

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

Dr. Pervaiz Ali Mahesar

Ph.D Scholar, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences,
University of Sindh Jamshoro

Email: pervaiz.mahesar@usindh.edu.pk

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Abstract

This article attempts to explore the roots of the Chinese soft power. For a few decades, Chinese soft power is under the rigorous scrutiny of the western media. The western media is severely critical of the Chinese economic model, authoritarianism, democracy, and Confucius institutes. China promotes its soft power through its civilization, culture, trade, and economics, win-win model, Shared Destiny, and mutual respect. However, the previous scholarship on China has focused more on the rise of China, the power struggle between China and the US, the Chinese economic model, and authoritarian leadership, whereas events that have helped shape Chinese soft power are less explored. Based on the secondary sources of literature on Chinese soft power, this research aims to explore and explain how Chinese soft power has evolved in China.

Keywords: China, Soft Power, Economic Model, Chinese Soft power, Chinese Culture, Shared Destiny

1. Introduction

This article aims to explore and analyze the roots of the Chinese soft power. There are several studies on soft power and Chinese soft power. For instance: the study of Maria Repnikova (2022) has theorized on Chinese soft power and suggests the vision and practices of Chinese soft power in a global context, Kingsley Edney, Stanley Rosen, and Ying Zhu (2020) explore how the Chinese Communist Party has played a role in improving Chinese image. These experts believe that Chinese soft power promotion is essential for its development amid international reaction. The study of Parama Sinha Palit (2017) examines deeply how China has initiated programs for promoting its soft power at the global level and it explains Chinese soft power characteristics. Further, it also suggests limitations of the Chinese soft power. It compares Chinese soft power with Indian initiatives or engagement with China. In addition to this, B.M Jain's study (2020) looks at the Chinese promotion of soft power through diplomacy. It aims to assess whether it is a myth or reality. (Repnikova, M. 2022; Zhu, Y., Edney, K., & Rosen, S. (Eds.) 2019; Palit, P. S. 2017; and Jains, B.M 2020). Whereas less attention has been paid to exploring how Chinese soft power has evolved and which events have shaped it. In line with this, Joseph Nye, an American Political Scientist, has done a profound work on this concept. Globally, his concept is debated and discussed among academia, political scientists, think tanks, diplomats, and the media. Among many books, Nye's widely acclaimed works are: *"Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

(1977)", *"Bound To Lead: The Changing Nature Of American Power (1990)"*, *"The Paradox of American Power (2002)"*, *"Soft power: The Means To Success In World Politics (2004)"*, and *"Is the American Century Over? (2015)"*.

The most famous definition of Joseph Nye for soft power is that a state 'A' can get what it wants from state 'B' through attraction, persuasion, and charm. He suggests instruments of attraction-'cultural attraction, ideology', to 'international institutions'. (Joseph S Nye, 1990b). His valuable contribution to soft power was eagerly emulated or embraced by the Chinese political as well as intellectual elites. To extend and encourage the promotion of soft power, the Chinese Communist Party's central committee report was adopted at the Seventeenth Party of Congress in 2007. The report stated that China will enhance its culture as a part of its soft power (Central Committee Report). It would be incorporated in their policy to uphold and enhance their soft image at the domestic level and in their external relations with the outside world.

In this regard, the Chinese President Hu Jintao accelerated the process of their socialist cultural development, and initiate cultural activities which could stimulate and reflect their soft image (Xinhua, January 9, 2008). However, President Hu did not clarify how to increase Chinese ability and what it wants. But the Chinese experts and analysts make inferences and suggested that their soft power emanates from their traditions, structure of domestic governance, and their foreign policy (Wang & Lu, 2008). The Chinese political and intellectual elites believe that soft power is instrumental in the rise of their country and can attract other countries (Xuetong, 2006).

Hence, this article is divided into five sections: first, it defines power, secondly, it critically examines discourse on Chinese soft power, thirdly, explains how anti-Americanism has contributed to the Chinese spread of soft power, fourthly, it further dives deep into exploring the roots of Chinese soft power, and in last, it concludes.

2. Definition of Power

The subject of power has remained at the heart of debate by several social scientists and is manifested in the writings of political philosophers like Aristotle, Plato, and Machiavelli. The definition of power has always been subject to rigorous discussion. When we discuss power, the first idea comes about Hans J. Morgenthau. His concept of power is taken to be of primary importance in international politics. His idea of power suggests that "all politics is a power struggle". It was driven by the fact that human association is constituted to satiate their desire for power by dominating it. Whatever the claim or goals governments set, their primary desire is to enhance power. Hence, the definition of power suggests that "all states seek to maximize their power, politics can be conceived of and analyzed as a struggle between independent units seeking to dominate others." (Holsti, 1964, p. 44). Other experts have also attempted to define power in different ways. For example, Arendt (1970) pointed out that "power is not a property of an individual, but rather argued that it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together". (Arendt, 1970, p. 44) However, Robert Dahl considers it as a relationship of power actors. (Dahl, 1957, p. 203). He uses the term "actor" which implies the roles of individuals, organizations, governments, etc. Whereas Max Weber's definition of power shows that there is a possibility that an actor with

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

his relationship with others might promote his interests/will despite opposition from the people. (Weber, 1947, p. 152). Weber also considers (power) as a zero-sum game for which he attaches several attributes to power, for instance, capabilities, quality, and resources of a group. Hans Morgenthau (1962/54) argued that hitherto all politics has been a power struggle. It means that power is the ultimate object for which international politics is done. Such conduct for power politics has become a necessity. (Morgenthau, 1962, pp. 25, 31) The scholars like Carr were also on the same page as Morgenthau over the power politics dynamics (Carr, Cox, & Cox, 1946, pp. 102, 201). The crux of the Realist theorists also lies at the heart of state perceptions of the world around which they live. (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 12).

Power, in international politics, is an ability to coerce, induce or influence other parties in a way that it could not do otherwise. Hard power can influence other groups or parties to do what 'A' likes from 'B'. In this regard, A party uses different ways like military means, coercive diplomacy, and economic sanctions to promote its interests (Campbell & O'Hanlon, 2006). However, in academic parlance, neorealist believes in the hard power pursuit of states whereas, liberal institutionalists focus on the soft power approach. Apart from hard power, soft power is regarded as the capacity of a state to persuade others to do what it wants. In this regard, Joseph Nye, a well-known American expert, in the 1990s, introduced soft power and its usage in the foreign policy of a country. He defines it as "the ability to get what one wants through persuasion or attraction rather than coercion (Joseph S Nye, 1990a). In line with Nye's definition, Cooper (2004) said that soft power possesses the capability of attraction, and covers almost everything but excludes military power. (Cooper, 2004). After defining the soft power, some of the studies have underscored how different studies or discourse shaping Chinese soft power.

3. Discourse Shaping Chinese Soft power

For a few decades, the Chinese soft power has gained much attention from academic scholars, think tank analysts, and the media. Many articles and books have been written. These writings have advanced our understanding of Chinese soft power from different angles. These perspectives could be related to the expansion of their Soft power in Southeast Asia, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The Chinese journals have surveyed articles published in their journals on Chinese soft power. They have also developed huge databases. Its name is the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) database. This database survey showed that it has found articles annually with the title "Soft power" in a text were around eight (1994-2000). It grew up to 314 from the year 2005 to 2007. (M. Li, 2008). Between 2004 and 2007, Chinese high officials have been time and again highlighted in their meetings and discussions about soft power (ibid., 22-4).

The increasing popularity of the Chinese soft power could be seen in the context of deconstructing the notion of China threat theory which was widely debated in the Western discourse. China wanted to inform the world that its rise is for peaceful purposes (Deng, 2009). The Chinese scholarship on their soft power indicates that their approach is unique and deeply rooted in their ideology, culture, and foreign policy (Ding, 1955). China has been making several efforts to enhance its popularity and cultivate its soft power. Their discourse

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

on soft power is manifested through their studies, writings, and published literature. In this context, one of the experts depicts in their writings a positive image of China in developing countries. (Kurlantzick, 2007).

The Chinese government adopted several methods to increase its soft power. This fact has been crystal clear in the writings of many Chinese scholars. The suggested approach of the Chinese government for their soft power strategy is diplomacy, political discourse, and self-restraint, promoting culture, public diplomacy and trade, and assistance. In this regard, the study of Bates Gill and Huang informs about the resources of the Chinese soft power. These resources include Chinese culture, domestic values, policies, peacekeeping, and international aid. For the promotion of their culture, the authors discuss the role of Confucius institutes. Their domestic values are reflected in their developmental model. China has also adopted a good neighborly policy. It has been contributing to peace efforts through aid and peacekeeping efforts at the regional and global levels. These approaches are taken as the Chinese resources for soft power (Gill & Huang, 2006).

In addition to this, Ding (1955) identifies three elements of Chinese soft power. These tools, according to the author, are a practice by China at the domestic level in the shape of their political values. They use diplomatic finesse for their external policies so that people of their countries could be attracted to their cultural values. As explained by Kurlantzick.J. (2007) Chinese efforts overall are aimed at developing their soft image through discourse, debate, publication, and business. These values are transmitted more in Asia, Africa, and Southeast Asia but lesser to Latin American countries (Opcit., 2007). In Chinese academic and political discourses, soft power began to be used in 2000. It has become an integral part of their foreign policy. Through foreign policy, Chinese leadership trying to facilitate its rise by constructing a cordial environment at the external level. In this regard, the “Beijing Consensus”, public diplomacy, and tourism are also characteristics of soft power. Mikail Kalimuddin and David Anderson (2018) explore the integration of soft power with Chinese security. Their research examines important cases. First, they discuss the South China Sea, secondly, they focus their research on cross-strait ties. Their study revealed that soft power is integrated with Chinese security, and it reflects the great sources of power. (Kalimuddin & Anderson, 2018). Whereas the study of Young Nam Cho and Jong-Ho Jeong (2008) looks at the Chinese soft power from the perspective of civilization, foreign policy, and Beijing Consensus. It finds that the acknowledgment of the Chinese soft power and its relevance and applicability shows China’s growing influence in Asia (Cho & Jeong, 2008).

Despite showing the popularity and significance of growing Chinese soft power in Asia, the study by Bates Gill (2006) has identified several obstacles and challenges to the Chinese soft power posture. He gives an example of Taiwan. His study demonstrates that China has not been able to achieve the objectives it intends to achieve. Gill suggests that China needs to be satisfied with a “half-loaf” outcome. He identifies a few challenges in the way of Chinese soft power. For instance, uneven resources, the legality of its diplomacy, and a lack of a consistent agenda. (Opcit., Gill & Huang, 2006:26).

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

While Gregory looks at the Chinese soft power in East Asia. It focuses on how the US soft power declined. His study adopts the survey methods in which he surveys the opinions of the people on the Chinese soft power and its influence. After this, he constructs variables to measure soft power. Then he compares his study with other powers in the region. His five sub-indices were: economy, capital, culture, politics, and diplomacy, its effectiveness, Chinese military power perceptions, the significance of their values and interactions and their relationship with the influence of China. His findings showed that in the context of Asia, the Chinese soft power appears to be weak (Holyk, 2011, p. 224). Moreover, the study by James Paradise focuses on how China is establishing its Confucius institutes at the regional and global levels. To promote their culture and language, the universities in China interact or come into contact with higher education institutions in other countries. They believe that their strategy could produce an honorable, respectable, and soft image of their country. Hence, Chinese soft power would begin to be assumed as a benign power. Though, at the same time, the effects of Trojan horses do exist. (Paradise, 2009).

Evelyn Goh (2014) investigates China's influence in the Southeast Asian region. The findings of his study revealed that since China has huge interests and is invested in this part of the region, China's relationship with the Southeast Asian countries appears to be asymmetrical. The Southeast Asian countries, as compared to China, are smaller, less developed, and more dependent on China. Therefore, the author observes that China has the potential and capability to influence its neighbors. This could directly or indirectly be supportive or favorable to Beijing. Although China's influence is not necessarily a direct process. (Goh, 2014). Above's discourses of different experts highlight how China is approaching other countries through its tools of soft power. However, Chinese engagement in different regions also showed a mixed response. Moreover, increasing anti-Americanism is also partly shaping Chinese soft image, because China has not engaged in conflicts in different parts of the world.

4. Growing Anti-Americanism And Chinese Soft Power

Several countries were friendly to America in Africa. But nowadays, they are resisting American policies, power, dictation, and influence. Countries like Libya, Sudan, and Zimbabwe have been frequently resisting and opposing American pressures. American policies including sanctions have produced a negative image of America in those African states. Even some other countries of South Africa- Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Mali, Namibia, and Niger, began to resist and challenge American coercion, dictation, and sanctions. American policies were defied and challenged. The South African leaders even rejected American investment, projects, and several initiatives (Whitaker, 2010, p. 1110). As pointed out by Beth Elise Whitaker (2010), the resistance to American interests in Africa started when they waged a war on Iraq. America had developed a coalition to dethrone Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, but it received a great blow from African states. Even Nelson Mandela criticized the severely American unilateral approach. However, the African Union initially posed a united front against the USA, but they were disunited after the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Some countries like Uganda, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Angola supported American

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

actions while some others, for instance, South Africa, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tanzania, criticized and condemned American action. Even South African President Thabo Mbeki was a big critic of the American approach. He along with other countries wrote a letter to the American White House (ibid., p.1112). The test case of American usage of power in Africa provides enough evidence to show how states influence and affect the behavior of other countries. This is a traditional way of using coercive measures, threats, or sanctions. This is, in other words, called a hard power. On the other hand, a country that applies a soft power to attract or persuade other countries through peaceful ways and means so that it could willingly accept what country 'A' wants from country 'B'. It depends on how much a country has developed its image at regional and global levels. Nevertheless, the international image and prestige of a country are very important to achieve objectives. In this sense, China has adopted a top-down strategy through which it has enhanced its power and prestige through its public diplomacy. Chinese public diplomacy has broadened its scope and image at the global level (Team, February 27, 2016).

As compared to previous powers, the emergence of China is happening at a time when the world is faced with many challenges (Jin, 2013). In such a complex world, the political system is increasing at such a rapid scale. This has been possible due to globalization. Globalization provides an outlet to enhance interconnectivity around the globe. It constitutes the people, their exchanges, ideas, and information. (Scholte, 2005). China introduced its reforms under the able leadership of Deng Xiaoping in the 1970s. These reforms were aimed at developing China on par with other developed nations in the world. China has been successful in its endeavors and has eventually gained a significant position among the comity of the world powers (Nathan & Scobell, 2015). Therefore, it has attracted the attention of many countries including their people. They have been partly successful in attracting and persuading people or nations to learn their language. The estimates show that around one hundred million people are learning the Chinese language globally.

These language institutes are normally located in universities, schools, think tanks, and colleges. In these language institutes, various courses related to China and Chinese culture and values are taught. A country needs to promote its soft power through engagement with other countries. This interaction could be with intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), multinational corporations (MNCs), and the public. Nevertheless, these institutions look at the use of force very negatively. (Hill & Beadle, 2014). The Chinese academic scholars, officials, and media believe that China has incorporated soft power into its external policy (Lampton, 2008). The crux of soft power, according to Nye, is to achieve its objectives through attraction and co-option. It doesn't rely on coercive measures or sanctions (J. S. Nye, 2004; Joseph S Nye, 2011). The question is, how Chinese soft power has evolved?

5. The Roots of the Chinese Soft Power

Historically, the roots of the Chinese soft power could be found during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) in which Admiral Zheng He (1371-1433)- a Chinese military commander and traveler, used the first time during the period of Zhu Di (1402-1424). In those times, Zheng

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

made brief voyages across the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. In addition to this, he had also visited other countries to display the power, strength, and wealth of the Ming Dynasty. It was the 4th longest dynasty ruled by the Han people.

Moreover, the word “Chinese soft power” began to be used in their official parlance in Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai’s (1953-1954) golden principles of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. These ideals were visible in their public diplomacy and their interaction with the outside world. (Cheng, 2016, p. 236). These five principles comprised “mutual respect for territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other’s international affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence”. In 1943, these principles were officially declared after Zhou Enlai met with a delegation from New Delhi. These ideals were later on practically incorporated and implemented through the trade agreement between China and India. These principles were also visible during the Afro-Asian gathering in 1955 at Bandung. (MOFA, 28.5.2014). See further information at Table 1.

Table 1 Genesis of the Chinese Soft power

YEAR	GENESIS OF THE CHINESE SOFT POWER
1368-1644	During Ming Dynasty , Admiral Zheng He (1371-1433) traveled to the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean, and a few other countries.
1953-54	Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai introduced “ The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence ”
1990-2000s	Chinese officials and academics expressed (soft power) in their culture
September 2004	In the Fourth Plenary Session of the 16th Central Committee of the CPC, Chinese President Hu Jintao announced, “ Harmonious Society ”
2007	During the 17th NCCP Meeting, Chinese President Hu Jintao announced the “ Great National Rejuvenation ” of Chinese culture
8-24 August 2008	Beijing Olympic Games . (204 Olympic committees and 13,000 accredited athletes took part in 28 different sports). Opened by President Hu Jintao
2013	President Xi Jinping introduced the “ Chinese Dream ” and also launched the BRI Project
2014	President Xi Jinping (Speech) “We should increase China’s soft power , give a good Chinese narrative, and better communicate China’s message to the world”
January 2017	President Xi Jinping became the first Chinese president to attend the World Economic Forum in Davos, the “ Community of Common Destiny ” was announced
14-15 May 2017	The inaugural Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation was hosted by China in Beijing in the presence of leaders from 29 countries
2019	China’s Ministry of Ecology and the Environment launched the BRI International Green Development Coalition (BRIGC), a platform for international cooperation to promote the green development of the BRI
4-20 February 2022	Winter Olympic Games in China

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

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As a follow-up, these principles were further extended to Africa and Asia. These measures were aimed at developing trust and enhancing the economic cooperation among several countries in Asia and Africa in mid of the 1960s. The Chinese Reforms and Opening Policy of the 1970s and 1980s toward its neighbors also include a good environment at an internal and external level so that they could trade peacefully. (ibid., MOFA, 2014) Moreover, the rise of China coupled with its rapid economic growth seems to be an established perception among Chinese scholars. Concerning their perceptions of the harmonious world, they reiterate their economic commitment and development in countries like Asia and Africa, encapsulating friendship, dialogue peace, stability, and harmony.

The Confucius institutes symbolically reflect Chinese identity and cultural promotion. It gives a great boost and support to the cultural agenda of the Chinese leadership (Hu Jintao) (Albro, 2015). These institutes were found in 2004. It has five hundred facilities globally among 140 states. It means that such an increasing ratio has even excelled in the previous projections. (Zhe, June 2010). These institutes either have a partnership with universities or think tanks, colleges, and schools. However, these interactions have to be routed through Hanban (Chinese Headquarters). The purpose of these institutes is to teach the Chinese language. Different category of student is enrolled to learn the Chinese language. This type of partnership with other countries has enabled Beijing to proliferate the establishment of Chinese institutes. This type of partnership is understandably appealing and seems to like “global branding” (Starr, 2009). Therefore, China possesses the potential and capability to successfully transfer its soft power. This reflects their “remarkable rise” (Op cit., Albro, 2015, p.390).

As compared to the previous leaders (Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao), President Xi Jinping took the helm of affairs at a time when China was more stable with the largest economy in Asia and the second-largest at the global level. With the ascendancy of Xi Jinping in 2012, China incorporated the term “Chinese Dream”. This term began to be discussed in terms of the Chinese peaceful rise and challenges at the domestic front (Sharp, 2013). Nevertheless, the great rejuvenation and domestic development remained the prominent features of Xi Jinping’s policies. It would not be wrong to assume that Mao Zedong offered a launching pad for soft power, Hu Jintao transformed and extended to the outside world but implemented by President Xi Jinping. The approach of President Xi is different from his former leaders. His agenda has at least put his country in a stable position in which the Chinese characteristics (prosperity, harmony, development, and its rise) are beautifully juxtaposed.

The Beijing Olympic Games held in the year 2008, were the biggest show on earth. This event led of huge importance to their culture. Similarly, the launching of the Confucius institutes was also aimed at broadening and softening the image of China. The promotion and learning of their language also indirectly enhance their soft power. President Hu Jintao expressed in 2017 that their culture is a source of their cohesion and creativity in their society besides developing their national strength (Speech, October 15, 2007). He further expressed that soft power entails the potential to ensure the fundamental rights and interests of the people. In line with the strategy, China is trying to internationalize movies, images, dramas, and Confucius institutes through its media outlets (Rabinovitch, 2008).

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

However, scholars around the world still debate over the intention of China as a rising power. One thing is sure China doesn't claim global power, and neither is a threat to America. In this regard, experts like Shing Ding observes that Chinese soft power should not be a threat to other powers including America (Ding, 2010). As discussed, earlier by Nye (2005), that soft power is the ability of state A to get what it wants from state B through the means of attraction. It doesn't believe in coercion or payments (Joseph S. Nye, 2005). One could infer from his definition that China is promoting its norms, values, and policies which offer benefits to other countries. Hence, the argument forwarded by Sheng Ding (2010) also informs that Beijing has preferred to keep itself at distance from engaging militarily and abide by the rules and regulations framed by international law.

Institutionally, China is participating through WTO, Anti-Piracy, and Global Climate watchdogs. It is exchanging its views and sharing experiences and learning from other countries. China is not a threat to its neighbors but wanted to have a peaceful neighborhood. In this sense, regional integration, interaction, participation, and partnerships speak about the Chinese way of working. Scholars suggest that China intends to build its soft power through development. The Chinese rise and increasing influence are integrated into their development strategy (M. Li, 2008; X. Li & Worm, 2011). In addition to this, soft power is also considered a strategy of self-defense. The positive images and favorable perceptions could replace the notion of China threat theory. China wants the world to properly understand its domestic development and try to motivate people to accept them as a rising power. Paradise (2009) also pointed out that China is increasing its influence through its soft power (Paradise, 2009). To become a responsible stakeholder in international politics, China needs to produce a conducive and peaceful environment so that it could continue with its sustainable economic development at home and abroad. (Gil, 2008, p. 117; Kurlantzick, 2007, p. 37).

Ding in his study reveals that the idea of attraction is deeply rooted in Chinese philology and culture, apart from what Nye coined. It further explains that there is a strong link between soft power and Harmonious World ideas displayed in the Chinese political philosophy (Ding, 1955, p. 196). Nevertheless, culture, language, arts, and ethnicity also constitute Chinese tools for soft power. Similarly, they have adopted certain tools in their conduct of business-like, like trade, aid, and promote their development model (Kurlantzick, 2007).

The current global strategy of China is multidimensional. It is a key player in terms of trade and investment and assists several countries in the world, for instance, Vietnam, Burma, Laos, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Indonesia besides its engagement in the African continent. The Chinese soft power does not only focus on its culture and language but also respects the sovereignty, integrity, and dignity of other countries. Hence, China has developed trust and credibility in several construction projects in Africa. Africa could be a test case for China's soft power and its identity (Ding, 1955, p. 30).

As noted by one of the studies China's soft power in Latin America, according to perceptions of people in Latin America, is sustainable development and advancement in technology. It offers many opportunities and it has the potential to become powerful at the global level. The proliferation of Chinese trade and investment around the world reflects its approach and policies of soft power (Ellis, 2011). The Polls were conducted in Africa and Latin America regarding China's soft power image. Polls showed that people appreciate China more than America. It was widely acknowledged that people in the world were more tilted towards

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

Chinese charm, ideas, and models than Americans.

The Chinese promotion of the development model, discourses related to peace, prosperity, harmony, and top-down approach to development and efforts at alleviating poverty in their country are some of the ideas which were widely appreciated in Polls Survey (Kurlantzick, 2007). These overall ideals and values of China are portrayed as the “Beijing Consensus”. This term is well known and referred to Joshua Cooper. According to Cooper, “it aims at equality, peace, and growth, and he thinks that China doesn’t have a uniform solution such as economic and political liberalization often propagated by the West—but has a “ruthless willingness to innovate and experiment” and “a lively defense of national borders and interests” (Ramo, 2004, p. 4 and 33; Suzuki, 2009, p. 782). Due to this attraction, the growth of the Chinese economy has been made possible. It is feared that the Chinese increasing soft power in the world will result in competition with America.

In contrast to the Chinese soft power, many experts discuss how America has lost its soft power, status, and credibility in the eyes of the developing and underdeveloped world. Some of the studies have identified that increasing American nationalism, its expansionist agenda, defeat in the Vietnam war, Nine -Eleven incident, the economic recession of the 1970s, a war in Afghanistan, etc could be among the several factors in the declining impact of their soft power in the world (Wallerstein, 2003, pp. 26-27; 2006). Still, some other scholars think that American soft power was at a peak during the year the 1990s and 2000. Further, they pointed out that cultural programs were no more encouraged, lack of active public diplomacy, a belligerent attitude towards trade and investment, its reluctance in ratifying the Kyoto Protocol, and the sudden USSR demise also raised several questions for the American soft power. (Kurlantzick, 2005, pp. 420-421). This American strategy saw the natural decline of their strong leadership, image, and influence in world politics.

Contrary to the Chinese soft power, Joseph Nye had cautioned that: “anti-Americanism has increased in recent years, and the United States' soft power-its ability to attract others by the legitimacy of U.S. policies and the values that underlie them-is in decline as a result.” The author further quoted the Gallup International polls survey which was taken from 29 countries said: “Washington's policies have harmed their view of the United States.” The author also discusses the Eurobarometer polls on European perceptions for America. The study finds that “the majority of Europeans believe that Washington has hindered efforts to fight global poverty, protect the environment, and maintain peace. Such attitudes undercut soft power, reducing the ability of the United States to achieve its goals without resorting to coercion or payment. Its unpopular policies in the past and its sheer size and association with disruptive modernity make some resentment unavoidable today.” (J. S. Nye, 2004, p. 16).

What America achieved through its soft power was a system of alliances, development of institutions, etc. These institutes lasted around sixty years. They believe that they had won the Cold War by using soft and hard power. The irony is that to contain extremism, terrorism or militancy requires Washington to have the cooperation of other countries. This cooperation is possible when there is an attraction in power A country. Soft power is not about popularity, but it is an approach to get what you want from other states. If country A is unpopular in country B, it is unlikely that to get concessions or benefits or to achieve what you want. In this regard, the resistance of Chile, Mexico, and Turkey in March 2003 could be taken as the best example. When a country loses its image and credibility in the eyes of other

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

countries then it has less benefit or leverage to gain in international politics. And when U.S. policies lose their legitimacy in the eyes of others, distrust grows, reducing U.S. leverage in international affairs." (ibid., Nye, 2004: p.16).

Notably, as compared to the US, China has taken many initiatives since 2011. President Xi Jinping took radical measures and introduced reforms and implemented the biggest ever projects in Chinese history. In this regard, the 17th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party's entire session focused on their culture and declared that they would build their country on the Chinese Socialist culture. As President said in 2104 that he wanted his country to enhance its soft power drive and communicate and build their strong narrative and communicate well to an outside world. His new projects, for instance, "the Chinese dream," "the Asia-Pacific dream," "the Silk Road Economic Belt," "the Twenty-First-Century Maritime Silk Road," "a new type of major-country relations," and many others. Hence, China attaches great importance to its initiatives and projects in the world (Shambaugh, 2015, p. 99). China has included many countries in its institutions. For example, in the New Development Bank, it is comprised of China-Brazil, Russia, India, and South Africa. Whereas, in its other institutions like Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific. In these institutions countries of other regions have been included. For instance, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and central and eastern Europe.

The purpose of these institutions is to support Chinese efforts for promoting its soft power and a new architectural framework in the Post War Western Order. In this sense, Shambaugh noted in his study that "China has invested billions of dollars (\$50 billion for the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, \$41 billion for the New Development Bank, \$40 billion for the Silk Road Economic Belt, and \$25 billion for the Maritime Silk Road. Beijing has also pledged to invest \$1.25 trillion worldwide by 2025. Together, these recent pledges by Beijing add up to \$1.41 trillion; in contrast, the Marshall Plan cost the equivalent of \$103 billion in today's dollars". (Shambaugh, 2015, p. 100).

The US State Department Polls of 2003, as indicated in the study of Garrison, showed that "China had a favorable views in Japan, South Korea, and Australia (54 percent, 68 percent, and 67 percent, respectively), and majority beliefs among Japanese and South Koreans that China will be the most influential country in East Asia in the next 5 to 10 years". (Garrison, 2005, p. 28). In addition to this, Yong Nam Cho and Jong-Ho Jeong, while discussing PEW research conducted in 2005, said that majority states in Asia like Turkey, Pakistan, Indonesia, Lebanon, Jordan, and India had a favorable view of China's rise and its growth. (Cho & Jeong, 2008). Some other scholars also show the BBC World Service Polls as an indicator that China's, positive images, its status, credibility, rise, and growth speak volumes about how China is going beyond its economics. (Huang & Ding, 2006).

Whereas the Bush administration's policies have compromised its security and diplomatic assertiveness. It has created resentment, anger, and dissatisfaction among several countries in the world. Their unpopular policies have jeopardized their security, peace, prosperity, and stability in the region. Hence, American soft power has declined at a regional and global level. (Kohut & Stokes, 2006). As compared to America, China has actively, peacefully, and dynamically promoted its power resources. The overall credit goes to the Chinese leadership including President Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping for their deeper analysis and interest in the world. Their pragmatic and balanced approach has won hearts and minds and streamlined

Exploring The Roots of The Chinese Soft Power

their national goals in a very calculated and strategic manner. In this regard, President Hu Jintao's development doctrine "China's Peaceful Rise" could be counted as a counterpoint to American policies that heavily relied on military might.

6. Conclusion

Power in international politics is considered to be an ability of state A to affect state B to achieve its goals. In this sense, states can influence other countries in different ways. For instance, they can use "sticks" and "carrots". The former term means that countries use their power as coercion, influence, threat, sanctions, or inducements. Whereas the latter term shows that a state can also use a softer approach (attraction) to achieve what it wants. One can infer that state A can achieve its objectives through its peace, positive images, prosperity, cultural values, and these could be reflected in adopting their policies and approaches while interacting with other countries. In this line, other states follow the example or model of country A and willingly emulates their values to achieve peace, prosperity, and stability. (J. Nye, Joseph S, 2008, p. 94). Around the world, political leaders know that soft power is not possible by mere slogans. It requires agenda-setting and debate within society. Soft power is seen as a part of democratic practice at the domestic level. A charismatic personality, cultural values, strong institutions, soft images, and prosperity provides a morality authority to a state. Soft power cannot be categorized into an influence rather it is a source or means for influence. Because influence could involve hard power or threat. Soft power is attractive. It is generally measured in terms of polls or focus groups. (ibid., Nye, 2008, p.96). As discussed above by Nye, soft power is based on the very foundations of culture, values, and policy. Through these factors, states try to achieve their objectives through their attraction and charm (ibid., Nye, 2008, p.97). More significantly, after the Century of Humiliation, and Opium Wars, China began to attract to the outside world through its ideas, communication, international communication, diplomacy, cultural patterns, and values. Throughout the decades of Chinese existence, three B's (Benevolence, Brilliance, and Beauty) have remained the core values or watchwords of Chinese foreign policy. Chinese leadership intends to realize the Chinese Dream through national rejuvenation and geo-economic connectivity. One of the most significant milestones of the Chinese foreign policy since 2007 has been to promote soft power. Chinese dynamic leadership wanted to extend goal of states stated objectives and capitalize up to the year 2035. Given these serious efforts by China, this article concludes that Chinese soft power is well founded in Chinese society and its values since the rule of the Ming Dynasty. Despite western criticism, China may not budge an inch from the promotion of its culture, trade, and economic values. In the future, China is expected to transform from soft power to smart power rather than hard power.

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