sharif government could be a viable cooperation partner. In south-east Asia, India is seen as an option, a potential counterweight to China, *not quite* a world power. Perhaps in consequence, Indian economic capability and soft power find easier acceptance.

How do these two countries see their Asian connections? India's self-perception of neighborhood relations is rosy, but the image as seen from these countries shows real deficiencies. Indian observers are not sparing in their critique of Indian policy. "While foreign-born 'natives' imagine an India with grand religious traditions or Bollywood songs, to people in places like Nepal, Bangladesh or Sri Lanka, India is a neighborhood bully".[11] Pakistan's antipathy to India is profound. But the key point from a soft power perspective is that with this underlying suspicion, potential affinity coexists. Pirated Indian films reach Pakistan ahead of their official release in India; this avid audience is no less mesmerized by Indian TV soap opera; an Indian commercial network now mainly shows Pakistani serials. For all their resentment towards India, open or expressed, the children of all elites in Bangladesh go to schools in Darjeeling and elsewhere in India. The subcontinent excels in such paradox.

Chinese assessment of its relations with Asia is almost uniformly upbeat. Academic freedom does not as yet extend to critical comment on the country's foreign policy. It is interesting that many Chinese scholars view India's Asian connections as a response to China; they seem to find it difficult to view this as a natural policy based on a desire to advance Indian interests.

In 2004, Nye thought that "the real promise for China and India still lies in the future. Rapid economic growth is likely to increase both countries' hard and soft power, but at this point neither country ranks high on the various indices of potential soft power resources" (Nye 2004, p. 88). That has surely changed for both countries, with larger possible gain for China.

## Values and image

From the end of 2012 onwards, President Xi Jinping put forward the notion of a 'Chinese dream'. He has invoked patriotism, reform and innovation as elements connected with this dream. This 'signature narrative' presents an attractive self-image to the Chinese people, aimed at bolstering regime legitimacy and mobilizing mass support. (His predecessor Hu Jintao had spoken of China's 'peaceful rise' and a 'harmonious society'.) China now frames its neighborhood policy through 'One Belt, One Road', recreating the old Silk Routes; this is also a bid to end its quasi-landlocked status, via new land routes to Asia and Europe, and rebuild maritime connections. But its assertive position on the South China Seas and other territorial issues ill-suits these claims. How does domestic authoritarianism and tight domestic control, as China practices, mesh with its soft power projection? This is a major constraint to its avowed self-image.

A public master narrative to bolster an external image is not India's method. Underlying its foreign policy pronouncements is a notion of 'Non-Alignment 2.0'; India explains its

foreign policy in terms of 'strategic autonomy', i.e. its independence of judgment and rejection of exclusive foreign relationships, much less alliances in any form. Some call this "the need to make independent judgments without being unduly influenced by ideas and policies set elsewhere", "to develop the capacity for strategic autonomous action" and "to work towards a more equitable international order" (Khilnani *et al*. pp. 13–14).[12] India proclaims 'unity in diversity', a secularism rooted in respect for all faiths, and a capacity to tolerate divergence and dissent within its multi-hued body politic. Democracy is part of this. Despite governance deficiencies, these Indian values are understood in Asia, underlying its soft power narrative. This has a real attraction abroad, grossly underestimated by scholars and surveys.

## Regional diplomacy in Asia

China's investment in building its soft power is, as we have seen above, much greater than that of India. China has also pursued its regional diplomacy in Asia with great vigor, and profited from early mover advantage. Witness two specific actions: first, the creation of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) mechanism in 1997, which has grown into a full-scale regional process with over 70 sub-groups and different dialogue mechanisms; second, Beijing's 1998 initiative in setting up the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) – another instance of nimble action.

India's south-east Asian regional actions have been more hesitant and delayed. Its 'Look East Policy', launched in 1993, was very much a catch-up effort. The Modi government now calls this an 'Act East' policy, pursued in a slightly more dynamic fashion. New Delhi did not materially support the countries affected by the 1998 Asian Crisis, and is out of the 'Chang Mai Initiative'. China has in effect blocked India's entry to APT; it is in the less effective East Asia Summit (EAS), now covering 18 countries with the 2012 addition of the US and Russia.

India is wary of China's Silk Road revival, even while it remains central to several of the planned infrastructure connections and routes. It is the second-biggest contributor to the new Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and intends to profit from that in an improving economic relationship with China and AIIB as new investment sources. We thus see competition and cooperation between the two, directly and across Asia. Improving New Delhi–Beijing ties, testified in Modi–Xi exchanges in 2014 and 2015, burnish the soft power image of both states.

## Assessment of attractiveness

Does the experience of China or India shed any light on how either or both of these countries derive benefit from their soft power? How well have they used it for the foreign policy outcomes they want?

Whether we speak of soft power or 'charisma', countries project abroad the attractive features of their culture and heritage. This enables them to win friendship and support and translates into economic advantage, directly through tourism inflows and indirectly via business connections and investments.

China's actions in enhancing its soft power lead to the following thoughts:

- The 2008 Beijing Olympics and, to a slightly lesser extent, the 2010 Shanghai Expo had a global impact in showcasing its grand vision, organizational ability, and athletic

and technological prowess. At home, this external success indirectly buttressed the legitimacy of the country's political system and its management of problem issues, be it ethnic dissent (Tibet and Sinkiang) or urban and environment issues. One conclusion: in China *the domestic dimension has to be considered as a key goal*, more so than with other countries.
- China confronts tension between its world power ambition with an implicit desire to alter the global order and huge investment in an attractive image. *Perception of a potential China threat is not easily eradicated*. China also faces efforts, by the US and others, to question its peaceful self-image.
- China's soft power actions have been innovative and *reflect a blend of meticulous planning and execution*. Others can learn from this, even if their ambition, resources and requirements are more modest.
- For China, *the economic base for its diplomacy is robust*, even if some dark clouds loom on the horizon. This power, and the country's military capacity, is the backbone of, as well as a shadow, on its attractiveness.
- China's authoritarian rule and its harsh policy towards dissidents remain real negatives in its image, which public diplomacy actions cannot eradicate.

As for India, one may sum up:

- Indian efforts to build soft power *lack a whole-of-government approach* and effective execution. Lack of an education diplomacy strategy is one example. The resources deployed are nowhere comparable to China's; especially missing is a public communications strategy and vision.
- *Some of the actions have been innovative*, including utilization of social media by MEA's Public Diplomacy Division, and culture projection. These plus points need further build-up and extension.
- A major plus: *India is not generally perceived in Asia and the world as a threat*. Relying on supple political diplomacy, India finds the environment responsive to its soft power projection actions.
- *India's economic potential holds promise*, but its capacity to translate that potential into action is a limiting factor. This is its governance challenge.

What has been the success of China and India in obtaining the outcomes they want? Attractiveness is not the only tool in the diplomatic arsenal, but, on balance, each country has achieved relatively a favorable result in consonance with its ambition.

## Notes

1 One index is offered by business consultant Ernst & Young. See: www.ey.com/GL/en/Issues/Driving-growth/Rapid-growth-markets-soft-power-index-Soft-power-defined. See also: www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/news/latest/institute-government-analyses-results-2012-soft-power-index. I had initially thought that such an index did not exist.
2 The ICCR seeks to promote India's soft power through fulfilling its objectives of developing and strengthening international cultural relations: www.iccr.gov.in/content/constitution.
3 India pioneered this concept, starting with a 'Festival of India' in the UK in 1982–3.
4 The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), supported by retired ambassadors, is handling this Indian Oral History project. See: www.icwa.in/oralhistory.html.
5 Two Facebook pages of the Ministry of External Affairs had over two million followers in 2016 (a number second only to the US State Department), many from the Indian diaspora.

6 Membership of this group is not made public, but analysts note that it includes the president and the premier, besides the State Counselor dealing with foreign affairs (who also heads this Foreign Affairs Leading [Small] Group office), the head of the Party International Affairs Department, the Foreign Minister, the Defence Minister, the State Security Minister and the Commerce Minister.
7 Foreign Minister Wang Yi is outranked by several others; since the days of Chen Yi (Foreign Minister 1958–72), China has not had a foreign minister who has been a member of the Politburo.
8 The SIPRI Report notes that between 2002 and 2010, President Hu Jintao had chaired 66 such presentations, and that one-third related to foreign affairs issues (SIPRI 2010, p. 34).
9 This department was established in the CCP in 1924, and, with the Organization Department, is the oldest in the Party.
10 Lee Kuan Yew in his book, *One Man's View of the World* (2013), cited in *The Economist*, 21 September 2013.
11 Siddarth Chatterjee and Amal Chatterjee, 'Start with Sri Lanka', *Times of India*, 23 September 2013.
12 My review of the Khilnani book was carried in *Business Standard* of 6 November 2013.
13 Estimate by David Shambaugh, *China Goes Global; The Partial Power*, Oxford University Press, 2013.
14 ICCR was established in 1951 and works under the Ministry of External Affairs. The cultural centers function under the supervision of the Indian mission; I had the privilege of overseeing the work of centers at Mauritius and Germany during my assignment to these countries.
15 See: www.ibtimes.com/bollywood-100-how-big-indias-mammoth-film-industry-1236299.
16 *India Today*, 30 May 2015.
17 See: http://edition.cnn.com/2013/05/29/world/asia/china-soft-power-foreign-students/index.html.
18 See: http://en.csc.edu.cn/laihua/newsdetailen.aspx?cid=122&id=1399.
19 Informal conversation with a senior ICCR official, July 2013.
20 Source: www.travelchinaguide.com/tourism/.
21 Source: http://tourism.nic.in/writereaddata/CMSPagePicture/file/marketresearch/statisticalsurveys/India%20Tourism%20Statistics%20at%20a%20Glance%202014.pdf.

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## SECTION VIII

# North and South-East Asia

# 32

# SOFT POWER IN EAST AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA (SECTION OVERVIEW)

*Damien Spry*

## Introduction: complex contexts

If soft power is the deployment of cultural resources – ideas, values, and identities as well as global brands and pop cultural icons – to inspire admiration and affection, Asia's growing soft power is initially impressive. This is especially so considering the region's past associations with post-colonial instability and conflict, political authoritarianism, self-protective models of national development, and cheap, poorly-made copies of more highly desired products.

That was then. This is now the Asian Century. Polls place Asian nations in the upper echelons of public opinion. Asian consumer brands are global giants. Asian cultures, languages and long histories are admired and taught more and more. Asian cuisines are ubiquitous; Asian cinema is celebrated. Asian celebrities draw huge audiences. Increased engagement in global markets, and competition for international influence, has spurred investment in soft power.

Results have been patchy: China's massive soft power push has gained attention, but not always positive attention (d'Hooghe 2010; Shambagh 2015); South Korea is associated with smartphones and *Hallyu* (the Korean Wave) in some places and confused with its noisy northern neighbour in others (Kinsey and Chung 2013); Japan is sometimes considered cool, sometimes cruel (Otmazgin 2012; Inuzuka and Fuchs 2014); and Singapore's apparent dismissal of an overt soft power push may, ironically, contribute to its position as a leading soft power (Kaplan 2015).

Such complexities and contradictions make summarizing the region a precarious undertaking. This overview suggests a set of five themes that contextualize Asia's soft power: China's rise, the 'hammer of history', new nationalisms, reluctant regionalisms and the global network society.

## China

Asia's strategic landscape is largely dominated by China's ongoing rise in confidence and power. China's international efforts include various soft power initiatives abroad;

its ongoing political stability necessitates a muscular nationalism at home: the two are not always compatible. Engagement with China and responding to (including balancing against) China have become unavoidable areas where hard power pragmatics (often centred on bilateral military alliances with the US) limit soft power aspirations – both China's and her neighbours'. However, the presence of two major hard powers means that no other nation can realistically consider challenging either the US or China, meaning that ambitious and proud nations (like Japan and South Korea) are given additional impetus to look to soft power as a means to expand influence and achieve policy objectives.

Despite China's considerable investment in public diplomacy, it is unable to purchase admiration of or support for its strategic goals. Estimates put China's budget for 'external propaganda' at $10 billion (compared with $666 million by the US) (Shambagh 2015), yet various indexes and public opinion polls rate China's soft power poorly. China's limited success as a soft power shows that investments in public diplomacy programs are not guaranteed to result in soft power gains and that concerns about hard power projections can drown out appreciation of cultural assets (Hall and Smith 2013).

There are other views. China's soft power strategy may be understood as "negative soft power" (Callahan 2015) aimed at securing support for the regime by positioning China in opposition to Japan, the US and the west in terms of its underlying values. The China dream, understood as national wealth and power, opposes the American dream of personal freedom and happiness. The goal of soft power, in these circumstances, is to buttress national ideology.

## The hammer of history

Of all Asian countries, Japan enjoys the highest global levels of soft power, as measured by numerous international soft power indices. Japan's "Gross National Cool" (McGray 2009) is variously attributed to the charms of its sophisticated cultural traditions, the growing appeal of its pop culture, its investment in engagement programs and even its international pacifist and anti-nuclear credentials.

But Japan's estimable global soft power is not replicated regionally. Twentieth-century militarism and colonialism remain etched in Korean and Chinese memories. Territorial claims perpetuate antagonisms. Most Japanese people, polls suggest, accept that Japan was wrong and favour atonement while also resenting how history is instrumentalized by their neighbours. But, as Kingston (2011) eloquently summarises, Japan "bears responsibility for handing the hammer of history to its neighbours" (p. 186).

China and the Koreas (North and South) do deploy history, and associated territorial disputes, to stoke nationalist support for the purpose of political expediency. And both China and South Korea have taken these campaigns global. In the UK, China openly described Japan as Voldemort, the evil wizard from the popular Harry Potter books (Callahan 2015). South Korean campaigns for recognition of their sovereignty of the Dokdo Islands (called the Takashima Islands in Japan) range from placards at the North Pole to slogans on recycling bags in New York City (Epstein 2010).

Japanese affection for Korean pop culture was supposed to allay anxieties among Korean youth in particular, and at times there have been reasons to hope matters could be resolved and wounds might heal. But recent moves to 'normalize' Japan's pacifist constitution, increases to the defence budget and adoption of the rhetoric of 'new nationalism' have fuelled flames. Korean opinion polls, for example, rank Japan as second only to

North Korea (with whom they remain technically at war) as a threat, and at times Japan even tops those lists. History continues to hammer pop culture back into place.

## New nationalisms

Many Asian nations face a dual challenge: the need to promote a reputation abroad that aids policy efforts in areas like trade agreements, security alliances and tourism promotion can conflict with the need to strengthen, develop and even defend national identities.

South Korea provides one example of how soft power can be instrumentalized for nationalistic purposes, including through deliberate, targeted government action. While an economic powerhouse, South Korea's rankings in nation branding indexes have not matched either its economic performance or its own expectations – even described by an official as a "a shame for Koreans" (Kim 2011, p. 125).

The response was to deliberately support the globalization of South Korean popular culture and promote its cultural heritage in order to increase national prestige and international standing; a classic soft power strategy. Korean dramas and K-pop have certainly gained considerable audiences and its standing in nation branding rankings has improved. Korean nationalists hoped South Korea could emerge from the margins of the region's cultural landscape to assume a more central position. But the reception in key neighbouring countries has run hot and cold: large, devoted audiences on one hand; restrictions on cultural imports and international public spats over cultural heritage claims on the other (Chua 2012). Moreover, polls suggest that domestic opinions of Korea's heritage and celebrities far exceed international opinions. Despite its international successes, South Korean soft power may be more effective as a form of national identification rather than global attraction. It may well be similar in other countries.

## Reluctant regionalisms

In Asia, the scant role of regional architecture is apparent. The purported 'noodle soup' of regional institutions, trade agreements and other diplomatic networks (ASEAN, APEC, EAS, TPP, Six Powers Talks and so on) make for a busy meeting calendar but are less influential than in other parts of the world. Certainly, ASEAN might emerge as south-east Asian nations look nervously to their powerful northern neighbour (indeed, the most unifying feature of ASEAN nations is the growing shadow cast by China) but it is no EU, NAFTA or NATO.

South-east Asian nations, seen individually, are not able to claim – yet – to possess either substantial soft power or demonstrable public diplomacy campaigns that are comparable with China, Japan or South Korea. There are certainly notable examples of how this might be achieved. Thailand and Vietnam have strong cases for culinary diplomacy. Many countries boast strong brands as tourist destinations that go beyond sleepy beaches to include sophisticated cultural centres. Cities like Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur are important global hubs. This promise has yet to be realised.

Singapore is the exception. Its great achievements – security and stability, growth and prosperity – are largely dependent on its attractiveness as a commercial centre, trading partner and reliable strategic friend.

ASEAN as a bloc is, however, drawing international attention. Proponents point to its pragmatic, quiet, purposeful and often successful diplomacy that has provided stability

in a previously volatile region but scepticism remains about its capacity to exceed the bare minimum.

## The global network society

Lastly, present media ecologies complicate communication networks and capacities. Despite the technological capacity for nations to reach out to publics and some considerable efforts to do so, the ability of nations to project soft power is curtailed by defiant attitudes and stubborn prejudice. Limited and stereotypical media coverage exacerbates this, especially in places where international news attention is scant and limited to major events and tragedies.

Internet-based media – mobile and smartphones, social networks, web-based networks of commerce, collaboration and conflict – create the conditions for the emergence of opposing forces: a global public sphere versus a fragmentation of audiences into microcosms of interests and attentions (benign or vitriolic). As social media and smartphones spread, this trend will continue.

## Conclusion: an Asian model of soft power?

While the Asian century progresses, the future of soft power in the region remains uncertain. Complexities abound, including the possible reconfiguration of public diplomacy to one that supports soft power 'with Asian characteristics': more defensive than the US, less able to reconcile historical hurts than the EU, less identifiably regional than Latin America, more diverse and more contested. The contexts, outlined above, that characterise soft power in Asia may transform how soft power is conceptualized, and operationalized, beyond the region. The Asian century might provide an Asian model of soft power.

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# 33

# THE PIVOT SHIFT OF JAPAN'S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

*Yasushi Watanabe*

## Historical background

### *From the Meiji period to the postwar period*

It was 2004 when the term 'public diplomacy' was officially adopted at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But the diplomatic approaches that it denotes have a longer history, of course, in Japanese foreign policy. The Tokugawa shogunate and the Satsuma and Nabeshima clans accepted invitations from Napoleon III, for instance, to participate in the Paris Exposition of 1867. They exhibited ceramics, woodblock prints, and other examples of artisanship and industry under the banner of 'Nippon'. A few years later, the Meiji government allocated 1 per cent of its annual budget to Japan's participation in the Vienna Exposition of 1873. Japan's exhibits at the expositions created a sensation, stoking a *Japonisme* frenzy in Europe's art world. The fascination with things Japanese proved an enduring phenomenon, as seen in the establishment of museums devoted to Japanese and other Asian art (Matsumura 2002).

A new phase in Japanese public diplomacy unfolded in connection with the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5). Japan's foreign ministry mobilized its embassies and consulates to convey its position on the conflict to the western powers. The Japanese, explained the diplomats, longed for peace with their northern neighbor, but Russian aggression had forced them to resort to military action.

Japan pulled out all the stops in its successful efforts to sway public opinion in the west. The measures it took to influence the media even included financial payoffs to newspapers. Japan also mobilized prominent scholars in its cause. Historian Matsumura Masayoshi (2010) writes of the effective work by Japan's ambassador to Austria–Hungary, Makino Nobuaki. Makino commissioned a Hungarian scholar to write a refutation of the 'yellow peril' calumny, and he and his staff distributed the paper widely.

In 1921, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs established its first information department. The western powers had convincingly demonstrated the strategic value of propaganda during World War I, and the Chinese had staged an anti-Japanese information blitz of alarming tenacity at the postwar Paris Peace Conference. Those and other developments persuaded Japan's foreign policymakers that they needed to work more

systematically in public diplomacy. Along with establishing an information department in the foreign ministry, they strengthened ties with two of Japan's international news agencies, Kokusai Tsushinsha (International News Agency) and Toho Tsushinsha.

By the mid-1930s, Japan was in serious danger of becoming a pariah state. It had earned international opprobrium in 1931 for staging the Mukden Incident and then using that incident as a pretext for invading and occupying Manchuria. And it had withdrawn from the League of Nations in response to a rebuke from that body for its aggression.

Public diplomacy was part of the Japanese government's efforts to retain some sort of standing in the global community. The government established the precursor of the Japan Foundation, the Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai (International Cultural Promotion Association) in 1934. In the same year, the state broadcaster, Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK), inaugurated radio services in Taiwan and Manchuria. And the following year, NHK inaugurated short-wave radio services for Japanese immigrants in Hawaii and on the US mainland. Note that Japan was moving more or less in step with the United Kingdom in its new approach to diplomacy. In 1934 the British Council was founded as the vehicle for propagating British culture and values.

The Japanese government centralized control over flows of information as the war in China escalated and as broader war in the Pacific loomed. That included integrating its propaganda functions. Responsibility for disseminating information and for promoting cultural exchange shifted in 1940 from the foreign ministry to a newly established information bureau in the cabinet office. The military, meanwhile, engaged aggressively in strategically distributing both nominally truthful and blatantly false information through its propaganda apparatus.

After the war, Japan faced the challenge of transforming its reputation as a militaristic aggressor into that of a democratic, peace-loving nation. An early effort in tackling that challenge was accession to membership in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1951. Japan's public diplomacy avoided material likely to arouse associations with the way of the samurai and with other elements of Japan's feudal past. Instead, it highlighted benign facets of Japanese culture, such as the tea ceremony and *ikebana* flower arranging.

A series of PR pamphlets produced by the foreign ministry in the early 1950s as *Japan of Today* exemplified the new emphases. The pamphlets commonly featured photos of cherry blossoms and of a snow-capped Mount Fuji. Their snow scenes were a none-too-subtle effort to distinguish 'cold-climate Japan' from the warm-weather nations of more southerly Asia. The idea was to underline Japan's identity as an industrialized nation of hard-working people. Ikebana has remained to this day an emphasis in Japan's diplomatic PR, as seen in photographic calendars published and distributed annually. In contrast, the government provided comparatively little support for overseas Japanese-language education until recent years. That was in deference to bad memories of imperial Japan's imposition of its language on its colonies.

## *A grasping for national identity*

The cultural anthropologist Aoki Tamotsu (1990) has analyzed the grasping for national identity evident in postwar public discourse in Japan, and he has identified four phases in the evolution of that grasping as follows:

1 negative exceptionalism (1945–54)

2 historical relativism (1955–63)
3 positive exceptionalism (1964–83)
4 a shift from exceptionalism to universality (since 1984).

Japan in the early postwar years lacked much latitude over the exercise of public diplomacy. Two obvious constraints in the era, that coincided with the Allied occupation, were Japan's shaky political foundation and a general shortage of resources. But we should note that social psychology also weighed against the effective exercise of public diplomacy.

Self-criticism was ubiquitous. Typifying the tone of the day were Sakaguchi Ango's 1946 essay 'Darakuron' ('On decadence'), Kida Minoru's 1946 memoir *Kichigai Buraku Shuyu Kiko* (*Dispatches From a Demented Village*), and Kuwahara Takeo's 1947 book *Gendai Nihonbunka no Hansei* (*Reflections on Contemporary Japanese Culture*).

Modernism and Marxism had exerted a great deal of influence on Japan's intellectuals. But the arguments that arose from both of those mutually incompatible quarters ultimately failed to resonate with Japanese society. People shared negative perceptions of those arguments as premodern, as vestiges of feudalism, as socially irrational and as undemocratic.

Japanese society reclaimed a sense of spiritual stability in Aoki's phase two, that spanned the years from 1955 to 1963 and which he characterizes as a time of historical relativism. The Japanese economy had attained convincing momentum, having received a powerful stimulus from the extraordinary demand spawned by the Korean War. As the negativism of phase one faded into the background, the Japanese people reappraised their standing from a fresh perspective. They took stock of their nation on its own terms, unwedded either to the model presented by the western powers or to socialist notions of development stages.

A government economic white paper declared in 1955 that the postwar era was over. In the same year, Kato Shuichi penned the essay 'Nihon Bunka no Zasshusei' ('Japanese Culture's Hybridity'). And Umesao Tadao offered up in 1957 the essay 'Bunmei no Seitai Shikan Josetsu' ('Introduction to an Ecological Perspective on the History of Civilization'). These two essays both highlighted the need and the potential for Japan to adopt a broad perspective in steering its national development.

### *An era of reactive self-assertion*

Japan's economy surged in the 1960s, replete with memorable events that evoked the nation's bustling vitality: the completion of the Shinkansen bullet train line, for example, and the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. Underlying the nation's prosperity was newfound political stability. Sato Eisaku served as prime minister continuously from November 1964 to July 1972. The signing of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security with the United States in 1960 had, along with other factors, kindled a continuing divisiveness in Japanese politics. With the Sato cabinets, Japan entered a sustained period of rightward-leaning political stability.

Authors penned a series of commentaries on the merits of 'the Japanese system', and commentary in that positive vein continued until the mid-1980s. Representative of that commentary are Sakuta Keiichi's *Haji no Bunka Saiko* (*A New Look at the Culture of Shame* 1964); Odaka Kunio's *Nihon non Keiei* (*Japanese Management* 1965); Nakane Chie's *Tateshakai no Ningenkankei* (*Human Relations in Vertical Society* 1967); Doi Takeo's

*Amae no Kozo* (*The Structure of Indulgence* 1971); Kimura Bin's *Hito to Hito tono Aida* (*Between People* 1972); Hamaguchi Eshun's *Nihonrashisa no Saihakken* (*Rediscovering Japaneseness* 1977); Murakami Yasusuke, Kumon Shumpei and Sato Seizaburo's *Bunmei toshite no Ie Shakai* (*Household Society as Civilization* 1979); and Murakami Yasusuke's *Shinchukan Taishu no Jidai* (*The Age of the New Middle Class* 1983).

A waxing national sense of worthiness overcame Japan's longstanding resistance to self-assertiveness in public diplomacy. The Public Information and Cultural Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs opened centers at Japanese embassies and consulates in one nation after another in the 1960s. In 1964, the ministry expanded and elevated the organizational standing of the bureau's cultural affairs unit. It established the Japan Foundation in 1972. And in 1974, the foreign ministry began publishing an English-language quarterly, the *Japan Echo*, to convey the ideas and observations of important Japanese thinkers to the world.

Thus did an increasingly self-assertive Japan deploy a growing array of machinery for public diplomacy. It employed that machinery, however, largely by way of responding to events, rather than by initiating and shaping events. Japan's public diplomacy remained, that is, of the reactive sort.

Events unquestionably presented Japan with plenty of challenges that required responses. One response consisted of establishing the United States–Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange – a bi-national panel of experts charged with the task of strengthening the cultural and educational foundations of the US–Japan relationship. That panel was partly an effort to reverse the damage caused by the rancour over the mutual security agreement. It came into being through an agreement formalized by then-Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato and then-President John F. Kennedy.

The US–Japan trade imbalance had become a contentious issue by the early 1960s, and the US government had clamped limits on imports of Japanese textiles. US–Japanese relations would suffer another blow in 1971 in the form of a series of 'Nixon shocks'. Then-President Richard Nixon, without consulting his foreign counterparts, ended the convertibility between the dollar and gold and, also without prior consultation with the United States' allies, announced plans to visit China.

In 1972, Japan's parliament passed the bill that provided for establishing the Japan Foundation in the name of promoting mutual understanding. The bill benefited from fervent backing from Japan's foreign minister Fukuda Takeo. Fukuda had expressed his sense of urgency shortly before the bill's passage in a foreign policy address. Below is a passage from that address, as quoted by Kaneko Masafumi (2007):

> Interest in Japan has increased notably in other nations in recent years. But at the same time, we see the emergence in different spheres of an unfounded wariness and wrongful misunderstanding of our nation. Some criticize us to the effect that we focus overly on economic gain in dealings with foreign counterparties. Others go so far as to express fear of a revival of Japanese militarism. At a time such as this, we need to work urgently in our diplomacy to dispel misimpressions of our nation and to present an accurate view of our nation to people overseas as a nation that cherishes peace and culture.
>
> (Kaneko 2007, pp. 190–1)

The Japanese government donated $1 million each to US universities while Tanaka Kakuei was prime minister, between July 1972 and December 1974. Those donations,

known as Tanaka Funds, were to support teaching and research in the field of Japanese studies. Furthermore, since the establishment of the Japan–United States Educational Commission (JUSEC) in December of 1979, the Japanese government has shared the cost of the Fulbright Program, which commenced in Japan in 1952, with the US government. Today, both governments fund the program on an equal basis. In addition, the Japan–United States Educational Exchange Promotion Foundation (Fulbright Foundation), established by the Japanese Fulbright Alumni Association in 1986, has collected contributions from the private sector, and JUSEC funds approximately 50 to 60 scholarships each for American and Japanese people to participate in the Fulbright Program each year.

Elsewhere, the Japanese Prime Minister, Kakuei Tanaka, became a lightning rod for anti-Japanese passions during state visits to Thailand and Indonesia in 1974.

Japan's economic inroads in south-east Asia had exacerbated latent ill will. People had come to regard Japanese people as 'economic animals'. A popular epithet was 'banana': yellow (Asian) on the outside but white (western) on the inside. The animosity had boiled over into a vitriolic boycott of Japanese goods in Thailand in 1972. And Tanaka's 1974 visits to Thailand and Indonesia ignited riots.

The Japanese government and its south-east Asian counterparts moved to ameliorate the frictions. They launched, for example, the Ship for Southeast Asian Youth Program in 1974. In that program hundreds of young people from Japan and south-east Asian nations live together on board for more than a month while visiting the participating nations. Meanwhile, the Japan Foundation opened a growing network of offices in south-east Asia.

South-east Asia became a focus of Japanese public diplomacy in the late 1970s on a par with the United States. Japan extended a variety of financial assistance for cultural undertakings and for the preservation of archaeological sites. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs even published, as *Human Relations in Japan*, a condensed English-language version of Nakane's aforementioned *Tateshakai no Ningenkankei* (*Human Relations in Vertical Society*) and distributed it in south-east Asia and elsewhere.

## *An era of rapid internationalization*

Characterizing the fourth phase (the years since 1984) posited by Aoki in Japan's postwar grasping for national identity has been a preoccupation with internationalization. Accompanying that preoccupation has been a rethinking of Japanese culture. That rethinking has proceeded largely in the flow of two distinct currents: the first examining Japan's proper role in the global community, and the second repositioning the very concept of Japanese cultural theory.

Odaka Kunio, who published *Nihon no Keiei* (*Japanese Management*) in 1965, returned to that subject two decades later. Whereas the 1965 book was a paean to the strengths and advantages of uniquely Japanese approaches to management, Odaka's stance shifted profoundly in his later work. It evinced a sense of crisis about the negative aspects of traditionally Japanese approaches.

The dramatist and social commentator Yamazaki Masakazu expressed similar concerns about Japanese uniqueness in the 1986 book *Bunka Kaikoku e no Chosen* (*Japan's Challenge of Cultural Opening*). Casting a skeptical gaze on practices long accepted as Japanese characteristics, he called for internationalization through a reopening of Japan. 'Internationalism' has since given way to 'globalization' as the buzzword of choice for the phenomenon in question, but the doubts posed by Yamazaki remain topical.

Meanwhile, efforts at repositioning the concept of Japanese cultural theory have addressed the questions of nationalism and of cultural constructionism. Its proponents, notably US and European academics, have attempted to portray the very notion of Japanese culture as a relativistic construct. Representative examples of their thought and conclusions include Peter Dale's 1986 book *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness* and Befu Harumi's 1987 work *Ideorogi toshite no Nihon Bunkaron* (*Japanese Cultural Theory as Ideology*). The author's introduction to Befu's book includes an interview with the historian and philosopher Tsurumi Shunsuke. Below is an excerpt from Tsurumi's comments, as reproduced by Aoki (1990):

> Some 70% or 80% of [what has been said and written as Japanese] cultural theory has been in reference to the United States. Cultural theorists can say that Japan is unique, but all that they are really saying is that Japan is different in one way or another from the United States or, perhaps, from Europe. The reason that cultural theory [in Japan] is so US centric is that the United States is economically and politically crucial to Japan. If the world were to change profoundly, the Japanese people's orientation would shift to some other direction, and cultural theory would turn in that direction, too.
>
> (p. 138)

In 1990, Aoki wrote as follows about the above sort of relativistic recasting of Japanese cultural theory:

> Asserting the uniqueness of Japanese culture is necessary to some extent, and the world will surely present a need for emphasizing the Japanese people's cultural identity. The time has come, however, for Japanese cultural theory to proceed toward a more-open universality and to become part of a universalist theory for constructing the world.
>
> (p. 171)

Questions of internationalization and of universality thus necessitated a rethinking of Japanese cultural theory. Amid that process, coping with internationalization and securing a viable place for Japan in the global community became pressing needs for Japan's public diplomacy.

## *Cultural exchange as a pillar of diplomacy*

Calls arose in the United States and Europe in the 1980s for Japan to shoulder more responsibility as a member of the global community. Pressure mounted for Japan to provide support for multilateral peacekeeping operations and similar undertakings and to expand its government development assistance and other economic assistance for developing nations. Japan's bilateral trade surpluses had spawned anti-Japanese sentiment among the nation's trading partners, and people began to speak of Japan as a nation that played by different rules and that was a threat to the free-trade system.

Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs stepped up its public relations in an effort to parry the mounting ill will. In 1984 it established the Cultural Affairs Department, created the position of Press Secretary/Director-General for Press and Public Relations in the minister's secretariat, and upgraded its foreign press unit to the International Press

Division. The Japan Foundation, meanwhile, began conducting the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test in 1984 in cooperation with the foundation Japan Educational Exchanges and Services.

Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru pledged in a speech in London in 1988 to strengthen international cultural exchange as a bulwark of foreign policy. He subsequently established a prime ministerial forum – the first of its kind – for discussing ways to promote that exchange. A report compiled from the proceedings of that forum characterized the philosophical principles and the purpose of international cultural exchange in reference to four themes: ensuring national security, contributing to the advancement of world culture, addressing the mounting interest in Japan and internationalizing Japanese society.

Of the above four themes, ensuring national security and addressing the mounting interest in Japan pertain directly to public diplomacy. The second, addressing the mounting interest in Japan, and the fourth, internationalizing Japanese society, were more a matter of cultural internationalism. That mix of public diplomacy and cultural internationalism would persist in subsequent reports of the prime ministerial forum.

Japan's public diplomacy has included undertaking Japan-directed diplomacy on behalf of other nations. For example, the Japan Foundation established in Tokyo in 1990 its ASEAN Culture Center (reorganized as the Japan Foundation Asia Center in 1995 and dissolved in 2004). That center was a vehicle for introducing the cultures of the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to Japan. The idea was to raise Japanese awareness and understanding of south-east Asia. From a Japanese perspective, that was more a matter of cultural internationalism than of diplomacy *per se*.

Efforts in the name of internationalizing Japanese society proceeded at the regional level as well as at the national level. Local governments in Japan established units for promoting international exchange. An initiative that has been highly successful in regard to internationalizing Japanese society is the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program, established in 1987. That program, managed nationally and deployed regionally, brings young people from English-speaking nations to Japan to teach English at schools nationwide.

In 1991, the Japanese government invested $50 billion in establishing the Center for Global Partnership inside the Japan Foundation. That was a move to address mounting frictions in the US–Japan bilateral relationship. The English name of the center emphasized the Japanese awareness of the special importance of the United States to Japan and also asserted a determination to shape the nations' bilateral relationship as a partnership of equals. (Interestingly, the Japanese name of the center is more concise: Nichibei Senta [Japan–US Center]).

Japan's burgeoning trade surplus with the United States had become an especially vexing problem. The nations' mutual security arrangements, meanwhile, had long been a nagging source of mutual discontent. And that discontent had worsened amid US dissatisfaction with Japan's contribution to the United Nations – authorized military action in the Gulf War.

The Center for Global Partnership's founding mandate was to promote US–Japanese cooperation in policy initiatives aimed at addressing global issues of mutual concern; for example, supporting democratization in developing nations, addressing threats to the environment and combating contagious diseases. Unsurprisingly, some in the United States viewed the center warily as a vehicle for Japanese lobbying. The Japanese defused that cynicism, however, by placing the center under the supervision of a council that

comprised American and Japanese members and by investing the center with a full and convincing measure of autonomy inside the Japan Foundation.

We might well regard the establishment of the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership as a turning point in the history of Japanese public diplomacy. Establishing the center was, to be sure, a reactive, rather than a proactive, measure. Japan was, as always, scrambling to quell foreign criticism and to dampen bilateral frictions. But the center attained an importance that transcended its initial purpose of dealing with issues that had arisen in the US–Japan relationship. Its approach was a refreshing departure from Japan's all-too-familiar reliance on hackneyed pleas for understanding of the nation's 'special circumstances'.

The center marked a new departure in tackling global issues of multinational concern through a genuinely bilateral and sometimes multilateral approach. With the Center for Global Partnership, Japan embraced a paradigm shift. It began to emphasize its common ground with other nations, rather than its uniqueness. Aoki expressed that paradigm shift aptly with his characterization of the fourth stage of Japan's grasping for national identity: the emphasis shifted from exceptionalism to universality.

## *A shift in emphasis to shared experience*

Contrasting dynamics have characterized diplomacy in east Asia in the years since the end of the Cold War. As the region became a growth engine for the global economy, nationalism and anti-Japanese sentiment flared in newly confident China and in the Republic of Korea. The Chinese and South Koreans became increasingly assertive in objecting to Japanese interpretations of shared history and in pressing claims to disputed territory. China's emergence as a military power, continuing uncertainty about North Korean intentions, and other developments pose threats to national security that demand an attentive diplomatic response.

On the other hand, the peoples of east Asia and of the entire Asia-Pacific region have also exhibited a growing inclination toward regional solidarity. That inclination has manifested in diverse initiatives in cultural diplomacy and international exchange diplomacy. At the grassroots level, young people in Japan, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan and coastal China, for example, have embraced a broadly shared pop culture. Sport has been another important medium for grassroots exchange, as in Japan and the Republic of Korea's joint hosting of soccer's 2002 World Cup.

Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry embarked on a national branding campaign in 2011 to promote Japanese 'content industries' internationally under the moniker Cool Japan. That presumably reflects a sense of crisis about the long-term decline in Japanese manufacturing and a determination to offset the economic impact of that decline by promoting post-industrial manufacturing in creative industries. But it also reflects informed perceptions of a genuine basis – a cultural commonality among east Asia, North America and other regions – for chic national branding. What's cool about Cool Japan, in other words, rests on a foundation of regionally and even globally shared culture.

In recent years, Japan's public diplomacy has addressed the international public interest in the spirit of 'human security'. It has emulated initiatives by the Goethe Institut and the French Cultural Center, the German and French equivalents of the Japan Foundation. Those organizations have provided a model by promoting peace through such initiatives as holding documentary film festivals in Afghanistan.

Distinguishing the Japanese initiatives has been a telling shift in emphasis: from simply seeking to dispel misconceptions about Japan to seeking to share useful lessons of Japan's experience. The Japan Foundation has taken initiatives, for example, to help the Afghani people revitalize their nation when the hostilities end there. In one instance it brought potters to Japan from the Afghan village of Istalif, long known for its ceramics, and arranged for them to learn new pottery-making techniques from Japanese potters. Japan's foreign ministry, meanwhile, has extended a hand to the cause of national reconciliation in Iraq. That has included bringing leaders of Iraqi religious sects and ethnic groups to Japan. The Iraqis visit Hiroshima and Kyoto, hear about Japan's experience with postwar reconstruction and share perspectives on democratization.

In the United States, the Japan Foundation moved after Hurricane Katrina to identify effective avenues of bilateral collaboration for supporting the recovery effort. It mobilized diverse resources to share expertise gleaned from the Kobe Earthquake of 1995 with counterparts in New Orleans. That gesture earned lasting gratitude, as evidenced in an editorial in New Orleans's *Times-Picayune* daily after the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011. The time had come, emphasized the editorial, to return the favor. Let us note that the 1991 establishment of the US-focused Center for Global Partnership coincided with the new focus on shared experience.

Japanese television dramas and documentaries, too, have earned devoted followings over the years in Middle Eastern and south-east Asian nations. Viewers in those nations have responded enthusiastically to dramatic and documentary accounts of how the Japanese coped with postwar privation and famously achieved the Japanese Miracle.

The world remains replete with opportunities for Japan to share its experience beneficially with other nations. The Japanese people have attained a strikingly broad consensus in regard to such matters as the need for nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation, stability in east Asia, responses to the threat of climate change, the development of renewable energies, and the prevention and control of contagious diseases. All of these and other challenges present a confluence of national interests and international interests.

Japan's growing emphasis on shared experience in public diplomacy is part of a broader shift to proactive approaches in that realm. And Japan's increasingly proactive stance in public diplomacy will benefit from the nation's history of creative and effective responses to adverse circumstances and events. That history and its legacy are just as valuable as pop culture and content industries in asserting an identity as Cool Japan: innovation in energy conservation and material recycling as a nation blessed with little in the way of energy resources and other natural resources; an extensive, systematic commitment to preserving environmental quality and maintaining healthful public sanitation as a nation that has experienced serious pollution; miraculous reconstruction efforts and a deep-rooted commitment to peace as a nation that has suffered calamitous natural disasters and devastating war.

Thus Japan's public diplomacy is entering a new phase. Since the 1990s that diplomacy has included a growing range of work with non-profit organizations and with other civil society organizations. It has spanned a growing range of activity in working with Japanese civil society organizations and in fostering productive relationships between civil society organizations in Japan and in other nations.

The Japan Foundation and the Japan Football Association, for example, brought the Iraqi national soccer team to Japan in 2004 and hosted a series of friendly matches with Japanese teams. In 2005, the Japan Foundation and the Japan International Volunteer Center brought representatives of two Israeli and Palestinian non-governmental medical

organizations to Japan and hosted discussions about humanitarian considerations in strife-riven territories.

The foregoing examples exemplify what we can fairly characterize as the new public diplomacy. In working with civil society counterparties, the Japanese government has been careful to assume the role of facilitator rather than that of controller. It has employed a soft and nuanced touch in supporting valuable work by multilayered networks of diverse participants. The Japan Foundation's Center for Global Partnership has blazed new trails for the foundation through networking with civil society organizations. It has made the most of that networking in supplementing traditional intellectual exchange with new initiatives in regional and grassroots exchange.

## Institutional issues

### *The Japan Foundation and the Agency for Cultural Affairs*

Another important feature of the Japan Foundation's Center for Global Partnership is a strong linkage to public policy in planning and undertaking activities. That linkage is natural, since the Japan Foundation operates under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But it has obscured the division of labor between the foundation and the Agency for Cultural Affairs. The agency, established in 1968 by what is now the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, has broadened its scope of activity in recent years, and that has resulted in frequent overlap with the Japan Foundation.

Japan's government conducted a sweeping organizational realignment of its ministries and agencies in 2001. At that time, it addressed the issue of overlap between the Japan Foundation and the Agency for Cultural Affairs by ostensibly focusing the former on diplomacy-related activities and the latter on cultural promotion. The government distinguished anew between the foundation's and the agency's mandates in 2009. Its new guidelines specified that the Japan Foundation would handle overseas projects and that the Agency for Cultural Affairs would handle domestic projects.

Drawing a line between diplomacy and cultural promotion or between overseas and domestic has become, however, all but impossible. Rapid globalization has rendered the distinctions moot as often as not. And the distinctions have weakened further amid the rise of 'soft power' – the term coined by the American political scientist Joseph Nye to describe the ability to persuade counterparts through attraction and co-opting rather than through coercion or financial incentives.

We could adopt other criteria, of course, for allotting responsibility for activities. The Japan Foundation could assume responsibility for activities of a strongly diplomatic orientation. And the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology could take charge when the activities in question are largely of the character of cultural internationalism. That ministry is home to the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, as well as the overseer of education in Japan. So it would bring broad-based capabilities to the planning and undertaking of cultural activities.

Some sort of overlap is inevitable, however, between public diplomacy and cultural internationalism, no matter how we might allocate the oversight responsibilities. Numerous ministries, agencies and other government bodies take part in asserting Japan's soft power, albeit not necessarily as directly as the foreign ministry and its Japan Foundation do. Here is but a partial sampling of the government functions that can figure in asserting soft power and, in parentheses, the government units

principally responsible for those functions: development assistance (Japan International Cooperation Agency), international broadcasting (NHK), science and technology promotion (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; Japan Society for the Promotion of Science), domestic regional promotion (local government bodies, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Council of Local Authorities for International Relations), multicultural interdependence (local government bodies, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Ministry of Justice, Council of Local Authorities for International Relations), content industries promotion and export promotion (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry; Japan External Trade Organization), tourism promotion (Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism; Japan National Tourism Organization).

Another government unit that commands attention in regard to public diplomacy is the Japanese Self-Defense Forces. The Japanese military is likely to participate in a growing range of peace-keeping operations through the United Nations, and the Japanese forces' presence will inevitably become a facet of public diplomacy. For example, Japanese soldiers assisted with the earthquake relief effort in Haiti in 2010, and while there they shared elements of Japanese culture with local children. They held fun sessions where the children could try their hands at Japanese calligraphy and could learn the basics of judo.

Here, we encounter a fundamental weakness of Japan's public diplomacy: no mechanism has existed for coordinating potentially complementary activities by the numerous government units engaged in public diplomacy-related activities. That lack aggravates an even more fundamental weakness: the exceedingly small scale of Japan's public diplomacy in comparison with the nation's GDP and in comparison with the public diplomacy conducted by other industrialized nations.

In March 2012, the Liaison Conference on International Public Relations was set up in the National Policy Unit of the Cabinet Secretariat to deal with the reconstruction of the national brand, especially in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011. It brings together senior officials of ministries and agencies and is convened jointly by the Minister of State for National Policy and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. It remains to be seen how this conference functions and develops.

## Japan's positioning

### *Possibilities in east Asia and in the Pacific basin*

Japan can maximize the credibility of its public diplomacy in some respects by focusing on regional cooperation in east Asia and throughout the Pacific basin. Those regions present a striking contrast with Europe, where nations exhibit a broad commonality in political, economic and cultural values and are generally at peace with one another. East Asia and the Pacific basin remain subject to a great deal of geopolitical disharmony and potential unrest. Japan needs to tread carefully in that unsettled landscape and prioritize its diplomatic efforts in reference to what is realistically possible.

A serious issue for Japan in east Asia pertains to the present-day task of dealing with the past. Japan's government has taken some good steps in recent years to address that problem. Those steps have included conducting two joint research projects with Chinese and Korean counterparts to forge a shared grasp of common history. The Sino-Japanese project took place from 2006 to 2009 and the Korean–Japanese project from 2006 to 2009, and each generated valuable findings and praiseworthy reports.

Japan needs to undertake more such joint research in the spirit of establishing common ground for constructive discourse. That should include soliciting the participation of researchers from beyond east Asia, as well as east Asian researchers. The participating researchers should receive unfettered access to as much information as possible. As they publish their findings in the international arena, that will reinforce Japan's national credibility and thus strengthen the foundation for Japan's public diplomacy. Crudely biased interpretations of history will give way to more objective, more nuanced interpretations. That will be an opportunity for showcasing Japan's meta-soft power.

### *Global civilian power*

Japan's alliance with the United States is its sole assurance of national security in regard to military defense. And both nations face numerous issues in the realm of national security, broadly defined, that transcend purely military concerns. They urgently need to upgrade their alliance to address such matters as nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation, anti-terrorism measures, disaster preparedness, healthcare, environmental protection, energy sufficiency, technological cooperation, and assistance for poor nations. All of these matters present implications for civilian power.

Let us bear in mind here that Japan remains an extremely high priority in US foreign policy. Interesting evidence of that priority is the number of American Centers in Japan. American Centers are public affairs outlets run by the US State Department in nations worldwide. Japan is home to five centers, in Sapporo, Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka and Fukuoka. That is an unusually large number for an industrialized nation, for the United States, like other western nations, is shifting its public affairs resources to developing nations in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. It suggests rich potential for strengthening cooperation with the United States further in the field of public diplomacy and in the spirit of mobilizing global civilian power (Watanabe 2008; Watanabe and McConnell 2008).

## Beyond beauty contests

Public diplomacy is a tool and function of foreign policy. Governments engage in public diplomacy as a means of advancing their foreign policy goals, not for the sake of engaging in public diplomacy. The goals emerge deductively from the grand design of a nation's foreign policy. Japan clearly has an interest, for example, in promoting China's harmonious assimilation into the global community. And we need to cope with geopolitical risk and responsibility as the capitalist–Communist dichotomy gives way to a democratic–autocratic dichotomy. In any case, those responsible need to heed the words of the British foreign minister and subsequently prime minister Anthony Eden: "It's perfectly true, of course, that good cultural propaganda cannot remedy the damage done by a bad foreign policy, but it is no exaggeration to say that even the best of diplomacy policies may fail if it neglects the task of interpretation and persuasion which modern communications impose" (Wagnleitner 1994, p. 50).

Japan's public diplomacy, though modest in scale and subject to institutional constraints, has produced respectable results. For instance, Nicholas Cull (2008), a specialist in public diplomacy at the University of Southern California, lauds Japan's vigorous commitment to cultural exchange. He cites as an example the aforementioned Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program. That program has earned high regard worldwide as a model of effective cultural exchange.

On the other hand, Japan's international cultural exchange has been heavy on the rhetoric of 'international friendship' and 'mutual understanding' and light on concrete linkage to policy goals. We have heard a lot about such vague aims as fostering favorable perceptions of Japan and establishing a strong 'national brand'. We have heard little, however, about underlying strategy. What policy goals are we addressing, for example, in pursuing those aims? Which strata of which sectors in which regions are we targeting with our public diplomacy?

Japan certainly faces a host of pressing tasks that demand a well-considered approach to foreign policy: helping to prevent civil strife in politically fragile nations, taking part in reforming the United Nations, resolving territorial disputes with its neighbors and dealing with frictions in regard to whaling, to name but a few. Addressing these and other diplomatic challenges that confront Japan will require substantive measures for winning hearts and minds in the global community.

Measures that go no further than national branding are bound to evoke *déjà vu* of such stereotypical (and wishful) self-images of Japan as a nation that asserts a unique and continuously evolving identity while hungrily ingesting cultural imports; a nation where people cherish natural harmony in the spirit of symbiosis; and a nation that combines old and new, tradition and innovation.

At best, Japan's hackneyed self-promotion mobilizes catchphrases that apply at least to some extent to any nation and society. At worst, it draws attention to the ways in which Japan's reality violates the lovely spirit of the phrases. Cynical observers respond to the symbiotic pretentions by noting Japan's 'tradition' of defiling moor and mountain, river and sea.

Another problem with glib branding schemes is the impossibility of capturing the full sweep of Japan's diversity with any catchphrase. Japanese people present a vast range of social and cultural characteristics rooted in geography, social strata, gender, age and other criteria. That diversity defies easy categorization. Of course, the nation presents an enduring 'Japaneseness', but that identity is relative. Its salient characteristics differ according to the subject at hand, to the nation or nations to which Japan is being compared, to the purpose of the comparison and to other factors. No one has ever proffered an all-encompassing characterization of 'Japan' or 'Japanese' that distinguishes the subject reliably and absolutely from other nations and cultures.

On careful examination, 'Japaneseness' proves to be less a matter of objective fact than of imagination and aspiration. Social anthropologists have long since abandoned what they discovered to be the fiction of national character. This is no time for resurrecting bankrupt theories about the supposedly fundamental uniqueness of the Japanese people or of Japanese culture. Guffaws of scorn will rain on anyone who dares to voice those theories anew, especially in an international venue.

The Goethe Institut, Germany's equivalent of the Japan Society, makes a valuable distinction between "presenting culture from Germany" and "presenting German culture". It has adopted the former as its fundamental stance, thereby broadening its scope beyond the narrowly 'German'. Japan's proponents of national branding would do well to recognize the constraints inherent to what they propose. Coherent branding would necessitate a narrow focus on selected policy objectives and target audiences. It would preclude the kind of inclusiveness that underlies the Goethe Institut's broad-ranging and highly effective approach.

Public diplomacy ought to be more profound than a beauty contest. Foreign policymakers need to aim for something more than casual popularity and half-baked national

branding in framing diplomatic policy. Otherwise, their policy-making will be just as shallow as the politicians obsessing over every swing in the public opinion polls. Asserting national appeal is an entirely appropriate goal in public diplomacy, but the focus needs to be on fundamental, substantive appeal – on presenting content that will win hearts and minds over the long haul.

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# 34

# THE KOREAN WAVE AS SOFT POWER PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

*Hun Shik Kim*

## Cross-cultural appeal of the Korean culture

The Korean Wave, or a growing popularity of South Korean entertainment contents in Asia and the rest of the world, has been a cultural phenomenon during the last two decades. Beginning in 1997, the first sign of the Wave began with exports of a few Korean television dramas, including *What Is Love All About*, to China. As soon as China's state broadcaster CCTV aired the Korean drama series it became an instant hit across the country. In 2003 and 2004, Japan's national broadcaster NHK aired a Korean TV drama miniseries called *Winter Sonata*, which became a cultural phenomenon thanks to its soaring popularity among Japanese female viewers. Another Korean drama series, *Jewel in the Palace*, was immensely popular in China and Taiwan, and the drama was later exported to more than 90 countries. Korean dramas' popularity gradually reached other countries in the region, including Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. The airing of Korean TV dramas soon triggered a widespread interest among foreign viewers not only in the TV dramas themselves but also in Korean culture, food, fashion and consumer goods (Russell 2012).

Next came Korean pop music with a wide variety of audiovisual elements in the 2000s. Dubbed K-pop, this musical genre showed a cultural hybridity or "East-West mash-up" according to Seabrook (2012). The Korean synchronized dance moves and hand gestures performed by K-pop idol bands such as Girls Generation, 2NE1 and Super Junior captivated pan-Asian audiences. K-pop's popularity began in China in the late 1990s when a Hong Kong-based satellite TV channel started to regularly air Korean pop music. Soon, Korean idol boy band H.O.T. reached the top music chart in China. Boa, a female Korean singer, soon debuted in Japan, and one of her songs ranked the top of the Oricon Weekly Chart. In 2012, the popularity of K-pop reached its peak when Korean rapper Psy (or Park Jae-sang) released his hit single 'Gangnam Style' on YouTube. The song topped the charts in more than 30 countries, and its music video has become the most-watched video on YouTube with over 2.5 billion views.

These Korean entertainment contents not only contributed to increasing the country's economic exports but they also attracted 12 million foreign travelers in 2013 alone, as well as encouraged foreign entertainment industry experts to visit Korea to learn the secrets

of the unprecedented success of Korea's cultural soft power. In 2009, China's *Youth Daily* even coined a new term, 'Hallyu', to refer to the popularity of Korean cultural entertainment contents. With one foot securely landed in the Asian entertainment market, the Korean Wave dominated TV drama ratings and popular music charts in many countries. *The Economist* reported that South Korea managed to charge past Japan to become "Asia's foremost trendsetter" (2014). *Time* called the success of the Korean Wave the best export item from South Korea (Mahr 2012).

## Soft power and public diplomacy

After witnessing the remarkable success of TV drama and pop music exports in several Asian countries, the South Korean government quickly realized vast opportunities in its cultural entertainment products as 'soft power' instruments to attain national policy objectives. The government's strategy was to focus on the appeal of Korean culture, values and brand image using these cultural entertainment products. Public diplomacy is related to the concept of 'soft power', which is the appeal of national culture, national values and national image using a variety of means (Huh n.d.; Nye 2004).

To engage with global audiences, the South Korean government's public diplomacy focused on using soft power, including television programs, dramas, films, books, computer games and even traditional food. Exporting and distributing Korean TV dramas, films and pop music contents in an effort to persuade and change people's attitudes toward Korea and its culture is considered a short-term public diplomacy effort. Another option for public diplomacy is through long-term efforts such as cultural and educational human exchanges, along with establishing and maintaining credibility and mutual trust through "interpersonal dialogues and negotiations". Nye (1990, 2004, 2009), who first coined the term 'soft power', explained that the success of the Korean Wave popular culture has heightened South Korea's visibility around the world and captured the imagination of a new generation, thus the cultural phenomenon deserves to be called a triumph of soft power. According to Nye, the government in Seoul actively shaped the country's popular culture across borders, particularly to younger generations in neighboring Asian countries (Nye 2009; Nye and Kim 2013).

A group of scholars and journalists (Borowiec 2011; Kim 2013, Kim and Lee 2014; Hong 2014) believe that the unprecedented success of Korean Wave exports was largely based on several different factors. First, Korean TV dramas reflected traditional Asian values of Confucianism such as family ties, respect for elders and filial piety, which led to instant appreciation by a vast number of Asian audiences who felt significant cultural proximities to these Korean values. Second, the Korean dramas contained emotionally powerful content, featured attractive main characters and presented chic urban professional lifestyles as well as romantic love affairs that appealed to viewers. Third, the Korean dramas utilized sophisticated TV production techniques, while carrying relatively affordable price tags for TV entertainment merchandises compared to those of American or Japanese counterparts (Lin and Tong 2007; Yoo, Jo and Jung 2014). Fourth, Korean pop music adopted styles and structures from the musical genres from the United States, United Kingdom and Japan by creating a unique cultural hybridity which appealed to global audiences (Seabrook 2012). Fifth, a group of young Korean filmmakers adopted cultural and stylistic influences from a variety of film directors in Japan and the United States, producing special mixed cultural forms (Shim 2009, 2011). Sixth, internet-based social networking websites and online video sharing website YouTube helped spread

the Korean entertainment contents with a remarkable speed and thus made them accessible to people around the world. Seventh, the South Korean government viewed the Korean Wave as a viable way to increase its national exports, and thus utilized the Wave not only as an economic means but also as a diplomatic asset to promote the country's national image and culture to people in other countries (Hong 2014; Nye 2009; Nye and Kim 2013).

## The role of the Korean government and networks of non-governmental players

It was as early as the mid-1990s when the South Korean government, led by then-President Kim Young-sam, proposed a plan to encourage and subsidize cultural and media production industry as one of the country's key strategic export sectors. The government set up a cultural industry bureau inside the Ministry of Culture to assist the private cultural sector in developing media contents worthy of overseas exports. Following the Asian financial crisis of 1997, the new South Korean government, led by President Kim Dae-jung, promoted economic reforms and restructuring projects to focus on the invigoration of the country's cultural industry (Hong 2014). In the process, the government made a commitment to invest 1 per cent of its national budget to spending on subsidies and low-interest loans for fostering private cultural content industries (Leong 2014). The government began providing various forms of subsidies and investment stimulus funds to cultural contents producers, including pop music, TV drama and film production companies. The government also launched numerous state agencies in charge of supporting overseas exports of various cultural entertainment products in close collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. Due to state support in terms of subsidies and tax breaks, companies such as SM Entertainment and YG Entertainment started changing the domestic entertainment business landscapes by introducing elaborate training programs for pop singers and performers as well as by exporting their K-pop products overseas. The Korean government also encouraged universities and colleges to set up more than 300 popular entertainment, drama and commercial music departments to train a talented workforce to support the burgeoning entertainment industry (Onishi 2005).

The Korean government indeed saw the potential of the Korean Wave as soft power and supported its cultural industry in various ways. The government was particularly cognizant that the Korean Wave would be: first, a viable option to increase the amount of overseas exports; second, a valuable tool to engage with global citizens who consume Korean cultural contents; and third, an effective tool to promote global audiences' affinity towards Korea and its culture. This was indeed an ambitious plan for a country such as South Korea, as it aspires to become one of the world's leading pop culture exporters, a status long dominated only by the United States and Japan.

In the early 2000s, Korean cultural content exports hovered around $500 million. By 2014, the total export volume exceeded $5.4 billion (Korea Creative Content Agency 2015). The Korean Wave has spread not only to Asia but as far as the Middle East and eastern Europe. In 2012, the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism announced another ambitious plan to set up a public fund worth $700 million to support the Korean cultural contents industry to build a drama town, a film studio and concert halls in South Korea (Cho 2012). The government also increased its investments in pop music, TV dramas, films and computer game industries, totaling $917 million in loans and credit guarantees (Na 2013). In addition, the government helped support the distribution of the

Korean Wave overseas by sponsoring K-pop concerts, K-pop talent shows and Korean food festivals through the government's networks of Korean embassies and cultural centers overseas. Furthermore, public broadcaster Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) was tasked with hosting the annual K-pop World Festival, in which selected non-Korean amateur singers and performers from all over the world compete to sing (in Korean) and dance to their favorite K-pop numbers on stage in South Korea (K-pop World Festival, KBS World n.d.). Each year, the screening process for this prestigious event typically takes six months until a handful of winners representing the five continents are invited to Korea for the final round of the competition. The Korean government has also encouraged state agencies and provincial governments in Korea to host an annual Hallyu Dream Festival. In 2015, the festival featured a three-day celebration of everything Hallyu, starting with pre-arranged group tours for foreign visitors in and around the host city of Gyeongju followed by a massive K-pop concert featuring more than 20 Korean idol bands and musicians (Hallyu Dream Festival 2015).

In addition to the government's initiatives to promote Korean cultural content exports overseas, private and non-governmental players helped to disseminate Korean entertainment culture in other countries. Business conglomerates or 'Chaebols' such as Samsung, CJ and Lotte began investing in, producing and distributing Korean films and dramas and transformed these subsidiaries and holdings into competitive cultural industries (Park 2012). Television drama exports to other Asian countries garnered a series of impressive successes too. In 2013, Korean dramas constituted 82 per cent of the total of $167 million in TV contents export of South Korea (Korea Creative Content Agency 2015). The amount of export was fourfold compared to the figure of $37.5 million in 2003. When hit Korean TV drama series *My Love from the Star* was aired in China in 2014, Chinese news media reported that the drama series was so popular that most city streets became quiet at around the airing time of the series. One of them reported, "practically everyone in the country was at home in front of the TV set" (CNC International 2014). The Korean Wave also helped to boost tourism in Korea. Immediately after the Korean TV drama *Winter Sonata* became a cultural phenomenon in Japan, the City of Chuncheon in Korea where the TV soap series was filmed became a must-see attraction for Japanese tourists who wanted to relive moments from the drama series by visiting familiar streets and parks featured in the drama series. After several Korean TV dramas were aired on broadcast and satellite television in China, the number of Chinese tourists to Korea also rose dramatically. In 2014, tourist arrivals in Korea rose 12 per cent compared to the previous year. Two-thirds of foreign tourist arrivals in Korea were Chinese (Wang 2014). In summary, it was apparent that the Korean government saw the Korean Wave as the means to boost its overseas exports and to attract more tourists to Korea. However, the government also tried to utilize the Wave as a form of cultural soft power for promoting its national image by engaging with citizens of other countries through Korean cultural content consumption and by heightening their cultural proximities to Korea.

## Technological tools for the global distribution of the Korean Wave

In the early periods of the Korean Wave, most Korean TV dramas and films were introduced when they were aired on major broadcast or satellite television stations in China and Japan. The use of traditional television platforms helped attract relatively sizeable audiences. However, competition for limited airtime became more intense in these countries among the imported TV dramas from Korea, Taiwan and Thailand, not to

mention American Hollywood. Soon Korean entertainment content had to be deployed through different media platforms such as internet-based video-sharing websites to appeal to wider audiences, especially young generations overseas. As Naren Chitty (2015) observed, the internet has become a great marketplace for cultural goods, ideas and services, making the platform the ideal communication channel for engaging with audiences overseas. Much of the success of the Korean Wave, K-pop in particular, is largely attributed to the almost immediate distribution and sharing of its content on internet-based user-generated content (UGC) websites such as video-sharing websites YouTube and DramaFever. YouTube especially is a favorite choice for the K-pop industry when it introduces new singers and performers to a sizable number of global audiences. In fact, the growing popularity and global surge of K-pop coincided with the growth and proliferation of online video streaming technologies in the 2000s. It is important to remember that those who actively consume Korean Wave products outside South Korea may not be the largest in number, but they represent extremely ardent and cohesive groups of young generations eager to spread their interest using their favorite video-streaming and social networking websites.

A number of Korean TV dramas, films and pop music videos have been placed online with minimum copyright restrictions, largely due to Korean cultural content producers' desire to appeal to global audiences. Today, most Korean television networks such as KBS, MBC and SBS are featuring their copyrighted dramas and variety shows on YouTube. Numerous Korean TV dramas have been pirated and are easily accessible to global audiences through various UGC websites. Many copyrighted K-pop music videos have been copied and shared by millions of YouTube users with few copyright restrictions. In fact, the worldwide success of Korean rapper Psy's Gangnam Style music video is attributed mostly to the absence of copyright restrictions placed by his management agency, YG Entertainment, when it uploaded the video for distribution on YouTube in July 2011. Thousands of YouTube copycat videos imitating Psy's dance moves and the original song inundated the platform, which ultimately helped boost the song's global popularity. Today, a vast number of Korean films are carried on YouTube, although some of the latest releases have been removed due to copyright issues. When the Korean TV drama series *My Love from the Star* was aired in China, each episode was carried online on Chinese UGC websites, and its popularity soared immediately. One line from the drama series spoken by the series' lead character, "Fried chicken and beer are essential during the first snow", became the top trending topic on Weibo, the Chinese version of Twitter (CNC International 2014).

## New challenges to the continued popularity of the Korean Wave

During the mid-2000s, the popularity of South Korea's TV dramas, entertainment and music swept through the Asia-Pacific region. In Taiwan, the Korean drama series *Jewel in the Palace* was so popular that selected scenes from the drama were used to advertise Korean tourism (Cho 2012). By 2014, the popularity of Korean TV dramas was at its peak with hugely successful hit drama series such as *Winter Sonata*, *A Tale of Autumn* and *My Love from the Star*. Korean pop music icons held concert tours in many Asian countries in an effort to engage with overseas fans. K-pop idol bands such as Girls Generation, Super Junior and KARA topped the Japanese Oricon music charts. Soon, youth in many Asian countries adopted and followed the fashion trends and hairstyles of Korean pop idols after consuming Korean TV dramas and K-pop bands.

As the Korean Wave became extremely popular, several Asian countries raised concerns by viewing Hallyu negatively as a form of cultural invasion into their national cultures. These countries began controlling the import of Hallyu cultural products or even outrightly rejecting Korean popular culture (Kim and Lee 2014). For instance, Korean TV dramas and K-pop were confronted with unexpected obstacles in the form of 'anti-Hallyu' sentiments in the late 2000s. The anti-Korean Wave sentiments were observed in two forms: one in protective trade barriers and the other in political and diplomatic backlash. Due to growing concerns and criticisms that imported Korean Wave products were posing a threat to domestic TV programming, some countries such as China, Thailand, Japan and Vietnam started imposing foreign TV programming quotas by limiting total airtime for Korean dramas as well as K-pop content on their domestic television channels. For instance, China was previously known to be extremely favorable to receiving Korean cultural contents including TV dramas and pop music. Soon, Chinese criticism was raised over the Korean dramas' descriptions of ancient history related to Korea–China relations. Chinese fans started believing that Korean dramas tended to portray distorted historical perspectives in the ways that they featured traditional Korean cuisine and medicine. Some Chinese K-pop and drama fans thus expressed concerns that consumption of Korean cultural products could be perceived as unpatriotic by their countrymen. China's measures to restrict total hours allowed for Korean TV programming included bans on airing all foreign TV contents during prime time hours between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. on Chinese television channels (Kim and Lee 2014). Similar restraints were placed on Chinese websites carrying Korean drama contents. China's entertainment regulators started imposing greater limits on foreign TV content as part of a broader campaign to control its fast-growing online video market (Qin 2015). Chinese broadcasters and drama production companies also started making Chinese versions of popular Korean dramas and variety shows using Chinese actors and crews, instead of purchasing the original Korean TV content (Qin 2015).

The Thai government placed a similar restrictive measure on its television channels. For instance, the total running time each month for foreign dramas aired on Thai TV was reduced from 43 hours to 26 hours in 2009 (Kim and Lee 2014). The local Thai media also highlighted anti-Korean sentiments by featuring hostile attitudes expressed by a Korean idol band toward Thai culture when the band visited Bangkok. Shortly after this unhappy episode, the cultural discourse in Thailand centered on expressing concerns over ubiquitous Korean entertainment contents, which eventually persuaded the government in Bangkok to reduce the volume and influence of Korean Wave products in Thailand.

Beginning in 2012, the most critical anti-Korean Wave sentiment emerged in Japan, where Korean TV drama series *Winter Sonata* was a huge hit and its lead male character Bae Yong-joon was the center of the 'Yonsama' syndrome during the early 2000s. For many Korean TV stars and pop music entertainers, Japan has been the biggest and the most profitable market in Asia. In August 2012, the South Korean President Lee Myung-bak visited Dokdo, an island which was the focus of a territorial dispute between Japan and Korea. Immediately after President Lee's official visit to Dokdo, diplomatic relations between Seoul and Tokyo deteriorated. By late 2012, another round of diplomatic conflict intensified, souring ties between the two countries, over Korean women being forced to work as 'sex slaves' for the Japanese military during World War II. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visits to the controversial Yasukuni war dead shrine further prompted furious responses from China and Korea (McCurry 2013).

In Seoul, enraged South Koreans held public protests regularly outside the Japanese Embassy. Korean media's in-depth news coverage fanned anger toward Japan. International news coverage on the dedication ceremonies for the Korean 'sex slave' women memorial statues in the United States also heightened the tension. In Tokyo, anti-Hallyu demonstrators led by right-wing Japanese activists marched through downtown, waving Japanese flags and holding signs with offensive messages against Korea (Park 2014). During this period, a number of anti-Korean Wave manga and books were published in Japan, and some of them became bestsellers, reflecting the pervasive Japanese sentiments against Korea. Although most anti-Korean Wave protests were organized and held by right-wing Japanese activists, observers in Seoul were concerned that the anti-Korean Wave sentiments in Japan may eventually result in negative consequences for Korea. Korean business representatives in Japan expressed their concerns as they witnessed sharp sales drops in Korean food, cosmetics and gift items (Park 2014). By 2014, most Japanese TV networks, including NHK, stopped running Korean TV dramas.

Between 2007 and 2013, the overall export figures for the four major genres of Korean Wave content to Japan showed healthy growth, although export of Korean films fluctuated. In particular, Korean online gaming and pop music exports have shown a steady increase despite the concerns over anti-Hallyu sentiments in Japan. Numerous live K-pop concert tours throughout Japan were well-attended by the Japanese fans (Korea Creative Content Agency 2014). As stated earlier, the stagnant exports of Korean TV broadcasting contents, including TV dramas, to Japan between 2011 and 2013 could be traced contextually, perhaps partly due to the deteriorating diplomatic relations between the two countries during the same time period.

According to a public opinion poll conducted by Japan's Cabinet Office in December 2014, over 66 per cent of Japanese citizens over 20 years old responded that they do not feel a sense of affinity to South Korea (Japan Times 2014). In the same survey, nearly 88 per cent of the respondents also expressed that they do not feel affinity to China. Earlier in 2012, when Sino-Japanese relations deteriorated due to a territorial dispute over Senkaku or the Diaoyu islands, a similar opinion poll had found that 80.6 per cent of the Japanese responded that they did not feel affinity to China (Fisher 2012; Koh 2012). Shortly after the latest poll results in Japan were released, the Korean news media began reporting that the popularity of the Korean Wave was waning overseas, although TV dramas and K-pop content still enjoyed a relatively big following in many Asian countries, including China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore (Goo 2013; Kim 2013). The recent backlash denting the popularity of the Korean Wave does signal difficult obstacles ahead for the Korean cultural industry as well as for the Korean government's strategic public diplomacy efforts to deploy the Korean Wave as a form of soft power.

*Table 2.8.34.1* Korean Wave content export to Japan, 2007–2013 (million US dollars)

| *Cultural products* | *2007* | *2008* | *2009* | *2010* | *2011* | *2012* | *2013* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TV broadcasting | 53.5 | 65.6 | 65.2 | 49.7 | 102.0 | 112.0 | 138.0 |
| Films | 5.2 | 9.0 | 5.9 | 2.3 | 3.6 | 0.7 | 8.0 |
| Music | 9.4 | 11.2 | 21.6 | 67.3 | 157.0 | 189.0 | 221.0 |
| Games | 242.0 | 227.0 | 329.0 | 435.0 | 652.0 | 703.0 | 725.0 |

*Source*: Korea Creative Content Agency (2014).

## Strategic options to sustain the popularity of the Korean Wave

Despite growing overseas exports and positive public perceptions of the Korean Wave, some observers contend that the popularity of Hallyu has been stagnant in the last few years. Moreover, the success and dominance of the Korean Wave are being viewed increasingly in some Asian countries as a symbol of cultural imperialism or cultural invasion. Trade protectionist measures toward Korean cultural products in China, Hong Kong and Thailand also negatively affected tourism in Korea.

In order to sustain steady growth in exports and to promote the popularity of the Korean Wave abroad, more concerted public diplomacy strategies should be devised both by the Korean government and Korean cultural industry practitioners. For one, Korean drama production companies and filmmakers must produce more creative drama series and movies geared toward global markets and audiences. One strategy is to devise ways to navigate the protective cultural policies and regulations in various host countries, for example by offering to co-produce more TV mini-series with local actors and crews in these countries.

Korean films still manage to garner fairly successful box office revenues in the domestic film market but they have had little success in overseas markets. Instead of further experimentation, the Korean drama and film industries were criticized for an overreliance on 'lucrative and safe' investment practices by producing cultural contents with repetitive themes and stale plots. Korean filmmakers must revive their spirit of experimentation with the diverse genres and original screenplay which enabled the industry to produce more internationally successful hits such as *Shiri*, *JSA* and *OldBoy*.

During the last few years K-pop's success has been impressive, especially with Psy's global exposure and popularity in 2012. However, the K-pop industry has been considered a niche market success story because it is fueled by a dedicated fandom among young generations sharing similar cultural tastes. For example, the impact of K-pop is significant and Korean idol bands enjoy a relatively big following in many countries in Asia, due partly to their Asian fans' close cultural proximity to Korea. However, the impact of the Korean Wave is less salient and merely confined to Korean immigrant communities in North America and western Europe (Donga Ilbo 2013). Specifically, the North American fan following of the Korean Wave is more limited, with fewer North Americans being aware of the presence of K-pop and its popularity among their peers in other continents. The public diplomacy efforts both by the Korean government and non-governmental Korean actors are needed to sustain the popularity of K-pop by devising longer-term cultural exchange programs. In more recent years, the Korean government, along with national broadcaster KBS, has been proactive in sponsoring K-pop concerts and other cultural events overseas by featuring both Korean and the host nation's entertainers. Mutual exchange rather than one-way street distribution will be effective in attracting more global audiences.

## Conclusion

Many observers agree that the success of the Korean Wave is largely attributed to the Korean government's proactive role in invigorating its cultural industry since the late 1990s. Independent cultural content producers joined in this national effort and created extremely successful cultural products that attracted an immense following outside South Korea. First started in China and Japan, later spread all over Asia and the rest of the world, the Korean Wave is seen as an Asian reaction to western or Hollywood's soft power hegemony

(Hogarth 2013). After two decades of consistent success and popularity in many countries, this Wave has contributed not only to the growth of South Korea's pop entertainment industry but also to creating a positive image of the country to global audiences. In these times of stagnant growth, Hallyu is at a crossroads as to how to continue to grow its influences and impact. Innovators in the Korean cultural industry should take lessons from the Hong Kong film industry. Once the world's third-largest movie industry after India's Bollywood and American Hollywood, Hong Kong films reached their utmost popularity in the 1980s, during which the films were exported to many countries and filmmakers around the world imitated their distinctive genres and production styles. Overproduction, overuse of stale themes and a drop in production quality control, together with rampant film piracy in Asian countries, hastened the decline of the Hong Kong film industry.

There may be some parallels here. The Korean Wave reached its peak in the 2000s, and continued to stay strong when Psy's Gangnam Style conquered the global pop music charts in 2012. Beginning in 2014, however, the Wave showed signs of waning. Korean news media began reporting on the decline of the Korean Wave. *Hankook Ilbo* reported that the Korean Wave in Japan is virtually over and stagnant at best. According to the report, Japanese citizens who were once enamored with Korean pop entertainment contents are losing interest in the Korean Wave (Kim 2013). The report also suggested that the main fanbase for the Korean Wave in China is limited to young people, not the general public. The Korean cultural industry is now challenged to make concerted efforts to reinvigorate its TV dramas, films and pop music contents so that Hallyu soft power can continue to attract global audiences. At the same time, both the Korean government and the Korean cultural industry must devise new public diplomacy strategies to alleviate the so-called 'cultural hostility' in some countries and to promote human and cultural exchange efforts between Korea and other countries.

As for fluctuating Korea–Japan diplomatic relations, public diplomacy efforts should be intensified because the gaps of distrust and anger between the two peoples due to the diplomatic cul-de-sac created by long-lasting territorial disputes and memories of unpleasant Japanese colonial legacy in Korea still linger in spite of two decades of remarkable success of Korean popular culture in Japan. What distinguishes public diplomacy from traditional propaganda campaigns is that public diplomacy is carried out on a person-to-person basis and needs active and participatory private non-governmental actors. Both the Korean government and independent cultural content producers must strive to make efforts to convince global audiences to follow the Korean Wave again. Mutual understanding and persuasion through long-term public diplomacy measures have become even more important today than traditional one-way street measures.

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# 35

# VIETNAMESE CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

## An emerging strategy

*Gary D. Rawnsley and Chi Ngac*[1]

> Cultural Diplomacy reveals the soul of a nation.
>
> (US Department of State 2005, p. 3)

Since 2009, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (hereafter Vietnam) has turned its attention to developing a programme of activities that its government defines as 'cultural diplomacy'. In Vietnam's judgement, cultural diplomacy is an important strategic apparatus that must be integrated with the nation's economic and political mechanisms of statecraft to further Vietnam's regional and global ambitions. The government has identified cultural diplomacy as the most important method of building meaningful international relationships based on mutual understanding (MoFA 2008, p. 54). Hence cultural diplomacy is ostensibly the driving force in the strategic shift of national ambitions and priorities: from "want to be friend" (stated at the 7th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam, CVN, in June 1991) to "search for friends and reliable partners" (9th National Congress, April 2001)[2], to an aspiration for Vietnam to be a "responsible member of the international community" (11th National Congress January 2011). The Vietnamese government is confident that this shift demonstrates its ambitions to engage more with the world and to participate in regional and international affairs; and the structural arrangements of Vietnam's foreign policy – at the levels of both decision-making and implementation – are designed to help realise these aspirations. In short, Vietnam accepts cultural diplomacy as a rational alternative and strategic counterweight to the influence of major powers in the region (MoFA 2008, pp. 54–5). Vietnam could never hope to compete with China and Japan – and the US's continuing involvement in Asia – in terms of hard power. Hence this reality has provoked the government in Hanoi to seek alternative methods of expressing and exercising power and influence and raising Vietnam's international profile. Vietnam's Ambassador to the UK and Ireland at the time of field research, Minh Quang Vu, observed in an interview in 2012 how his country "does not focus exclusively on the ambition to use its culture to influence and dominate publics abroad, but it prefers to enhance mutual understanding, trust and relationship-building" (interview, 21 May 2012).

This chapter discusses and evaluates how the Vietnamese government aligns its cultural diplomacy strategy with its national and international ambitions, and considers how Vietnam's diplomatic missions overseas integrate culture into their routines and practices. The Vietnam case study is especially interesting and valuable, for it challenges the received wisdom about which actors are best suited to designing and executing a cultural diplomacy strategy. While most studies of cultural diplomacy highlight the value of maintaining as much distance as possible from the government, thus allowing the cultural industries to work without being tainted by explicit political objectives or suspicions of 'propaganda' – "it often behooves governments to keep in the background and to work with private actors" who "enjoy more trust than governments do" (Nye 2008, p. 105) – the Vietnamese government has decided to take a central and hands-on role in the design and execution of the country's cultural diplomacy activities. The integration with economics and politics has clearly persuaded the government that the state should decide the narrative: which themes and images to present to the world and how.

This indicates a second reason for examining Vietnam's approach: This is relatively new territory for Hanoi, which has only recently dipped its toe in the public diplomacy waters, and this is reflected in the absence of any comprehensive discussion – in either English or Vietnamese – of Vietnam's public diplomacy or cultural diplomacy, or what might be termed its overall 'soft power' strategy. So, as a preliminary discussion and as the prelude to more thorough research, this chapter suggests that by looking closely at Vietnam we can observe how a small power – a developing country which enjoys relative political stability and is growing in regional stature – begins to understand the necessity of international cultural engagement for the realization of its ambitions, especially to balance the more powerful actors in the neighbourhood. The pursuit of cultural diplomacy may reveal weaknesses in a country's hard power and may be able to compensate for deficiencies in the hard power and geopolitical domains. Small countries like Vietnam are more likely to use cultural diplomacy as a tool for domestic development by boosting tourism and foreign investment (MoFA 2008, pp. 54–5).

A final objective of this chapter addresses the prominence of culture in the strategies of Asian, and especially (neo)authoritarian societies. Neither Vietnam's reasoning for situating culture at the centre of its diplomacy, nor its methods of projecting the national culture to define and sell Vietnam to international audiences, is unique. Rather, any analysis of Japanese, Korean, Chinese and Taiwanese public diplomacy must privilege culture as their core mechanism of international communications. Hence this paper speaks to a wider research agenda that questions the relevance and appropriation of western approaches to public and cultural diplomacy and soft power by societies with very different cultures, traditions, histories and political philosophies. We suggest that it is essential to analyse cultural diplomacy from the perspective of the specific society's own understanding and practice, and this is why we are confident that this discussion will contribute to an analysis of 'de-westernization' which expands discussions about the concept beyond Anglo-American models and relocates public and cultural diplomacy within specific cultural, social and political contexts that better reflect local approaches to politics, international relations and communications. This research agenda is concerned with more than simply describing and studying how different countries design and execute soft power strategies; it is also an attempt to contribute a more culturally sensitive and nuanced understanding and explanation of different theoretical and conceptual perspectives we may find beyond Europe and the US. As more and more governments in Asia are developing their public diplomacy capacity as an instrument of statecraft, we must

appreciate fully the way understandings of power, diplomacy and public and cultural diplomacy are embedded within, help shape and are shaped by distinct environments.

Vietnam experiences friction between the dominant narratives of socialist modernisation, driven by its Communist Party, and the continuous references to culture and tradition. Cultural, traditional and historical themes may be the most popular among audiences and are the easiest for the government to sell. Its dilemma – one that it shares with its close Communist neighbour, the People's Republic of China (PRC) – is the lack of an obvious correlation between enjoying traditional qualities, including culture, and liking contemporary Vietnam, its policies, political system or its behaviour at home and abroad (Wang 2010). Here, the Chinese experience is instructive. The appeal of the PRC's modernization and its self-projection as a strong, confident and increasingly powerful nation is problematic and reveals internal linguistic and conceptual conflicts about the product China is selling: which is the more authentic China? As Ramo (2007, p. 12) has noted, "China has changed faster than any nation in history" but "its image has failed to keep up with these changes." Hence the persistence of specific rhetorical devices that serve a legitimising function at home but mean little overseas. Vietnam, too, another equally dynamic Asian society with growing economic and strategic relevance for the region, has yet to decide what Vietnam is or which Vietnam is the most appropriate for overseas consumption.

Moreover, Vietnam has been constrained by its own past. Decades of colonialism, revolution, war, reconstruction and a damaging international embargo meant that cultural and public diplomacy were not national priorities until Vietnam could begin to engage more with the world after the normalization of relations with the US in 1995. Yet war remains the dominant image of Vietnam for many international audiences and therefore restricts the efficacy of its cultural outreach. Unlike the Chinese Communist Party, which embraces and projects China's past status as 'victim' during the 'century of humiliation' to amplify its nationalist ambitions (Callahan 2009), the government of Vietnam is far more cautious in discussing its recent painful history, preferring instead to focus more on the distant past and the virtues of its traditional culture.

## Cultural diplomacy

> Above all else is culture.
>
> (Liang Zhuge, military adviser in China's Three Kingdoms)

While there is no settled definition of cultural diplomacy, there are two descriptions that help our understanding of the concept and its practice. The first is a much-used and broad description which claims cultural diplomacy is "the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding" (Cummings 2003, p. 1). Pavan Varma, head of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, agrees with this essentially idealist approach, suggesting that culture:

> [H]as the potential to shape, alter and impact the ideas and opinions of public communities. From a wide-ranging perspective, culture has the capacity to resolve tensions and prejudices – ethnic, religious, communal, national and international. It can create a climate of tolerance, respect and understanding among nations, religions and entire regions. It is thus an essential medium for peaceful and tolerant contact and communication.
>
> (Varma 2007, p. 128)

Another perspective is contained in the Report of the US State Department Advisory Committee on cultural diplomacy which described it as the "linchpin of public diplomacy", adding that "it is in cultural activities that a nation's idea of itself is best represented" (US Department of State 2005, p. 3).

Absent in both definitions is reference to the political: to what ends is the 'mutual understanding' in Cummings's definition working towards? And for what purpose does the US State Department think it is a good idea to represent "the nation's idea of itself"? In seeking answers to these questions, we are helped by Philip M. Taylor (2007), who always placed the political and strategic at the forefront of his thinking on the subject. He noted that the ultimate objective of cultural diplomacy is to serve and further the national interest; that it is a means by which power is accumulated, projected and exercised (otherwise are we simply referring to cultural relations or engagement?), and that in the cultural realm the distinction between hard and soft power may not be as discrete as we might suppose. Perhaps the problem is that current approaches to cultural diplomacy focus too much on the source of the product, as well as the product itself, and do not pay sufficient attention to either the *motive* of the source or the power of the receiver living within distinct political, social and cultural contexts (Womack 2005).

So it is worth remembering that cultural diplomacy must serve two masters; it helps promote the national interest – however it is defined and whoever defines it – and it must encourage mutual understanding, tolerance, respect, trust and the existence of shared interests. Hence the unresolved issue remains of whether or not cultural diplomacy must pursue explicitly political agendas and interests, or whether these are the natural and long-term by-products of the projection of culture for its own sake. The agents of cultural diplomacy are in no doubt:

> Artists engage in cross-cultural exchange not to proselytize about their own values, but rather to understand different cultural traditions, to find new sources of imaginative inspiration, to discover new methods and ways of working and to exchange ideas with people whose worldviews differ from their own. They want to be influenced rather than influence.
>
> (Channick 2005)

The details of this debate are less relevant than understanding three key issues: that cultural diplomacy (1) provides a politically neutral platform that works best when distance from the government and its political agenda is maintained. Governments should facilitate the infrastructures for the non-governmental sector and the cultural industries to engage in outreach activities[3]; (2) it is acknowledged as an important and cost-effective method of building trust and relationships with people (especially non-elites) by choosing themes that not only represent cultural aspects but also resonate with audiences; and (3) it works across the long term and demands long-term investment. It is unrealistic to expect immediate or short-term returns on activities.

However, it is a mistake to place too much confidence in cultural diplomacy. It is not and should not be deemed a solution to a country's diplomatic, political or even presentation problems; and while the strategic reasons for privileging culture are reasonable, there are still several interconnected concerns that the agents responsible need to address. The first relates to the difficulty of measuring *impacts* as opposed to *outputs*. It is easy to count the number of international visitors who pass through Vietnam's airports or the box office receipts for a movie made in Vietnam and exhibited at an international film

festival. It is far more challenging to measure the *response* of individuals who encounter Vietnam in a cultural mode and determine whether or not their attitudes or behaviour towards Vietnam have changed as a consequence of engaging with a specific cultural product. After all, culture is highly subjective, and what may appeal to one member of the audience may not appeal in the same way, if at all, to another (Liebes and Katz 1993). In fact there is a distinct possibility that the audience may reject the cultural product altogether as a threat to their own social values (as per 'cultural imperialism'): "A target may find a sender's promotion of cultural and political values (such as democracy) to be an act of coercion, not persuasion. A sender's cultural and political values themselves may be interpreted by a target state to be the potential source of threat to society" (Lee 2011, p. 22). Janice Bially Mattern (2005) called this the hard character of soft power. Confidence in the universal application and value of one set of cultural products or principles can easily be translated as political and cultural arrogance.

In other words, the audience may interpret the cultural product in an entirely different way from the way its creator intended. This means that the outcome of any soft power strategy, including cultural diplomacy, is "more in control of the subject than is often the case with hard power" (Nye 2008, p. 13), and, therefore, there is no guarantee that cultural interest will translate into tangible soft power outcomes; there is no certified direct correlation between consuming a cultural product and a change in opinion or behaviour towards the source (McConnell 2008; Yoshiko 2008). This is particularly the case when cultural products are being exported around the world for viewing by audiences who may have no or very little cultural understanding of what they are seeing. Hence it is necessary to understand the audience for such outreach; to define with whom one wishes to communicate, why and how.

Vietnam's cultural diplomacy resonates more with audiences in Asia than in the rest of the world, and this may demonstrate that geographical and cultural proximity – with shared values (especially Confucianism), histories and interests – helps identify what might be shared culturally to advance the relationship between neighbours. This also reflects Vietnam's commitment to learning from its neighbours and absorbing the way they conduct cultural relations, and Japan has been a particular inspiration (interview with Son Minh Pham, 22 July 2012). Meanwhile, Vietnam's cultural diplomacy beyond Asia is constrained by a number of factors (most obviously the shadow of the Vietnam wars), some of which are beyond the control of the government in Hanoi but which require careful and innovative strategies if their effects are to be mitigated.

## The structure, aims and objectives

The importance that Vietnam attaches to cultural diplomacy is revealed by the publication in 2011 of Decision No.208/QD-TTG, 'Strategies on Cultural Diplomacy Through 2020', by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA 2011). Clearly acknowledging the need for long-term planning to create long-term benefits, this document affirms that the economic, political and cultural approaches to Vietnam's foreign engagement exist within a symbiotic relationship that compels them to interact and co-operate. Traditional-style diplomacy provides the vision and direction for Vietnam's foreign relations; economic diplomacy is concerned with the endowment, accumulation and allocation of resources; while, according to the government, cultural diplomacy is the "spiritual foundation of external … activities" (ibid.). Hence the structural arrangements of Vietnam's foreign policy – design, decision-making and implementation – are intended to facilitate such

collaboration, with MoFA supposedly at the centre as the strategic driver. Each area of activity and each Ministry serve their own bureaucratic interests while also reinforcing the strengths and needs of the other two. For example, cultural diplomacy is connected explicitly to the five-year economic and social development planning mechanisms (which include tourism and foreign investment as part of their remit). In an interview for this chapter, Vietnam's Ambassador to the UK and Ireland, Minh Quang Vu, described the aim of his country's economic diplomacy as doubling British investment in Vietnam in two years. He therefore identified cultural diplomacy as a method of deepening economic partnerships: "[At] conferences about business development programmes or campaigns," he noted, "cultural aspects are often emphasised – especially when it comes to Vietnamese products – to … create a more favourable image of the Vietnamese market" (interview, 21 May 2012). So there is official confidence in culture's ability to add value to relationships built and maintained in other areas of activity, and that culture can, if deployed strategically, enhance "national brand value" and "prestige in the international community" (Jin 2011).

Yet despite the officially integrated, three-pronged approach to Vietnam's diplomatic strategy (Pham 2010), Son Thanh Bui, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, affirmed that cultural diplomacy is the central pillar that is most useful for building mutual understanding with other countries and for developing meaningful relationships (MoFA 2008, p. 54); it is the fulcrum of Vietnam's "comprehensive and modern diplomacy" (MoFA 2011). This indicates that the government clearly recognises the potential of cultural diplomacy in furthering Vietnam's foreign policy agenda, and this was echoed in interviews conducted with members of Vietnam's mission in London: "Culture must come first as a gateway to the economy and to politics" (interview, 10 July 2013).

The Vietnamese government has identified five areas that require a commitment to cultural diplomacy:

- establishing relations with countries that do not yet enjoy formal links with Vietnam;
- consolidating existing relationships and facilitating mutual understanding;
- projecting Vietnam's image to the international community;
- associating Vietnam's cultural heritage with UNESCO;
- recognising how Vietnam's culture may absorb the 'essence' of other countries (MoFA 2011).

Moreover, the same document describes how cultural diplomacy can help preserve Vietnam's national security and connect with both the domestic constituency and the Vietnamese diaspora to nurture a sense of national identity. These are characteristics that Vietnam shares with its Asian neighbours. For example, among the principle audiences for Indian cultural diplomacy are diasporic communities throughout the world (Thussu 2013), while the Chinese government is very clear that public diplomacy must be directed towards Chinese people living within its borders, Chinese communities around the world and international opinion (d'Hooghe 2005, p. 100; Kurlantzick 2008; Han *et al.* 2012, p. 63).[4] It is possible to argue that this unique approach encourages tensions and contradictions in content, method and purpose, for the Chinese outreach strategy must reconcile the need to project both the economic modernization of the country and the continuing appeal of traditional cultural themes while simultaneously trying to explain and justify the continuation of rule by the CCP. The government must communicate these often contradictory themes to two different audiences

to achieve different goals, and must, therefore, work hard to make sure the message is consistent across all platforms. A Chinese Foreign Minister has observed that diplomacy is "an extension of domestic politics" (Edney 2012, p. 907). Hence the domestic programme of nation-building, ensuring stability and harmony, and maintaining the authority of the Communist Party all help explain China's cultural diplomacy overseas. Edney (2012, p. 914) notes that the "efforts to promote Chinese culture internationally and to increase China's international voice are undertaken primarily in order to shape a public opinion environment conducive to the pursuit of the CCP's domestic political agenda".

So Vietnam, like other regional actors, is confident that the projection of and engagement in cultural activities will have strong and positive consequences at home and abroad – that the intangibles of cultural engagement can be converted into tangible political and economic benefits, and this is captured in MoFA's 'Strategy on Cultural Diplomacy Through 2020' (MoFA 2011):

> To strongly step up cultural diplomatic activities to make the world better understand the Vietnamese land, people and culture, further build confidence of other countries, make relations between Vietnam and its partners more profound, stable and lasting, thereby raising the country's status in the international arena and facilitating its socio-economic development. Cultural diplomatic activities will also contribute to absorbing the cultural quintessence of mankind, enriching and deepening the national traditional cultural values.

Yet the formal and official mechanisms that have been created overseas to engage in cultural diplomacy do not provide the resources required to do the job: Vietnam's diplomats receive no formal training in cultural diplomacy, indicating that government commitment and rhetoric is one thing but managing the day-to-day activities in its foreign missions to accomplish the stated objectives is quite another. For example, when in 2012 we first visited Vietnam's embassy in London, and visited again in 2013, there was just one member of staff, a Cultural Attaché, who could devote time to this work, but had no separate pot of funds to draw from (and the Attaché remained subordinate to the Ambassador who is directly responsible for the embassy's cultural diplomacy). A further visit to the embassy in 2015 revealed that there is now no Cultural Attaché, and cultural work is spread among colleagues. This is a serious situation for a diplomatic mission working in one of the world's major cities and which represents a diplomatic strategy that places culture at its core. It also devalues cultural diplomacy by sending a signal that it is not important and, moreover, that anyone can do it.

MoFA's budget for cultural work is small, and in 2008 had risen to only 1.8 per cent in response to Vietnam's economic growth. These funds had to cover both the development of the cultural and art industries in Vietnam and cultural diplomacy activities overseas. Embassy staff must still bargain and barter both with their colleagues in London and with their masters back home on a case-by-case basis. Cultural diplomacy competes for funds with all the other activities and priorities of the embassy.

However, the embassy is able to overcome such problems by engaging routinely with Vietnamese communities in the UK who can sponsor and organize events, and Vietnamese students and private sector businesses are particularly helpful and active groups. Moreover, the embassy has nurtured close relationships with organisations such as the British Council and other bodies involved in the work of British cultural industries

(the British Council Art Fund has created funding opportunities for Vietnamese artists and art organisations, including those living and working in the United Kingdom, to exhibit their work), and these arrangements, links and partnerships are reflected at Vietnam's other overseas missions. Moreover, there is evidence that when he was in post, the embassy's Cultural Attaché oversaw a process that included the careful targeting of specific audiences in the UK and had the confidence to contradict instructions from MoFA if a cultural activity may not work within the UK market (interview, 21 May 2012). Vietnam has organised a series of bilateral cultural relationships with Japan, for example, through an Annual Japan–Vietnam Cultural Festival (Browne 2012, p. 40; Tsuboi n.d., p. 6) and a handicraft exhibition in 2010. The Vietnam International Film Festival (ViFF), co-organised by the Vietnamese American Arts and Letters Association and UCLA's Vietnam Language and Culture centre, is an important international showcase for Vietnam's nascent movie industry and demonstrates again the advantages of working with the non-governmental sector in strategic markets.[5] Engagement with non-governmental agencies is an effective approach to cultural diplomacy because, as Nye has observed, they "directly touch the lives of far more people than government representatives do" (Nye 2008, p. 105).

However, Vietnam still does not have the resources to compete with the outreach and engagement strategies of its more successful Asian neighbours. It has no equivalent of China's Confucius Institutes, Korea's King Sejong Institutes, the Taiwan Academies, the India Council of Cultural Relations or the Japan Cultural Centres. Nor does Vietnam have a developed cultural industry, so most of its cultural strategies are designed and implemented by MoFA or the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. This explains why the Vietnamese government is far more hands-on in terms of cultural diplomacy compared to other states who recognise that the more distant the government from the cultural product, the more credibility it will enjoy. This has less to do with the determination of the Vietnamese government to maintain control of the message (as in China) and more with the condition of Vietnam's cultural landscape. It also suggests that there may be a correlation between existing familiarity with a country and the need for government intervention: the fact that Vietnam has little profile and 'brand recognition' beyond its history of conflict may mean that central direction is required.[6] There are also more pressing reasons for government involvement. State institutions are in the best position to coordinate cultural diplomacy activities and the actors involved; they provide the infrastructures, visa regimes etc. required to support the work of the cultural industries. They can help arrange cultural tours and visits – in 2007 alone Vietnam despatched 407 touring performances and exhibitions across the world – and prepare the promotional materials that may help their activities to flourish.

A further major structural problem that connects with the novelty of cultural and public diplomacy is the absence of training and instruction provided to members of the diplomatic corps preparing for despatch to overseas missions. The government decided to establish a cultural diplomacy course in several major universities (including the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, the Academy of Journalism and Communication, and Hanoi University of Culture) to orient students towards its cultural diplomacy strategy (MoFA 2011). However, at the time of writing (September 2015) this decision has yet to be implemented. The Ambassador to the UK and Ireland, Son Minh Vu, said in interview that "the cultural diplomacy training programmes offered by MoFA and the Ministry of Education [are of] limited quality" (interview, 21 March 2012).

## Themes

The theme that defines Vietnam's cultural diplomacy strategy is the promotion of the country as peaceful and stable, one that has navigated a delicate period of renewal after decades of war and ostracism, and which aspires to be an important regional player; a "dynamic economy … and actively participating in regional and international issues, struggling for peace, co-operation and development" (Pham 2010). This is reflected in the comments of Deputy Foreign Minister Cuong Quoc Nguyen who observed that "Cultural diplomacy plays a very important role in creating a meritorious image of Vietnam in the international arena, and conveying a message of a peaceful, stable, friendly, open and reformed Vietnam that has seen rapid and sustainable development and a growing position in the region and the world" (MoFA 2011). However, projecting such themes has not been easy given that the wars against France and the US continue to define and inhibit the international community's assessment of Vietnam.[7] Moreover, Vietnam has felt the need to divert foreign attention and criticism from the more authoritarian nature of its communist credentials, and thus in its international communications pays particular attention to representing itself as a free market open economy that welcomes foreign trade and investment: "Vietnam is a friend and reliable partner of all countries" (MoFA 2012).

Vietnam sells itself as a "beautiful country with a legendary history, a unique culture, friendly citizens and a dynamic economy" (MoFA 2008, p. 8).[8] However, Vietnam also goes beyond these pedestrian themes to highlight a very specific idea of 'culture', and this has an impact on its international projection. In this geographic context culture refers to a "high level of social life and [the] expression of civilization." Thus for the Vietnamese a cultured person is 'civilized' and 'educated' (Bui and Sekhar 2012). This means that cultural diplomacy is not only about rebuilding relationships around political and economic objectives, but is also concerned with creating and communicating an image of Vietnam as a highly 'cultured', ie. civilized and educated, nation, which, of course, means that the government must ensure that its education policies are working at home first before they can be communicated on an international scale. This is something to which Vietnam has started to pay serious attention since the 1990s. Until that time, 'culture' was not a subject one could study at university; now it is a mandatory part of the curriculum. In 2001, the 9th Party Congress identified the objectives for Vietnam's 'cultural progress': "To speed up the movement [whereby] the whole nation is united to build up cultural life. Building civilized lifestyles and cultural families etc.; bringing into full play the national and cultural identity; preserving and restoring tangible and intangible cultural [identities] that serve as the basis for cultural exchange among communities, regions, and between Vietnam and the outside world" (cited in Nguyen 2008, p. 4). In other words, there is a clear acknowledgement that the basis for Vietnam's cultural projection *overseas* begins with the development of culture *at home*, and hence the government has designed a comprehensive programme to promote traditional Vietnamese values among the Vietnamese people. This was a campaign described as "All people unite to build a cultural life" (Vietnam News 2012).

Moreover, we find in Vietnam's approach to cultural diplomacy an emphasis on ethical and moral perspectives on its conduct of international relations that have been informed by a mixture of influences – Ho Chi Minh's ideology, Confucianism and Marxism–Leninism. Vietnam's diplomats observe how these influences allow for a flexible and pragmatic style of diplomacy, and that an ethical style of diplomacy can help build and maintain relationships. This so-called 'ethical' diplomacy is contrary to the dominant

paradigms in international relations because it tends to focus on states acting beyond their self-interests, treating other international actors equally and operating in an honest and transparent way (Frost 1996; Thompson 1992; Graham 2008). While it is important to evaluate such claims by measuring whether Vietnam lives up to them in practice – in public diplomacy, as in international relations generally, actions always speak louder than words – it is possible to identify the connection of this ethical approach to cultural diplomacy which likewise emphasises mutuality, trust and respect.[9]

These core values of Vietnam's ethical-style diplomacy – which play well with audiences in neighbouring countries with Confucian traditions – include "harmony, duty, honour and respect" (Hunt 2002), found scattered throughout history textbooks[10] and in the folk tales and legends passed down through the generations. The 5th Plenum of the Communist Party's Central Committee clearly connected the features of Vietnam's cultural identity to its overseas projection. These features included patriotism, self-reliance, humanity, tolerance, morality, hard work and a "simple lifestyle" (MoFA 2008, p. 74). The problem, of course, is that such words are too ambiguous to be the basis for a sustained publicity campaign, yet the government has never been able to decide how to describe and communicate Vietnam's cultural identity in a way that will be embraced by foreign publics. Hence the embrace of a more scattergun approach, even though scholars (such as Tuyen Thanh Nguyen and Graeme Johanson 2008) and the outcome of a national conference on Vietnam's cultural diplomacy in 2009 (the Year of Cultural Diplomacy) did call for a more focused method that highlighted fewer characteristics with more universal appeal.

History has always been a prominent theme in public and cultural diplomacy, especially when governments communicate their development strategies to their own people at home. The Chinese government has been particularly enthusiastic in invoking history to marshal public opinion (Gries 2004; Callahan 2009). The purpose is to frame discussions about identity and help the CCP preserve its political legitimacy, and there is no contradiction between the modern and the traditional, both of which feed into the Chinese cultural diplomacy strategy.

An example of how Vietnam has integrated its own historical identity with its cultural diplomacy strategy occurred in 2010 when the government arranged a series of activities to mark the 100th anniversary of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long in Hanoi. The most important of these was the programme to persuade UNESCO to accept the old royal palace as a centre of World Cultural Heritage. This conforms to the Communist Party's belief that "cultural heritage is an invaluable asset" and is the "essence of national identity and the basis for creating news values and cultural exchanges" (in Nguyen 2008, p. 9). UNESCO's interest in Vietnam also dovetails with the organization's recognition of Ho Chi Minh's contribution to heritage preservation and the restoration of the traditional arts. UNESCO suggested that Vietnam should "spread knowledge of the greatness of his ideals and his works for national liberation". Moreover, the Vietnamese government has co-operated with UNESCO to protect and promote the cultures of ethnic groups. For example, UNESCO supported a project to promote (especially among younger Vietnamese people) the music and rituals of the Gong culture in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. In this way the government of Vietnam has identified ethnic diversity as a way of promoting a more complex picture of Vietnam's identity, heritage and culture; this connects to the economic agenda as Vietnam's growing coffee industry is centred in those areas of the country inhabited by minority ethnic groups (interview, 10 July 2013).

At the same time, the Vietnamese government seized this historical opportunity of receiving UNESCO's explicit support to launch a comprehensive information campaign that distributed to foreign broadcasters, journalists and visiting dignitaries its position and record on human rights and democracy, especially Vietnam's involvement in the relevant agencies of the United Nations and ASEAN. One example is participation by young Vietnamese artists in the ASEAN Graphic Arts Competition and Exhibition, endorsed by the government as a way of showcasing modern and traditional Vietnamese culture.

So the themes that structure Vietnam's cultural diplomacy strategies are common among governments throughout east Asia where people share a Confucian heritage and values and have a shared history of (post)colonialism in one form or another. Hence we have arrived at a possible explanation for the success of Vietnam's cultural diplomacy among its neighbours and the absence of impact beyond Asia: cultural proximity, defined by Straubhaar as "the tendency to prefer media products from one's own culture or the most similar possible culture" (Straubhaar 2003, p. 85). This means that audience attention is best attracted and sustained when viewer and cultural content share a 'cultural linguistic' or 'geolinguistic' location (Sinclair, Jacka and Cunningham 1998; Straubhaar 2003). Therefore there is reason to argue that different types of cultural diplomacy work on different levels with different audiences: while Vietnam's approach based on shared values works well with audiences in east and south-east Asia, it has less relevance to audiences elsewhere, in which case the exotic 'other' may be a more powerful image. This means, for example, that in the cultural diplomacy activities organised by the Vietnamese embassy in London traditional music and dancing are prominent, but differentiate between 'high' and 'low' culture, the former represented by symphonies and ballets by Vietnamese composers and musicians while the latter, targeting 'ordinary' Brits, includes Vietnamese puppet shows, fashion shows and even a Vietnam Festival at London's Spitalfields Market (interview, 10 July 2013). Moreover, while Vietnam cannot compete with the popularity of the Korean or Japanese cultural waves (Hallyu and J-pop respectively[11]), in east Asia so-called 'V-pop' has experienced some success in Laos, Thailand and Cambodia.[12] Again, this suggests the power of cultural proximity with Vietnam's neighbours in south-east Asia.

However, public admiration for and interest in Vietnam's cultural expression does not necessarily translate into greater levels of international public support for Vietnam and its foreign policy objectives. This suggests a fundamental weakness of locating culture and tradition at the forefront of soft power; namely, there is no guarantee that cultural interest will convert into tangible soft power outcomes. How does cultural power connect with one's national aspirations and foreign policy ambitions? As Nye (2008, p. 164) has observed: "Whether the possession of power resources actually produces favourable outcomes depends upon the context and the skills of the agent in converting the resources into behavioural outcomes." Published research (for example, McConnell 2008; Watanabe 2008) suggests that there is no direct correlation between consuming a cultural product and an increase in sympathy or empathy with the source. Watching a Vietnamese movie or attending a Vietnamese food festival does not necessarily translate into a change of attitude, opinion or behaviour towards Vietnam.

Moreover, even the argument that attraction is based on cultural proximity is flawed when we consider how geostrategic and historical differences may inhibit the free flow of cultural products. As noted above, the so-called 'Korean wave' (Hallyu) has enjoyed considerable success in east Asia; it is the most successful example of nation branding in Vietnam, and Korean culture penetrates all aspects of life there. However, Hallyu

has experienced a serious backlash from the Chinese people, who have considered this an attempt by Seoul to assert the primacy of Korean culture over all others (Cho 2005, p. 160). As discussed earlier, these allusions to 'cultural imperialism' (and in this case a different form of cultural imperialism that is not synonymous with the idea of Americanization that still dominates the literature) demonstrates that ostensibly 'soft' instruments of power can have 'hard power' consequences and interpretations.[13]

## Conclusions

Vietnamese cultural diplomacy faces the same problem as its Chinese counterpart – that is, there is a clear disconnect between the aims and objectives of Vietnam's strategy and the political reality of life in the country, and the exposure of these contradictions threatens the credibility of Vietnam's cultural diplomacy. Perceptions about the government's domestic behaviour and its responses to issues of human rights, democracy and freedom of speech all sour the international assessment of Vietnam's soft power. Stories about a new crackdown on free expression in late 2009, which intensified in 2013,[14] together with the frequent arrest of bloggers who dare to challenge the official narrative, present a difficult picture for Vietnamese cultural diplomacy to sell, while political turbulence in 2013 – the government barely survived the first ever vote of confidence in the National Assembly – undermines the image of a peaceful and stable country. In July 2013, the Vietnamese government relaxed restrictions on foreign television channels broadcasting in the country. These regulations required foreign channels to have a local partner with a translation and editing license to meet "people's healthy needs" (in May 2013, 21 channels, including the BBC and CNN, were taken off air). The decision was overturned when foreign governments said such restrictions were damaging their investment in Vietnam. The soft power consequences were clear: "We know that the international community is watching," said John Medeiros, chief policy officer at the Cable and Satellite Broadcasting Association of Asia. "Frankly, the Vietnamese government is getting some bad press [because of this]" (Than Nien News 2013).

This indicates that Vietnam still experiences problems within the political realm which prevent policies, values and principles – as well as cultural products – being as attractive to international audiences as they otherwise might be. In fact, we may well argue that cultural diplomacy is by its very nature an instrumentalist method of conducting foreign relations, and by focusing on the instruments of soft power – cultural products – we are presented with an incomplete picture. Rather, to truly understand the successes and failures of Vietnam's cultural diplomacy we must ensure that we grasp the consequences of political decisions made in Hanoi that may influence audience reaction. In turn this architecture compounds the problems associated with building and maintaining credibility as the reality of the Vietnam government's behaviour challenges and undermines any of the more positive messages and themes that its cultural diplomacy is able to communicate. For example, no volume of Vietnamese public or cultural diplomacy will compete with China's nationalist rhetoric and convince Chinese audiences of Vietnam's claims to parts of the South China Sea and sovereignty of the Paracels and Spratlys (and similarly Chinese public diplomacy will achieve little in Vietnam on the same issue).

Vietnam is a relative novice in terms of engaging in public and cultural diplomacy; this is understandable, as it is only recently that Vietnam has found the renewed confidence to engage with the international community in a meaningful way after decades of revolution, war and recovery. This tentative approach explains not only the government's direct

hands-on approach to activities, but also the absence of official proposals and guidance on Vietnam's cultural diplomacy, and this is reflected in the few government sources cited in this paper. It is difficult to find any official documentation beyond Decision No. 208 QD-TTG (MoFA 2011) except in matters of finance and budget, and this deficiency reveals a country still feeling its way and improvising. Hence it is possible to argue that Vietnam's cultural diplomacy is impulsive, passive and disorderly and, therefore, the success of its cultural projection is limited. Members of the Vietnamese embassy in London concede that the cultural diplomacy is somewhat confused and they have difficulty identifying the most unique cultural products that best represent the country (interview, 10 July 2013). The themes that resonate most are those that are familiar to Vietnam's regional neighbours, namely Confucianism, harmony and self-reliance. These themes do not travel well beyond Asia, so cultural diplomacy must depend on projecting exotic tropes with more appeal to foreign audiences unfamiliar with Vietnam. At the same time the Vietnam wars continue to cast shadows over the country's international communication. While China is now more visible than at any time in the past and a continuous presence on our television screens, in our cinemas, in our high streets and on our university campuses, Vietnam is still largely invisible, generating little news coverage and little attention beyond curiosity about war and refugees.

Funding is invested in particular *ad hoc* activities in particular countries, rather than providing the resources for a comprehensive programme that begins in Hanoi. And this is a stunning situation that contradicts the official view of cultural diplomacy as the central pillar of a three-pronged strategy that is required to facilitate Vietnam's political and economic engagement. With the exception of the Year of Cultural Diplomacy in 2009 the government has devoted insufficient resources to cultural diplomacy, while the academic study of public diplomacy in Vietnam is undernourished. This can only lead one to the conclusion that, despite official pronouncements to the contrary, economic diplomacy is the overriding strategic priority.

## Notes

1 Both authors would like to thank members of the Vietnam embassy in London who agreed to be interviewed on three separate occasions in 2012, 2013 and 2015.

2 "Vietnam is ready to be a creditable friend and partner with all countries in the international community, struggling for peace, independence and development" (Communist Party of Vietnam 2001, p. 42).

3 "[A]ctors in public diplomacy can no longer be confined to the profession of diplomats, but include various individuals, groups and institutions who engage in international and intercultural communication activities" (Signitzer and Coombs 1992, p. 139).

4 Shambaugh (2013, p. 62) sees this approach as a weakness in the Chinese strategy. He notes that "much of Chinese popular culture abroad is targeted at the overseas [Chinese] community and never reaches non-Chinese audiences. It is an insular discourse in Chinese, by Chinese and for Chinese."

5 ViFF complements the biennial National Film Festival organised by the Department of Cinematography inside Vietnam's Culture Ministry. On the eve of the 2013 Festival the head of department, Ngo Phuong Lan, noted: "The film festival conveys an obvious message: 'Vietnam's Cinema – national, humane, creative and integrating'". 'Vietnam's cinema – national, humane, creative and integrating', *Vietnam*+, 10 October 2013, available at http://en.vietnamplus.vn/Home/Vietnams-Cinema-national-humane-creative-and-integrating/201310/40003.vnplus, accessed 24 February 2014.

6 This issue is discussed in the context of the China–Taiwan situation in Rawnsley (2012). Taiwan is far less well-known than China and so must choose its narratives carefully.

7 In his keynote address to the Shangri-La Dialogue, Prime Minister Nguyen Dung Tan (2012) made reference to this history: "We do not forget the past but need to put it behind us and look forward to the future."
8 Similar priorities were identified by the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) in 1988: "independence, self-control, openness, diversification, and multilateralism in international relations" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 1988).
9 Our interviewees at Vietnam's embassy in London made it very clear that 'ethical diplomacy' is not an official approach, but more a style and way of thinking.
10 For example, the textbooks tell us that in the fifteenth century, Nguyen Trai, the principal adviser to Le Loi (later the King) resisted the Chinese Ming dynasty's occupation over parts of Dai Viet (the former name of Vietnam). This resistance was based on a philosophy that emphasised common interests among nations. The Ming invasion and occupation was described as inhumane and unjust, and hence there was never any question that the resistance by Dai Viet would triumph.
11 In 2000, Korea exported $244.5 million worth of cultural products; by 2010 this had risen to $2.6 billion (Thussu 2013, p. 35).
12 Vietnam, via Ho Chi Minh TV, exported some television programmes to Thailand in the 1990s (Nguyen 2011; Nguyen 2011).
13 On perceptions of Asian countries and culture within Asia and the US, see Whitney and Shambaugh (2009).
14 Concerns led to Reporters Without Borders ranking Vietnam 172/179 on its Press Freedom Index.

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# 36

# BEYOND THE BOATS

## Constraints on Indonesian and Australian soft power

*Murray Green*

### Introduction

'Stopping the boats' has defined significant elements of the relationship between Indonesia and Australia. The Australian Labor Governments between 2007 and 2013 saw over 44,000 asylum seekers arrive in Australia by boat (Uhlmann 2015). Opposition Leader Tony Abbott campaigned in the 2013 election on a platform of 'stopping the boats'. From December 2013, then-Prime Minister Abbott oversaw a virtual cessation of the arrival of asylum seekers by boat in Australia. This was achieved by turning boats back to Indonesia, which is an established transit location for asylum seekers and refugees. It is estimated that some 10,000 are registered in Indonesia with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (Hugo, Tan and Napitupulu 2014). In domestic Australian politics this policy, and support for it, has significant electoral resonance (ANU 2015).

This achievement has come at a significant reputational and relationship cost, particularly with Indonesia. Australia has been accused of unilateralism rather than taking a collaborative and regional approach to solving irregular migration. Many of the asylum seekers and refugees come to Indonesia through Malaysia and originate from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar (Hugo, Tan and Napitupulu 2014).

Indonesia has not reacted well to Australia's border security strategy. During the 2013 election campaign Tony Abbott proposed that Australia would spend some AU$20 million on Indonesian wardens in fishing villages to provide information on boats about to leave for Australia. The proposal went beyond that to an intention to buy and destroy Indonesian boats to prevent them from sailing with asylum seekers in the direction of Australia. The influential Commission 1 Chairman in the Indonesian Parliament, Mahfudz Siddiq, observed that these initiatives were "crazy", "degrading" and "offensive" (South China Morning Post 2013).

Tony Abbott's Australian government stopped the boats. Immigration Minister Peter Dutton indicated that 20 boats containing 633 "potential illegal arrivals" had been turned back through Operation Sovereign Borders (Dutton 2015).

But any consideration of Australian and Indonesian relations needs to go beyond the boats. Going beyond this difference in immigration policy between the two nations is

difficult to do without acknowledging that the practice of soft power will be played out in the context of Australia's hard power initiatives.

This chapter will attempt first to distil some Indonesian and Australian concepts of soft power. First, the framework advanced by Indonesian President Yudhoyono when addressing the Australian Parliament in 2010 will be contrasted with the Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop's outline of Australian soft power at the Lowy Institute for International Policy in Sydney in June 2015. Second, the practice of soft power by each nation will be assessed in the context of two related 2014 Australian developments. These are, first, the response to allegations of Australian espionage activity in Indonesia and second, the Australian government's withdrawal of funds for a principal agent of soft power in the region, through international television. Further, an attempt will be made to assess the constraints on each nation's power of attraction, a critical element in the practice of soft power. In conclusion it will be argued that each nation, while articulating soft power aspirations, has yet to invest substantially in sustained effort and resources to augment each other's power of attraction.

## Conceptions of soft power

What could be considered as the 'gold standard' in the soft power tool of attraction has been identified by Joseph Nye. Soft power is influenced by three basic resources: culture (in places where it is attractive to others), political values (where there is consistency at home and abroad) and foreign policies (when others see them as legitimate and having moral authority). The attractiveness of culture has some illusive edges. Culture, according to Nye, is the pattern of social behaviours by which groups transmit knowledge and values. Some culture is universal and some is national or even confined to small groups or social classes (Nye 2004, p. 11).

As I have noted elsewhere (Green 2013), soft power's dependency on attraction provides some particular challenges. First, there needs to be some matching between the sender's sense of what is attractive and the receiver's understanding of what are desirable values. There needs to be a coming together of life experiences and a repertoire of collective interpretations of the world. There needs to be knowledge about the attraction before the attraction can occur. Second, there needs to be an understanding of what drives positive attraction (after Yong 2011). Alexander Vuving has suggested three clusters of qualities that are essential to attraction across borders: being benign and not aggressive; being competent; and having beauty (Vuving 2009 cited in Nye 2011, p. 92). Being benign attracts sympathy, trust and credibility. Competence is a reflection of style, capacity and behaviour. From recognition of competence flows admiration, respect and a desire to follow. Beauty is related to vision and values that encourage affinity and adherence (Vuving 2009, pp. 7–8).

How does the leadership of Australia and immediate past leadership of Indonesia match this articulation of soft power?

Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Indonesia, addressed the combined houses of the Australian Parliament on 10 March 2010 (Parliament of Australia, Hansard 2010). He reflected on some 60 years of the relationship with Australia since Indonesian independence and alluded to defining events such as convicting the Bali bomber and the 2004 Aceh tsunami and Australian assistance. But the relationship has not always been sweetness and collaboration:

> There were periods when we were burdened by mistrust and suspicions at both ends. There were times when it felt like we were just reacting to events and were in a state of drift. There were moments when we felt as if our worlds were just too far apart.
>
> (Parliament of Australia, Hansard 10 March 2010, p. 2137)

The president observed that this was in the past and Indonesia now looks at Australia 'in a different way'. Australia is now a country of choice for Indonesian students and tourists. Then the president started talking about Australia's soft power of attraction. Indonesia admires Australia's living standards, its 'social dynamism' as well as its 'openness and generosity'. In particular Yudhoyono noted how Indonesians watch the Australian Open tennis on their television sets and they also watch Australian soap operas (like *Home and Away*, broadcast on the Australian Foreign Affairs-funded Australia Network). Australian stars like Hugh Jackman, Nicole Kidman, Mel Gibson and the late Steve Irwin have many fans in Indonesia.

The soft power of education provided a personal context for the president. His son graduated from Perth's Curtin University. Yudhoyono knew of no other western country with more 'Indonesianists' in government, think tanks and universities and high schools. But the president's optimism did not come without a critique:

> The most persistent problem in our relations is the persistence of age-old stereotypes … there are Australians who still see Indonesia as an authoritarian country, as a military dictatorship, as a hotbed of Islamic extremism or even as an expansionist power. On the other hand, in Indonesia there are people who are inflicted with 'Australiaphobia' – those who believe that the notion of the White Australia still persists, that Australia harbours ill-intention toward Indonesia and is either sympathetic to or supports separatist elements in our country.
>
> (Hansard 10 March 2010, p. 2137)

It is Yudhoyono's projection of modern Indonesia that is a basis by which we may assess Indonesia's aspirations for the exercise of soft power. First, Indonesia is a beautiful archipelago and much more than 'a beach playground with coconut trees'. Second, Indonesia is the world's third largest democracy and the largest country in south-east Asia. Third, Indonesia is "passionate" about its independence, moderation, religious freedom and tolerance. Finally, the president rejected the notion of a hostile Indonesia. The nation aspired to creating a strategic environment 'marked by millions of friends and zero enemies'.

The president concluded that Indonesians are a proud people who cherish national unity and territorial integrity 'above all else'. Their nationalism is about forging harmony and unity among Indonesia's many ethnic and religious groups, including in Aceh and Papua, where 'peace and reconciliation' is not trivial but a matter for national survival for Indonesians. The president wished all Australians would understand that.

This relationship optimism and nuanced projection of Indonesia was severely impacted by events that recalibrated the environment for the exercise of soft power. Australian intelligence was accused of intercepting the president's phone and that of his wife; Australia terminated its principal fiscal commitment to soft power in Indonesia and east Asia; and Indonesia executed two Australian drug smugglers. Further, the new Indonesian President, Joko Widodo, appears not to be quite as engaged as Yudhoyono in thinking about relationships with his southern neighbour.

We shall look at the impact of these developments on the exercise of Indonesian and Australian soft power but before doing so we shall now look, by comparison, at how the present Australian government frames its exercise of soft power.

In her speech to the Lowy Institute on 11 June 2015, Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop was also confident about Australia's source of attractiveness (Bishop 2015).

In education, Australia is the world's fourth-largest destination for international students. Australia, Ms Bishop argued, was the "lifestyle capital of the world", with four Australian cities consistently among the top ten 'liveable' cities in the world.

The Foreign Minister then outlined further elements of Australia's soft power:

> We are a smart, creative and tolerant people with a robust economy and strong institutions. Our society, built on waves of immigration over the course of our history, possesses the energy and entrepreneurial spirit that comes from the meeting of cultures and ideas from all corners of the world.
>
> (Bishop 2015)

The two pillars of Australia's open society are a liberal democracy, committed to freedom, the rule of law, human rights and democratic institutions and an open export-orientated market economy. The Foreign Minister outlined Australia's use of power. Australia's hard power and soft power enable the nation to advocate for and defend its values and beliefs. The foundation of Australia's soft power, the Foreign Minister argued, was its liberal democracy with respect to the rule of law, freedom of speech, freedom of religion and freedom of political affiliation.

The Foreign Minister's address included two specific references to the application of soft power: Australia's 'koala diplomacy' and the introduction of the New Colombo Plan involving the placement of Australian students in east Asia and the Pacific as part of their learning. Indonesia is the foremost destination in this program.

'Koala diplomacy' involves making the Australian native marsupial available to other countries. The Foreign Minister observed that "our koalas have come to represent our warmth, our openness, our friendship as a nation". The New Colombo Plan, echoing the achievements of the original Colombo Plan, will see some 10,000 Australian students having studied in the Asia-Pacific region by the end of 2016.

There are similarities in the claimed soft power credentials advanced by these Indonesian and Australian leaders. Democracy and openness; diversity in culture and religion; and the beauty and liveability of the environment feature as common claims of attraction. There is a basis for resonance in what is regarded as attractive and it is common to both nations. But Indonesian and Australian sharing of soft power attraction has been impacted by three recent circumstances: the allegation of Australian intelligence intercepting the Indonesian Presidential Palace, the end of Australia's soft power engagement through international television, and the execution of two Australian drug smugglers, despite pleas to the Indonesian President from the Australian Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. Two of these developments explicitly affected the context for the exercise of soft power. The other was far-reaching but more discreet.

## Constraints on the exercise of soft power

### *Allegations of Australian spying on the Indonesian President*

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), the government-funded national broadcaster, joined with the *Guardian Australia* in reporting the release of intelligence files by fugitive United States security contractor Edward Snowden. The documents were reported to indicate that the Australia Defence Signals Directorate intercepted the phone calls of Indonesian President Yudhoyono and his wife for a period of at least

15 days in August 2009 (less than a year prior to the Indonesian President's address to the Australian Parliament). The news reports were broadcast domestically in Australia and internationally on Australia Network television and Radio Australia, including throughout Indonesia.

There was a strong reaction from the Indonesian government. The Indonesian Ambassador to Australia was recalled to Jakarta and Australian–Indonesian relations lapsed into crisis.

The then Australian Minister for Communications, Malcolm Turnbull, rang the Managing Director of the ABC to indicate that broadcasting the phone tapping story in collaboration with *Guardian Australia* was "an error of judgment" (Swan 2013). This echoed the criticism of the Australian Prime Minister, who said:

> I think the ABC were guilty of poor judgment in broadcasting that material, which was obviously difficult for Australia's national security and long-term best interests. Why should the ABC be acting as an advertising agent for a left-wing British newspaper?
>
> (Kerr 2013)

The broadcast by the ABC of the Snowden material and the intervention of the prime minister attracted contested commentary and analysis that ranged from closing down Australia Network to privatising the ABC and to the prime minister playing the treason card (Green 2014, p. 2).

While the Australian government appeared to be trying to deflect any confirmation of the bugging towards a scrutiny of the ABC, the Indonesian government was not so equivocal. At a political level the Indonesian President appeared angry and outraged. His Twitter account included:

> Today I instructed [Foreign] Minister Marty Natalegawa to recall Indonesia's Ambassador to Australia. This is a firm diplomatic response … I also regret the statement of Australian Prime Minister that belittled this tapping matter on Indonesia, without any remorse.
>
> (Cited in Belot 2013, p. 1)

Australia's soft power capacity appeared further impacted when the Australian embassy in Jakarta was attacked with eggs by protesters from the Islamic Defenders Front. Images of the Australian Prime Minister were burnt, as was the Australian flag (Belot 2013).

### *Withdrawal of funding for Australia's soft power media initiative*

Australia's largest investment in soft power was funding by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) of an international television network that broadcast in Asia and the Pacific to some 45 nations, by way of some 600 re-broadcasters mainly on cable platforms. Indonesia was a principal user of this service, where some content was subtitled in Indonesian. Some AU$220 million was budgeted over ten years for this international television service, known as Australia Network. For transparency, I need to disclose that, as Director International at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (2006–12), I had responsibility for this channel. DFAT contracted the ABC to program, operate and distribute the Australia Network as an instrument of soft power.

The arrangement for Australia Network was put in place after a competitive tender. Following intervention by the then Labor Government, the ABC was awarded the contract to operate the service against the other tenderer, Sky News – part-owned by Rupert Murdoch – which at least in some press reports, was regarded as the lead bidder. The government awarded Sky News a compensatory payment for its costs in the light of the tender process being cancelled. The process was strongly criticized by the Commonwealth Auditor General for lapses in procedure (Australian National Office of Audit 2012).

The Abbott government appeared uncomfortable about the DFAT-funded Australia Network not being more attuned to the interests of "the home team" (Packham 2014). Australia Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, speaking at Chatham House in London, observed:

> It is not about ABC promoting its news program … into the region, it's actually meant to be fulfilling the Australian Government's foreign policy objectives … my question is whether under a soft power diplomacy contract … is that the best use of taxpayer's money to project a positive image into the region.
>
> (Bishop 2014, pp. 13–14)

The Minister went on to say that the conflicts between ABC news programming and the network's priorities had been evident in the presentation of asylum seeker stories and the publication of leaks from whistle-blower Edward Snowden.

Soft power is the practice of the power of attraction. International broadcasting can be a significant instrument of soft power. However, this instrument of soft power is found not in a network that is seen as being a government voice but rather in a media network that is seen as being independent of government, although supporting funds may come from it (Green 2013). Arguably the best example of international broadcasting as an instrument of soft power is the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service Radio and BBC World News television. The reason that these are most effective means of soft power for the United Kingdom (UK) is that the last thing they would be recognized for is deferring to UK government views. The soft power of attraction is that the UK promotes and funds open independent debate on domestic and international issues, which reflects the values of UK society.

Sky News in its proposal for Australia's international television service made a distinction between the approach to news and information domestically and internationally. Chief Executive Angelos Frangopoulos underlined this:

> Unlike the ABC's confused news management, we do understand the critical difference between a Sky News channel and the DFAT funded Australia Network … [which] should be supporting Australia's international missions, championing the nation's business and trade, and playing a central role to foster understanding of Australia and its people across the region.
>
> (Frangopoulos 2013)

If there was any confusion, it was in the Foreign Minister's and the Chief of Sky News' understanding of how soft power best works through international media.

Soft power does not mean soft and deferential journalism. Because of the obligations of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983 (Section VIII[1][c]), news content, whether published at home or abroad, is required to have the same

standards: independence, accuracy, impartiality and objectivity. These values are a power of attraction in Asia and the Pacific. This journalism is believable because of its independence from the state, compared to some regional examples of journalism which are rather deferential to a nation's political leadership. The strength of Australia's soft power is that by demonstrating open and independent journalism, the values of Australia being an open society, where free speech is central to the way of life, are on display. This is Australia's soft power, its power of attraction.

Soft power in public international media does not, therefore, have to mean soft journalism; that is, avoiding difficult stories because they may offend the nations where they are being broadcast or displease governments that may be funding these networks.

A Lowy Institute for International Policy study in 2010, undertaken independently but funded by the ABC, found that Australia's approach to international broadcasting and public diplomacy was 'complicated and confused' (Oliver and O'Keeffe 2010). Australia's approach is further complicated because of the lack of policy coherence in terms of understanding the role of public international media. Government policy appeared uncoordinated and asymmetric. Radio Australia was funded through the Department of Communications and Australia Network was funded through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. While the Minister for Foreign Affairs appeared to have some expectation that Australia Network would be an advocacy service for government perspectives, Radio Australia is seen as a lifeline for reliable independent news and information in the Asia-Pacific region in times of crisis.

The abolition of funding for the soft power initiative in the Australia Network did not have the public resonance of the Australian bugging story but the two developments are not without connection. It was clear that the Australian government was displeased about the ABC reports. It was also clear that the Foreign Minister had a view about media soft power that amounted to an expectation of synergy with government perspectives. The impact of media as soft power was demonstrated when the Indonesian Presidential Palace requested DVDs of programs that were missed when viewing Australia Network.

### *The Indonesian execution of Australian drug smugglers*

Australian citizens Andrew Chan and Myuran Sukumaran were executed by Indonesia in April 2015 for illegally importing heroin. They had already served some ten years in prison prior to their execution, which followed unsuccessful appeals to the Indonesian President by the convicted pair as well as by the Australian Prime Minister. The Australian Foreign Minister and Attorney General also unsuccessfully appealed to their Indonesian counterparts.

As part of the pre-execution advocacy and plea process, Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott asked Indonesia to remember the generosity of Australia during the 2004 Aceh tsunami. This intervention led to a significant constraining of Australia's power of attraction. This was one of Australia's "missteps" in its handling of the issue (Ward 2015, p. 106). Indonesians launched a Twitter campaign under the hashtags 'Coins for Australia' (#KoinUntukAustralia) and 'Coins for Abbott' (#KoinUntukAbbott) to pay back the billion-dollar aid money. The campaign spread from Aceh throughout Indonesia and attracted comments like "Go to Hell with your aid bogans Oz" (Allard 2015). Coins were thrown outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta.

A further intervention from the Australian Foreign Minister also appeared to constrain Australia's power of attraction. Julie Bishop suggested "Australian people will

demonstrate their disapproval of this action [the planned executions], including by making decisions about where they wish to holiday" (Kenny 2015). This appeared to refer to a favourite Australian holiday destination – Bali. The Indonesian Foreign Ministry expressed doubt that a foreign minister from a friendly country, who was respected in the region, would make such a statement (Ward 2015, p. 107).

Indonesian and Australian soft power plays out in the context of these events: allegations of Australian spying on the Indonesian President; the cancellation of a significant Australian soft power media initiative; and reactions in Australia and Indonesia to the execution of two Australian drug smugglers. It is argued that just as we have to craft our soft power settings 'beyond the boats', so too any consideration of Indonesia's and Australia's power of attraction requires us to go beyond espionage, the loss of media opportunity and the fallout from executions. What, then, are indicators of enduring Indonesian and Australian soft power that transcend the contextual constraints we have examined so far?

## Beyond the constraints on soft power

Earlier it was noted that the power of attraction depended on some connection between a sender's sense of what is attractive and the receiver's sense of what are desirable values. Further, there needs to be an understanding of what drives positive attraction before attraction can occur (Yong 2011). It was also noted (Vuving 2009) that the drivers of positive attraction include being benign and not aggressive; being competent; and having an aesthetic attraction in beauty. We shall now attempt to assess Indonesia's and Australia's soft power capacity against these forces of attraction.

### *Indonesia*

A foremost Indonesian diplomacy observer, Rizal Sukma, in a definitive 2011 analysis, identified six limitations on Indonesian soft power (Sukma 2011, p. 108). The constraints included a conclusion that Indonesia's soft power is "fragile, precarious and underdeveloped". Indonesia, in Sukma's view, has a deficit in the power of attraction. There is a lack of resources to nurture and sustain Indonesia's soft power initiatives. There is inconsistency in Indonesia's foreign policy, a crucial setting for the practice of soft power, that has been fed by competing domestic agendas. Indonesia's soft power is limited by ambiguity in the nation's identity, argues Sukma. Indonesia's population is largely Islamic but the state is not constituted in Islamic terms. Further, there is often a conflict between the foreign policy interests and priorities of the Indonesian President and the Foreign Ministry. Sukma concludes that the reality of Indonesian domestic politics often constrains the ability to consistently advocate its powers of attraction. These amount to a significant catalogue of constraints.

We noted earlier how the Indonesian President in his 2010 address to the Australian Parliament positioned his nation as an exemplar for democracy in east Asia and for moderation and tolerance as to how Islam was practised. While Sukma in 2011 had some scepticism about Indonesia's democratic credentials, from the perspective of 2016, rather than 2011, the democratic standing of Indonesia has been enhanced, not least because of the way in which a whole nation of over 250 million elected its president in an orderly manner in the 2014 election of Joko Widodo. But that is not how a significant portion of Australians receive this advocated power of attraction. In a 2015 Lowy Institute Poll

only 34 per cent of those Australians interviewed thought Indonesia was a democracy (Lowy 2015). A nation's perception of the rule of law may be closely related to perceptions of democracy and in separate polling Lowy found that 69 per cent of Australians thought the death penalty should not be used for drug traffickers (Lowy 2015). At the time of the Bali bombing in 2002 Indonesia was seen as "at best as a 'messy state'" either breaking into separatist parts or being dramatically affected by Islamic extremists. The perspective of some analysts in more recent times is that Indonesia is 'a normal country' with attractions of religious pluralism and geographic and cultural diversity (MacIntyre and Ramage 2008).

A more recent and confident and optimistic appraisal of Indonesia's soft power is that "Indonesia's greatest asset is in the international arena" (Pitsuwan 2014, p. 251). This upbeat assessment is based on three elements of Indonesian achievement. First, Indonesia's successful economic growth following the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis and where the nation is being considered in the company of emerging economies such as Brazil, Russia, India and China. Second, Indonesia's transition from dictatorship to democracy is in contrast to other nations in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which Indonesia founded and where it remains influential. The contrast between the progress of democracy in Thailand and the Philippines is in sharp contrast to the democratic achievements of Indonesia. And third, Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world and is a compelling example of the "peaceful co-existence of modernity, democracy and Islam" (Pitsuwan 2014, p. 252).

This writer shares this bright assessment of Indonesia's power of attraction and concurs with this view that it is foreign policy and the conduct of foreign affairs, including public diplomacy, that provide the settings for the conduct of soft power.

## *Australia*

As we have seen in the asylum seeker turn-back policy and well-founded suspicions of spying, Australia's practice of hard power has constrained elements of its strength in soft power in its relationship with Indonesia. Recent authoritative analyses on Indonesian–Australian relations are titled *Condemned to Crisis* (Ward 2015) and *Together Apart* (Dobell 2015). We shall consider two instruments of Australian soft power: the attraction of high quality and accessible education and attempts to understand Indonesia through the soft power experience of Indonesian language learning.

The Indonesian President in his 2010 address to the Australian Parliament identified Australia as the destination of choice for Indonesian students. Australia is the fourth-largest provider of higher education for international students after the United States, the United Kingdom and France. The quality, range and accessibility of Australia's some 40 universities offer attractive options for further study, as well as the opportunities in the senior years of secondary education. But as Byrne and Hall noted in their 2011 study, Australia's educational engagement has shifted from an emphasis on exchange assistance programs such as the original Colombo Plan to the commercialized full fee approach of today (Byrne and Hall 2011, p. 1). The soft power dynamic of international education centres on positive experiences and exchanges with the development of intellectual, commercial and social relationships reinforcing the attractiveness of a nation and in turn influencing regional or global outcomes (Byrne and Hall 2011, p. 5). The original Colombo Plan focused on the import of students to locations such as Australia but, as the Australian Foreign Minister indicated in her 2015 Lowy speech, the New Colombo

Plan has the objective of exposing Australian students to educational experiences in the Asia-Pacific region. Indonesia is the foremost choice of location and by the end of 2016 some 10,000 Australian students would have studied or had practical placements in the Asia-Pacific region (Bishop 2015, p. 5). The power of attractiveness is not only the experience of international students in Australia but the soft power impact of Australian students in the Asia-Pacific region.

A particular way in which the power of attractiveness can be enhanced is in the experience of learning another language, particularly of a culture and nation which Australia seeks to influence. Like the Australia–Indonesia relationship, the progress of learning Indonesian in Australian educational institutions has had the experience of both rise and fall. David Hill has analysed this phenomenon in the context of soft power. In Australian universities there was 37 per cent decline in students studying Indonesian between 2001 and 2010 (Hill 2014, p. 1) but the Indonesian President in his 2010 address to the Australian Parliament praised Australia as the place where more Indonesian language learning occurred than anywhere else outside Indonesia. There are more recent signs for optimism. While Indonesian language learning in Australia may be sliding, there are rising numbers of Australian students studying in Indonesia (Hill and Sen 2014).

The Indonesian language is more recently beginning to permeate Australian popular culture. And just as South Korea advanced its soft power credentials through rap music, this may an instrument in the practice of the power of Australian–Indonesian attraction. A major Australian insurance company's advertising campaign has included Rhonda, a local woman falling in love with Ketut from Bali, and the dialogue included some Indonesian conversation. Similarly, Indonesian dialogue has been included in the well-received ABC Television drama *Rake* (Hill and Sen 2014).

There still, however, appears to be some disconnect. Indonesia needs to accelerate its investment in Australian language learning centres and it is in Australia's soft power interests to have an Indonesian-literate leadership in business, public administration and civil society.

## Conclusion

This chapter has sought to identify some of the significant constraints on Indonesian and Australian soft power. A principal argument underpinning this analysis is that the practice of hard power has a pervasive influence on the practice of soft power.

Australia's power of attraction has been constrained by its unilateral policy on returning asylum seekers transiting through Indonesia, allegations of intelligence monitoring of the presidential phone, and a confused debate on the meaning and impact of soft power through international media.

Indonesia's soft power has been constrained by poor appreciation of its democratic achievement, an equivocal response to its claim to be pluralist but Islamic in a modern, moderate state, and a negative reaction to the remedy of execution for drug smugglers.

While there are encouraging indicators that some of these constraints may be overcome in the practice of soft power, there remains a deficit in the commitment of both Australian and Indonesian governments to invest more substantially in the conditions that foster the power of attraction. Until the Australian government has a concept of soft power that rightly demands alignment with Australian values but does not confuse this with deference to political direction, then the potential for the soft power of attraction will remain diminished by the constraint of hard power.

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# CONCLUSION

*Naren Chitty*

## Introduction

Presenting a cartograph of the global confederacy through a discussion of soft power's role in the world polity, we examined in Part I related methodological issues and cultural and technological underpinnings. An exploration of selected national domains, sometimes comparative, relative to genres of public diplomacy associated with soft power as discussed in Ch. 1 followed in Part II. On occasion reflections stemmed from, or were about, countries (as well as two territories of larger sovereign countries) some of which have largely escaped the attention of essayists of soft power. Contributions arise from many disciplinary contexts in addition to international relations and international communications. This conclusion will reflect on commonalities in the variegated texts. Major themes that appeared, either in explicit discussion or in focus, include influence; the role of technology and networking; the soft (low politics-related) public diplomacy tracks of a broad cultural diplomacy, civic diplomacy and hard (high politics-related) public diplomacy; linguistic aspects of soft power; and normative soft power. A variety of ways in which language, conversation and symbolic interaction might be used in examining soft power have been discussed. A pentad of wide-angled lenses is used below for viewing and discussing contributions. These are the nature of soft power; cultural diplomacy and cultural industry; soft power, influence and hard public diplomacy; governance and civil diplomacy; and national competition and cooperation.

## Nature of soft power

As indicated above, soft power is viewed as having normative (Ch. 1, Ch. 3, Ch. 11, Ch. 12, Ch. 13, Ch. 16, Ch. 19, Ch. 24, Ch. 28 and others), linguistic (Ch. 1, Ch. 20) and symbolic (Ch. 1, Ch. 11, Ch. 26) dimensions. This is very much in keeping with a post-positivist constructivist domicile for soft power rather than a positivist neoliberal one, though, in my view, from a hard constructivist[1] perspective, the notion of soft power being housed in a constructivist home at the same time as it is domiciled in a positivist neoliberal one need not give rise to discomfiture. World politics is constructed through words and deeds, speech and other acts. Soft power has registers at both levels, system

and agent (Ch. 14). The international system is a social construct and agent behaviour influences and is influenced by the system. Soft power too is a social construction, as are technologies. To articulate Hall's (1976) insight differently, technologies extend affordances to words and deeds. Affordance is a key term in Ch. 14.

Several contributions, in discussing soft power, hark back to influence in world politics. Force-free influence is not foreign to international relations. But soft power fills a word gap in IR theory and practice and should only be dislodged if an alternative filler is found to "conceptualizing and practicing influence" (Ch. 2). The notion of 'influentials' is important for soft power theorization; influentials inhabit the capillaries of the global confederacy (Ch. 1). Further theorization needs to be undertaken in relation to soft power and influence, there being varied and even contradictory views on the relationship between influence and power, as captured by Zimmerling (2005). These varied views range from influence being the broader concept of the two (i.e. power and influence) with the former being intended and the latter unintended in terms either of means or effects; power being the broader case; political influence being the same as power; influence being based on persuasion while power not so; influence and power being interchangeable terms; agents needing power to be able to influence; and power being the ability to influence so as to enhance power (Zimmerling 2005). The suggestion has been made that "soft power should be seen as a separate concept from hard power, reflect the inner-workings of the practice, and be situated within the proper political context" (Ch. 4). In Lasswell and Kaplan's (1950) view power is a special case of influence, one where influence is intended. Is unintended influence soft power? Ch. 3 takes the position that hard power is about command and control and soft power is the same as influence. Given that according to Nye there are both passive and active approaches to soft power, we might conclude that unintended influence is closer to passive soft power and intended influence to active soft power. We might now introduce Nye's terms to the discussion, hard and soft power (Nye 2011). There is not a tidy fit between unintended influence and soft power; soft power spills over into intended influence. Hard power would be intended influence in the view of Lasswell and Kaplan (1950), as would Nye's active soft power. A range may be constructed, one with the following key segments or categories:

A intended influence/active hard power
B unintended influence/passive hard power
C intended influence/active soft power
D unintended influence/passive soft power.

Intended influence/active hard power (Type A) is the use of coercion or inducement (Nye 2011). Unintended influence/passive hard power (Type B) is having means of coercion or inducement, not employing them, but having influence as a consequence of possession of these. Intended influence/active soft power (Type C) is strategically deployed or purposively used soft power. Unintended influence/active soft power (Type D) is an effect of an actor's values *sans* strategy. Types C and D can occur against backdrops of Types A or B. When this happens purposively, Nye (2011) calls it smart power.

Technologies have built-in affordances and so when technologies such as social media are used this is done purposively to benefit from their affordances. Such usage falls under Type C. However, once technologies are in place, from discrete intelligent software artefacts to the totality of socio-technological plexuses (cybersphere, mediasphere and

infosphere) of Ronfeldt and Arqilla (2007), such plexuses can exert Type D. In the infosphere (the technological matrix of the global confederacy) there is also the merging of mind and technology even if the same technology hosts warring expressions of mind – from humanistic republicanism (Ch. 1) to commination (Ch. 14).

Culture is described as an instrument of power or hegemonic influence and subordinated groups rationalize acceptance of the hegemon's views in the latter's soft power (Ch. 9). Soft power is everywhere in discourses. But where soft rather than hard power is at play there should be greater potential for agency or for receivers to act as influentials (Ch. 1), and this is an affordance of network technology. There is a view that the discourse of early industrializing powers in the west has 'barbarized' the rest of the world and that that this influence needs to be combated with countervailing cultural constructs. The effect of barbarization has been soft power accrual in the western model of civilization – the west no longer has to convince the rest that the latter should follow a globalizing western examplar (Ch. 3). Culture is viewed as an instrument of power, domination or hegemonic influence and subordinated groups are facilitated in their acquiescence by attributing it to soft power (Ch. 9).

The impulse to influence on behalf of the nation, whether in relation to civil or cultural diplomacy, high politics-related public or traditional diplomacy, has been posited as civic virtue. Civic virtue motivates citizens to engage in soft power enhancement activities that demonstrate virtue or virtuosity (Ch. 1). When one speaks of motivation one enters the realm of intended influence/active soft power, but state-sponsored and individually motivated initiatives may have different qualities of 'intention'. Virtue and virtuosity are but the primers of soft power. In terms of civil diplomacy, it is not just the influence of opinion leaders or influentials on public opinion but also the "influence of public opinion on policy communities" that needs to be considered (Ch. 1). Hence opinion leaders on social media play increasingly important roles. Their motivation may be to work in the interest of their countries in the context of international competition – and/or in the context of international cooperation, where one could even compete about how cooperative one is.

Civic virtue operates alongside an individual's (1) values, (2) propriety, (3) nationalism/patriotism and (4) self-interest; the relationships are complex and intertwined; there can be different balances for each individual and context.

1 value-based
2 rule-based
3 nationalness-based
4 expedience-based.

Civic virtue that grows out of values that resonate with what an individual's society deems to be its highest values and resonate with the common good is value-based civic virtue, and soft power arising from this would be value-based. Civic virtue that is a product of careful observance of laws and rules that are meant to curb civic vice is rule-based civic virtue, and soft power arising from this would be rule-based. Civic virtue coming out of nationalness is nationalness-based civic virtue, and soft power arising from this would be nationalness-based. Alternatively, rather than being principally values-, rules- or nationalness-based, civic virtue could be principally expedience-based and a mere posturing that stems from self-interest. Soft power arising from this would be expedience-based. These possibilities are recognized in positing civic virtue as that

which motivates individuals to become involved in seeking to expand the soft power of their respective countries.

There is – in several of the chapters that arise from fields such as cultural studies, linguistic and international communication, that have been influenced by reception theory – a shifting of the focus of soft power from agent to listener (Ch. 1, Ch. 5, Ch. 7, Ch. 8, Ch. 15). Considerable attention is afforded to listening, listening being admittedly a factor of communication noted as important by Nye (2011) but that is perhaps overshadowed by strategic approaches associated with intended influence/active soft power. While listening is particularly valuable in interpersonal settings when one listens to what the other party has to say, attending to what large groups and nations are communicating is also a kind of listening and may be achieved through various audience-centred methods of research. An audience-centred framing analysis is one such method (Ch. 5). Data mining allows listening to what is being said by large numbers of people on social media (Ch. 7).

## Cultural diplomacy and cultural industry

Cultural projects born of cultural policy are given legs by external cultural action. Such projects are the means of influencing external audiences, even if outcomes are not controlled (Ch. 2). In addition to listening, one needs to speak to different audiences and in terms of culture this means one cannot limit one's audience to connoisseurs of 'high culture'. Germany has included day-to-day life, not just Kultur, in its cultural action (Ch. 20). Several other countries or provinces are reported as running cultural diplomacy programs (Ch. 13, Ch. 19, Ch. 23, Ch. 28, Ch. 33, Ch. 35, Ch. 36). A conceptualization of a soft power project for Brazil discusses interaction in quotidian culturescapes "in informal settings through conversation, hospitality and access to the enjoyment of popular culture" (Ch. 19). These settings are parlours for conversations about, or the experiencing of, all manner of intangible or tangible heritage and contemporary cultural artefacts (Table 1.1.1.4), either directly or in mediated or hybrid forms. Because of its multi-dimensional experiential nature, this is a potent but subtle soft power brew of influence – and one best served with informality and serendipity. Such settings, when facilitated by public diplomacy agencies, are intended for unintended influence/passive soft power. However, informality and serendipity are not easily factored into government programs that need to be audited; soft power action can be better undertaken by public or private agents (Ch. 1, Ch. 19, Ch. 33). Policies and programs that encourage mobility (a soft power multiplier – Ch. 1) can create circumstances that allow this informality and serendipity to make appearances if they are not so rigid as to stifle the ludic (Table 1.1.1.4). Virtuosity in staging of and participating in international sports events are powerful factors of sports soft power – but soft power benefits from these areas may be blighted by deficits from the governance area or merely draw attention briefly away from it.

The development of cultural industry, identified as a soft power multiplier (Ch. 1), is addressed for Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Catalonia (an autonomous Spanish community), Nigeria and India (Ch. 10, Ch. 25, Ch. 29, Ch. 34). Cultural industry development is perhaps one of the methods small international players or even provinces can employ to multiply soft power. Foregrounding cultural economy, it can develop a parallel soft power stream for a country that can flourish even as the country faces soft power deficits in political areas (Ch. 1). The critique of the choice of Bollywood as an important element of India's brand (Ch. 29) shows that internal competition can exist – as can be seen also in the policy arguments between Spain and Catalonia (Ch. 19).

## Soft power, influence and hard public diplomacy

A distinction has been made between civil diplomacy and state public diplomacy (Ch. 1). It would be useful to make the point that while state public diplomacy may employ cultural action or, through parallel cultural industrial policy development, may facilitate cultural industry, if one extracts culture from state public diplomacy one is left with economic and military diplomacy and public diplomacy associated with high politics. But cultural action cannot be entirely divorced from these areas because it can also be employed in tandem with these other kinds of diplomacy. Hybrid forms are not uncommon. A foreign ministry diplomatic reception may be followed by an important ministerial foreign policy at dinner. Nautical goodwill visits of aircraft carriers, warships and submarines have a long history in military diplomacy. States seek to influence governments and publics in the realm of high politics, not merely through indirect sweeteners such as cultural action, but through high political messaging or messages addressing sovereignty and security concerns. The impulse for early twenty-first-century Russian public diplomacy strategy is high political, stemming from western suspicion of Russia as an erstwhile Cold War foe, and Russia's discomfort in the face of the post-Cold War eastward creep of European normative power (Ch. 28). Russia employs policies aimed at messaging (with intended influence/active soft power) via its new and renewed soft power multipliers – its international media (Ch. 1, Ch. 26). Like China, it is also building up its hard power resources.

Traditional diplomacy may also be employed with the purpose of generating soft power. One sees Algeria, having had its fair share of bloody violence, seeking to develop regional soft power through diplomatic mediation in the Malian crisis – through peacemaking (Make-up 3 in Ch. 1). It also plays an active role in fighting terrorism today. Its mixed approach has been described as compatible with Nye's (2011) smart power (Ch. 24). The approach may be characterized as one of intended influence/active soft power.

Internal hard power factors (physical or structural violence) in countries that are major suppliers of refugees in the twenty-first century interplay with soft power of potential receiving countries to produce migratory or refugee flows from the former to the latter (Ch. 1, Ch. 6, Ch. 17, Ch. 36). As much as an expanding European normative power has strengthened, perhaps unevenly, intra-European peace and prosperity, its virtues have resulted in challenges based on a heightened heteronomy within the European space.

## Governance and civic diplomacy

The curtain-fall for apartheid and a new act for unity under Mandela in 1994 generated considerable Make-up 3 type soft power (Ch. 1, Ch. 24). But South Africa, as well as Zimbabwe, dissipated post-apartheid soft power assets, eroding the national brand (Ch. 24). As much as there can be intangible heritage factors that sour soft power, soft power that has arisen through reconciliation can be dissipated through bad governance. A reputation for poor governance goes hand-in-hand with soft power deficits. The reverse is also the case. Pan-national organizations such as the European Union are seats of governance and participants in civil diplomacy. Their approaches to governance are soft power-based. One of the ways soft power is exercised in the EU by the EU is "through non-literal linguistic tools" (Ch. 20). In a completely different linguistic context, Arab culture is described as influencing or exerting soft power on news production through formula journalism that employs evocative hyperbole that exerts its own soft power over Arab audiences (Ch. 11).

Soft power dynamics cannot be contained within national borders. Or, to put it in terms of influence, there are two factors at play. The quality of the governance relationship between people and government in a country will influence foreign governments' and peoples' opinion of the country via media or diplomatic networks. Bad governance will create a negative influence on citizens. It will also have a negative influence on foreign audiences that value good governance (Ch. 1, Ch. 12). Soft power can apply to international as well as intra-national settings with feedback loops from national I-soft power deficits affecting E-soft power in relation to overseas audiences (Ch. 1). The reverse flow can lead to nationalist blowback or political activation of dissident groups in a society.

Whether fungibility of soft power between culture and foreign policy domains is possible remains questionable (Ch. 1, Ch. 2). The records of democratic governance of several former or current communist states, reported on in this volume, detract from positive outcomes of their cultural diplomacy (Ch. 32, Ch. 35). Post-communist or communist states discussed herein Ch. 2, Ch. 12, Ch. 28, Ch. 31, Ch. 35), despite their embracing to greater or lesser degrees soft law, the economic system and selected cultural aspects of the global confederacy, sit on heritage intangible political cultural constructs that are dissonant with those of the west (Ch. 3, Ch. 12, Ch. 28). Despite the different ontologies for political and economic rights in China and the west, "[t]here is a general trend that China is and will be constructing and improving rule of law continuously" with a "goal of building a state under the rule of law, by means of anti-corruption activities and legislations to achieve this goal" (Ch. 12). There is recognition that its much-publicized anti-corruption drive will not only be "good for China to realize its soft power and smart power in the international community, but also for China's developmental environment" – in other words, it will progressively benefit citizens (Ch. 12). In line with Make-up 2, to perform well in terms of governance is to demonstrate competence in this area (Ch. 1). Economic success may allow a nation's economic brand to sparkle without its democratic weaknesses being swept under the rug (Ch. 6). Influentials – and these could be traditional elites, internet *causes célèbres* and even micro-blogging influentials – (Zhang, Sun and Liu 2011, p. 1) in the public sphere – may also generate interest in issues among publics at home and abroad through civil diplomacy (Ch. 1). The use of clicktivism to stoke a *cause célèbre* purposively has been called social media soft power, or "the concerted international attention and buy-in into an issue or sympathy towards a cause generated by the savvy use of social media either by state or non-state actors" (Ch. 16). Social media campaigns can also sully the reputation of a nation and erode its brand (Ch. 6). The social media realm offers untold depths of data relevant to what users like or dislike, and data mining and big data analytical methods may be constructed to trawl this record of moment-by-moment symbolic interaction (Ch. 7).

States, even monarchies, can employ soft power-based governance frameworks, in the case of Bhutan, "creating a feeling among the citizenry of belonging to one large 'family'" under the king. However "[s]oft power works best when it arises naturally out of cultural practices that have evolved as a result of domestic circumstances", the roots of Gross National Happiness having arisen in Bhutan at its foundation in the 1600s (Ch. 30). Nation branding may be viewed as a technique for projecting soft power strategically in external and internal contexts of competition, the latter having to be resolved through consensus-building in brand construction (Ch. 6). The role and inclusive composition of parliamentary groups in generating a healthy consensus on a national image has been highlighted (Ch. 6, Ch. 19). The employment of soft power in governance is likely to facilitate consensus-building, within a given polity, regarding preferred national images.

## National competition and cooperation

Behind cultural projects – and national branding projects – are competing 'nationalnesses' (Ch. 2, Ch. 6). Nationalness has been construed above as one of the four contributing factors to espousal of civic virtue that prompts soft power enhancement for one's country. Such competition is witnessed in Vietnam's aim of generating a countervailing influence through cultural diplomacy to the influence of powerful neighbours (Ch. 35). It is manifest in the global marketplace of goods and ideas through competitive identity that is officially expressed through nation branding (Ch. 6). An "assumption of nationalness is an assumption of difference, which will imply competition as well as collaboration" (Ch. 1). 'Inter-national' competition occurs within as well as between countries as more than one nation can inhabit a country (Ch. 3, Ch. 6). In confederations, heteroglossic linguistic identity can contrast with monoglossic representation of a central feature, as shown through examination of use of symbolic language (metaphor in this case) to exercise soft power within a confederal zone (Ch. 21). While nonoglossic representation of a central feature is facilitated in the European confederacy, "the idea of Asian citizenship remains a concept in progress, because it lacks political consensus", raising the question of how regional discourse can encourage countries to move towards integration through their national cultural policies (Ch. 10, Ch. 21). Heteronomy in the global confederacy may be seen at the level of heritage values. 'Software of soft power' refers to "indigenous civilization elements which were created, transmitted by countries such as China and India and contributed to the world's development. They are comparatively inert, unchanged and unaffected as antibodies to the huge impact of globalization" (Ch. 3). This belongs to intangible heritage power and Make-up 1 that refers to core heritage (and contemporary) values (Ch. 1). These are elements in the normative dialectics of the confederacy and are natural to heteronomy.

That meaningful person-to-person interactions are valuable has been discussed in several chapters (Ch. 1, Ch. 31, Ch. 33). Ch. 33 calls for "mobilizing global civilian power" to this end. We have noted earlier that unscripted cross-cultural social interaction can kindle soft power (Ch. 18). Civilian power is not just participation of citizens in projects of soft power enhancement for their countries, but also the power of publics to interpret and shape discourses (Ch. 1, Ch. 15). The method of framing analysis is an important way of mapping interpreted and intended frames of a country (Ch. 5). The conscious participation in soft power enhancement for one's country, either voluntarily in autochthonous 'micro-projects' as in the Brazilian case (Ch. 18) or in projects emanating from state policy and organizations, or private organizations aligning themselves with state policy, can be facilitated by civic virtue rather than compulsion (Ch. 1).

The competition between nations continues unabated in the economic sphere, even if colonial cultural capture and Cold War captivation have receded into the distant past. Erstwhile European colonies can graduate to becoming neighbourhood soft powers through virtuosity in a key cultural area that in the case of Nigeria is its film industry (Ch. 25). Cultural diplomacy is a way for some of offering a "strategic counterweight to the influence of major powers in the region" (Ch. 35). Ironically, successful projects of nation-building that involve creative industry development can later deliver the nation's audiences to pan-regional soft powers in the west (Ch. 10).

Civic virtue is said to fire a whole range of intentional soft power (intended influence – active soft power) generating behaviour – including through various forms of civil diplomacy (Ch. 1). Can this impetus operate at the level of the confederacy with states acting

as citizens writ large? "Cultural action, in its 'expanded' form is seen as simultaneously an expression of the nation, a way of doing good in the world, a way of building relations, and a way of benefitting the national community" (Ch. 2). There are both reasons of national self-interest and the interest of the international community embedded in this statement. Cultural action in its 'expanded' form can be viewed as a way of benefiting the international community. Do states in the confederacy, to greater or lesser degrees and for value-, rule-, nationalness- or expedience-based reasons, aspire to be 'state citizens' of the confederacy by balancing in preferred ways the dictates of *raison d'état* and some larger humanist notion of *raison d'être*? In the case of Algeria its self-perceived virtuosity is in conflict resolution and diplomacy and it sees peace-making as a way to raise its standing in the world (Ch. 26). Conceptualization of new virtuous ways of dealing with soft power can also benefit the common good by defining new values for the international community. Attempts have been made to measure what a country offers "the common good of humanity, and what it takes away" from it (Ch. 6). New humanist values may be conceived to include another area addressed in this volume, our relationship to the animal kingdom and how or whether one uses animals as soft power assets. Animals could be used heartlessly as soft power assets through their being gifted or displayed; alternatively our relationship to the animal world can be more enlightened (Ch. 13).

Some of the values of the confederacy find expression in national constitutions; for example, Nigeria's constitution has several levels of commissives – one each in relation to national and African interest and three in relation to international interest (Ch. 25). Perception of a country's role in the confederation is shaped by the latter's history, so Algeria sees its world citizenship responsibilities through the lens of its anti-colonial civil war, supporting liberation movements and self-determination processes for occupied countries; espousing non-intervention; favouring conflict resolution and respecting colonial borders; and cooperating with the west in fighting terrorism (Ch. 26). The fallen superpower, Russia, on the other hand, sees its role as resisting any semblance of US-dominated hegemony in the confederation, using its soft power resources and public diplomacy strategies to promote an alternative discourse to the one led by the US and its allies (Ch. 27, Ch. 28).

Not surprisingly, despite the variance in perceived roles and preferred messages in the confederacy, the direct delivery mechanisms for political messages are to be found within two of the three soft power multiplier rubrics, notably mobility and media. The delivery platforms and formats for print and broadcast media and the designs of mobility programs are familiar ones across the globe, taking inspiration from western countries that have led the way in these areas. Al Jazeera, CCTV International and RT are reminiscent in format, though not in content, to CNN and elements of the Fulbright program; US student exchange programs and cultural centres belonging to Alliance Française, British Council and Goethe Institut are to be found in more recent exchange projects or cultural centres of rising powers. It is mostly the people and content that change, though sometimes the same people are used, as in the case of Larry King being on RT. Cultural centres may be considered as being within the larger framework of mobility in that people need to be brought together at a centre for a program, even if this is intra-city mobility. Countries compete for attention first and then hearts and minds using the whole range of mobility and media options. But while cultural centres compete for attention and showcase a country's culture and views from within the country, they do not generally engage in competition through overt negative propaganda about their rivals. In this sense they appear to act within codes of diplomatic civility. On the other hand, media associated

with rival powers, whether state-owned or private, often play un-avowed coadjutors' roles vis-à-vis their own countries, promoting their respective political viewpoints and contesting policies of rivals robustly, as may be found in Al Jazeera, CCTV, Fox News and RT (Ch. 23, Ch. 28). The specific soft power policies of Russia (a challenger to western hegemony in the confederacy) vis-à-vis media are avowed expressions of nationalness (Ch. 27, Ch. 28).

A small country such as Bhutan has been able to successfully influence international governance policy with a home-grown prescription of privileging the pursuit of happiness in development (Ch. 30). The 'pursuit of happiness' is not an alien concept to the US, appearing as an inalienable right in the Declaration of Independence, but it did not make its way into the Charter of the United Nations (United Nations n.d.) at the time of its foundation, perhaps because of the then-prevailing imperatives of security and economic development. Bhutan's Gross National Happiness is "concerned with the interdependence of all things. No one and nothing can exist independently of everything else" (Ch. 30). The concept of interdependence arose in international relations, in the 1980s, on the neo-liberal platform, that was soft power's theatre of nascence.

Hegemony, in what Reich and Lebow (2014, pp. 6–8) call a post-hegemonic world, is said to require normative (leadership in international agenda-shaping) international economic management and sponsoring (of global initiatives) responsibilities. "It is neither unilateralism nor 'a first among equals' in a traditional multilateral forum or alliance. Rather, it entails a capacity to listen, and then a selective willingness to use a variety of capabilities to implement consensual goals that are consistent with self-interest. All three functions of hegemony require contingent forms of influence rather than the blunt exercise of power" (Reich and Lebow 2014, p. 8). Ch. 12 provides a prescription for China in this respect. These responsibilities may be viewed as prescriptive for states seeking to be leading influentials, in the confederacy, in exercising soft power-based governance.

Countries see that they have a role in the confederacy but arguably international civic virtue is more likely to be multiplied by convergence of educational norms that emphasize humanist international service than purely through civic sparks in the nation state itself, though such sparks do exist and are fanned internationally by NGOs and IGOs in issue areas around public goods such as the environment (Olson 2002). "Educating for global citizenship is increasingly named as a goal of education" (Schultz 2007, p. 248). Convergence of educational norms related to international service are interconnected with national public diplomacy projects around educational mobility and with NGO initiatives in projects seeking to address international crises. Social media is recognised as a major tool for networking in public diplomacy (Ch. 8) and the digitized world is seen as presenting opportunities for global citizenship (Culver and Kerr 2014). But it is also a weapon that is used by outlaws of the confederacy for countervailing normativization. In many ways, technology-based networks are modern capillaries of soft power.

## Conclusion

Systemic and individual influence (two of four categories) having the nature of soft power are characterized as intended influence/active soft power or unintended influence/passive soft power. The other two have the nature of hard power. Intended influence/active hard power that involves violent action has not been excluded from the global confederacy and occurs either in sanctioned or unsanctioned forms. Unintended influence/passive hard power that involves manipulation of instruments of violence takes place incessantly and

together with sporadic use of violence – and economic forms of hard power – provides contexts for the use of soft power.

Systemic normative and individual purposive dimensions of influence are linked by social–technological networks that are the capillaries of constructivist power in the confederacy. Analyses of cultural, legal, methodological, normative and technological aspects of soft power have been undertaken in this volume. Normative dimensions shape individual purposiveness and messaging and their contexts, processes and outcomes – that are mappable and measurable. Technological affordances make all this possible in a global context. The volume also contains case studies from across the world, many of them discussing cultural projects associated with soft power, notably under the rubrics of cultural action, cultural diplomacy and cultural industry. Cases of diplomacy and civil diplomacy were also examined.

Soft power was not originally conceived as a theory (Ch. 14), and the present stock of soft power theory needs further elaboration (Ch. 1). Paradoxically, while the soft power concept's 'lionization' in policy and media circles has outstripped theory-building (Introduction), such policy attentiveness may very well provide oxygen for research (Ch. 2). This volume is one, hopefully of many, that will make ever-deeper explorations of soft power. The odyssey of this volume, launched with a cartograph of the weak global confederacy, traversed theory, methodology, culture and technology, and case studies in countries ranged around the Atlantic and Indian oceans, in the New World, on the World Island and in the Antipodes; it passed 'beyond the boats' to this conclusion, in search of the pacific. While wars continue to be waged within the confederacy, peace and prosperity are supreme values and soft power theory may offer a compass for the pacific.

## Note

1 "Hard constructivists like Onuf, Koslowski and Kratochwil believe that social institutions and structures are nothing but 'artifice of man-made institutions', and maintain 'both the international system and the state in terms of normatively constituted practices'. Soft constructivists are an eclectic lot consisting of practically anyone who shows interest in culture, identity, norms and accept the notion that 'actors' interests are not fixed but change and arise out of a social context" (Palan 2000, p. 576).

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