The Evolution of Chinese Soft Power:
Its International and Domestic Roles

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Abstract

The conceptualization of soft power and its political application has been frequently discussed and debated. This thesis seeks to deepen this field of research theoretically and empirically through a systematic exploration of China's key motives in promoting soft power and applying it as a national project in the 21st century.

This thesis refines Joseph Nye's original conceptual framework and initially develops a three-level conceptualization of soft power: the power of "positive attraction", "institutional power" (power of agenda-setting) and "constitutive power" (power of identity-making). Based on the new conceptual framework of soft power developed in this thesis, I then put forward four hypotheses along with the further illumination of connection between power, soft power and the "national interest". Hypothesis 1 (H1): soft power mainly serves national interests. Hypothesis 2 (H2): soft power is primarily operational in the international arena. Hypothesis 3 (H3): non-state actors are tactically the primary drivers of national soft power campaigns. Hypothesis 4 (H4): the application of soft power, like power in general, is contingent on a specific scope and domain. The scope of power describes who is involved in the power relationship, and the domain of power clarifies which topics or issue-agendas are involved. The empirical examination of the motivations for, and political application of, soft power by Chinese policymaking elites, sets to test these hypotheses.

This thesis consequently concludes that, first, China's soft power campaigns seek to promote Chinese cultural, economic and political interests rather than international interests or subnational interests. Specifically, China's global soft power campaigns aim to protect cultural security, reduce the cultural trade deficit, facilitate the development of cultural industries, reshape a favorable international image and legitimize its rising power. Second, China's soft power campaigns are a "two-level game" as they target both domestic *and* international audiences. Given the existing conceptualization of soft power centers on how it is employed to promote a country's foreign policy, China's focus on the domestic dimension of its soft power campaigns is unique. This is one of

this thesis' original contributions. Simply put, the domestic application of soft power is intended to enhance China's nation-building and state-making in the 21st century. Third, the Chinese government is the dominant driver of China's soft power campaigns. Chinese NGOs, think tanks, social groups and individuals as a whole only play a limited and marginal role during this process, partly for the reason that they cannot behave independently from the Chinese government, and partly because the Chinese government does not know how to allow the civil society to make this happen. Finally, the Chinese government differentiates various agendas and target audiences, and considers country-specific preferences and nuanced situations for its implementation. The globalization of Confucius Institutes, the China Cultural Centers and the Chinese media is illustrative, in addition to other instructive examples of exporting "Beijing Consensus" through the national project of building Overseas Special Economic Zones, and of the recent establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. As a result, the examination of the driving force behind China's soft power campaigns confirms the first hypothesis but proves that the second one is partially correct. Meanwhile, the exploration of China's political application of soft power as a national project verifies the utility of the fourth hypothesis, but invalidates the third one.

Overall, China's state-led soft power campaigns are used to promote political legitimacy, in addition to promoting national interests defined by central decision-makers. The conceptualization of soft power with Chinese characteristics and its political application further epitomizes the Chinese government's grand strategic shift from a passive to a proactive peaceful rise. I suggest that soft balancing between China and the US may become increasingly commonplace in the near future. China's soft power campaigns can either reinforce or reverse the recent rising trend of Sino-US strategic competition for influence towards the "Thucydides trap" in reference to the inevitability of war caused by a rising power and the consequent fear of a ruling power. The future role of soft power in China's so-called peaceful rise, as a result, largely depends on its effectiveness in helping maintain a subtle equilibrium between "two orders"—a US-led liberal international order and the CCP-led domestic order in China.

Declaration

I, Shaomin Xu, certify that:

This thesis has been substantially accomplished during enrolment in the degree.

This thesis does not contain material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution.

No part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of The University of Western Australia and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

This thesis does not contain any material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. The work(s) are not in any way a violation or infringement of any copyright, trademark, patent, or other rights whatsoever of any person.

The research involving human data reported in this thesis was assessed and approved by The University of Western Australia Human Research Ethics Committee. Approval #: [RA/4/1/7325].

This thesis contains published work and/or work prepared for publication, some of which has been co-authored. The bibliographical details of the work and where it appears in the thesis are outlined below.

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Abbreviations

AAUP	American Association of University Professors
AFC	Asian Financial Crisis
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
AMS	Academy of Military Science
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BFA	Boao Forum for Asia
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CASS	Chinese Academy of Social Science
CBRC	China Banking Regulatory Commission
CCCs	China Cultural Centers
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCs	Confucius Classrooms
CCTV	China Central Television
CDB	China Development Bank
CDMs	Chinese Diplomatic Missions
CFA	Committee of Foreign Affairs
CPPCC	Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
CIBN	China International Broadcasting Network
CICA	Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia
CIPG	China International Publishing Group
CIRC	China Insurance Regulatory Commission
CIs	Confucius Institutes
CLGPIW	Central Leading Group on Propaganda and Ideological Work
CNC	China Network Corporation
CNP	Comprehensive National Power
CNPIEC	China National Publications Import and Export Corporation
CNS	China News Service
CPAFFC	Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign

MII	Ministry of Information Industry
MOC	Ministry of Culture
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFCOM	Ministry of Commerce
NCAC	National Copyright Administration of the PRC
NBSC	National Bureau of Statistics of China
NDB	New Development Bank
NDRC	National Development and Reform Commission
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NPC	National People's Congress
NPOPSS	National Planning Office for Philosophy and Social Sciences
NSLSG	National Security Leading Small Group
OBOR	One Belt and One Road
OPD	Office of Public Diplomacy
OSEZs	Overseas Special Economic Zones
PBOC	People's Bank of China
RCEP	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
PEM	Patriotic Education Movement
PEW	Pew Research Center
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PR	Public Relations
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSC	Politburo Standing Committee
PSUs	Public Service Units
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
RMB	Renminbi
SAFE	State Administration of Foreign Exchange
SAPPRFT	State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television

SARFT	State Administration of Radio, Film and Television
SAT	State Administration of Taxation
SCIO	State Council Information Office
SCS	South China Sea
SOEs	State-owned Enterprises
TCI	Trade Competiveness Index
TPP	Trans-Pacific Partnership
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNPKOs	UN peacekeeping operations
USIA	US Information Agency
WB	World Bank
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WOT	War on Terror

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Introduction

The conceptualization of "soft power" was first developed by a prominent international relations (IR) scholar Joseph Nye from Harvard University in the 1990s.[1] Nowadays, soft power has become something of a cliché in political, academic and media circles, and the political application of soft power has become increasingly commonplace.[2] Nye defines soft power as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment", and it "arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political values and policies".[3] In contrast, hard power is the ability to make others follow the actor's will through commanding, coercion and/or payment.[4] This definition of soft power acts as a starting point to explore its further conceptualization and political application.

There is a consensus that Chinese leaders and academics adopted the soft power terminology from Nye.[5] The former Chinese president of People's Republic of China (PRC), Hu Jintao, promoted the idea of "cultural soft power" (*Wenhua Ruanshili*) in the 17th National Congress of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 2007.[6] The current Xi-Li administration also accorded considerable attention to the promotion of Chinese soft power.[7] In short, Chinese soft power has been a topic of frequent discussions and debates in China and abroad.[8] However, much of the existing analysis has not yet critically engaged with the common application of key assumptions based on the Western conceptualization of soft power and its political utilization, when exploring the continuing evolution of ideas and practices associated with soft power in China,

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[1] Joseph S. Nye, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990); *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[2] *Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 5.

[3] *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs Publishing, 2004), x.

[4] *The Future of Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011).

[5] Hongying Wang and Yeh-Chung Lu, "The Conception of Soft Power and Its Policy Implication: A Comparative Study of China and Taiwan," *Journal of Contemporary China* 17, no. 56 (2008): 434.

[6] Hu Jintao, "Hu Jintao's report at the 17th Party Congress: Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive for New Victories in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in all." Accessed October 15, 2013. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-10/24/content_6938749.htm

[7] David Shambaugh, "China's Soft-Power Push," *Foreign Affairs* 94, no. 4 (2015): 99-107.

[8] Shaomin Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]* (Taipei: Xinwenfeng Publishing House, 2012).

particularly the impact of soft power at the domestic level. The principal intention of this thesis is to address this lacuna and provide an overall explication of soft power's role in China's contemporary foreign *and* domestic policies.

China's Soft Power Campaigns

China's soft power campaigns have gained momentum in the last decade and garnered considerable attention in China and abroad. The going-global projects of the Confucius Institutes (CIs), China Cultural Centers (CCCs) and the Chinese media have been officially promulgated by the Chinese government as a key component of its soft power campaigns. As this thesis will explain and demonstrate, the Chinese government considers cultural exchanges and trade, and the promotion of cultural/creative industries as a significant part of its global soft power campaigns. By contrast, China's increasing role in the agenda-setting and institution-building as a manifestation of its soft power can be only extrapolated and inferred because the Chinese government has been reluctant to draw attention to this aspect of its overall influence and soft power. The example of the so-called "Beijing Consensus" demonstrates the nuances and multi-dimensional nature of China's soft power campaigns in this regard. On one hand, the Chinese government officially denied exporting the Beijing Consensus. On the other, it has actively propagated this model domestically, and even sophisticatedly transplanted this model through the state-led program of building "Overseas Special Economic Zones" (OSEZs) mainly in the developing countries. To sum up, both Chinese government's public verbalization and logical extrapolation and inference made on the basis of its policy and behavior are significant to discern its soft power campaigns. The logical extrapolation and inference come down to the conceptual framework of soft power, including the power of "positive attraction",[9] "institutional" and "constitutive" power,[10] as further illustrated in the following section.

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[9] Nye, *The Future of Power*, 21.

[10] Michael Barnett and Boymond Duvall, "Power in Global Governance," in *Power in Global Governance*, ed. Michael Barnett and Boymond Duvall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1-32.

It is important to note that the debate related to the conceptualization of Chinese soft power and its political application as a national project remains unsettled. Debates in terms of the definition of (Chinese) soft power and resources, motivations, applications, impacts and implications of China's soft power campaigns, are particularly relevant.[11] Instead of engaging in every debate, this thesis is limited to an overarching question dealing with the motivations and the specific application of China's soft power campaigns.

Questions, Hypotheses and Central Arguments

As mentioned above, this thesis devotes special attention to a core question—*why and how have Chinese policy-makers utilized soft power since the beginning of the 21ˢᵗ century?* This thesis will help deepen this field of research theoretically and empirically. Theoretically, this thesis seeks to develop a relatively clear and operable conceptual framework of soft power to identify a country's soft power and its political application. Based on this conceptual framework, this thesis will elaborate on some key hypotheses directly linked to the motivations and application of a country's soft power. In so doing, the theoretical relationship between power, soft power and the national interest will be further clarified rather than taken for granted. In addition, the analytical eclecticism will be initially applied to examine the incentives of China's soft power campaigns. Empirically, this thesis will provide a comprehensive description of China's soft power campaigns in terms of its process, vehicles and impacts. Special attention will be accorded to the vehicles overlooked by observers both in China and abroad, such as China's recent activism in enhancing its agenda-setting and institution-building in the global (economic) governance.

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[11] For example, see Falk Hartig, *Chinese Public Diplomacy: The Rise of the Confucius Institute* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016); Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power is Transforming the World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007); Sheng Ding, *The Dragon's Hidden Wings: How China Rises with Its Soft Power* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2008); Jian Wang, ed. *Soft Power in China: Public Diplomacy through Communication* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 2011); Lai Longyi and Lu Yiyi, eds., *China's soft power and international relations* (New York and London: Routledge, 2012); Mingjiang Li, ed. *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2009); Michael T. Barr, *Who's Afraid of China? The Challenge of Chinese Soft Power* (London: Zed Books, 2011).

Following the core question noted above, several subsidiary research questions will also be addressed. Regarding the "why" aspect of China's soft power campaigns, this thesis seeks to examine which international and/or domestic factors have driven China's soft power campaigns, and explore how these campaigns are potentially linked to Chinese national interests and its grand strategy thinking (if China has a grand strategy). Regarding the "how" aspect of China's soft power campaigns, this thesis attempts to explore the making of "soft power with Chinese characteristics"[12] in the Chinese historical, political and cultural context, and its specific application in contrast to that of American soft power as a result. Therefore, on one hand, it pays attention to the following questions pertaining to the predominant thought of "power" in the ancient Chinese context and its influence on the current soft power studies in China. More importantly, how Chinese political circles and its scholarly community have viewed American hegemonism in general and American soft power in particular, and how the soft power with Chinese characteristics is contrasted to the American soft power? On the other hand, the political application of soft power with Chinese characteristics as a national project need to take into account the following questions, including who has been involved in China's soft power campaigns and in what issue-agendas and processes, which vehicles have been utilized, and what are the global impacts so far? The Chinese government's emphasis on the "*cultural* soft power" during its campaigns captures particular attention. That is, what is the role of "culture" in the conceptualization of soft power and its political application by the party-state?

In an attempt to answer this core question—why and how have Chinese policy-makers utilized soft power—four general hypotheses are developed. Hypothesis 1 (H1): soft power mainly serves national interests. Hypothesis 2 (H2): soft power is primarily operational in the international arena. Hypothesis 3 (H3): non-state actors are tactically the primary drivers of national soft power campaigns. Hypothesis 4 (H4): the application of soft power, like power in general, is contingent on a specific scope and

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[12] Bonnie S. Glaser and Melissa E. Murph, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics," in *Soft Power and Its Implication for the United States*, ed. Carola MaGiffert (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2009), 10-27.

domain. The scope of power describes who is involved in the power relationship, and the domain of power clarifies which topics or issue-agendas are involved.[13] These general hypotheses are derived from soft power scholarship mainly linked to the Western conceptualization of soft power and its subsequent political application. They are often taken as unstated assumptions underlying the general conceptualization of soft power and its political application by an entity. However, the principal intention of this thesis is to understand how China conceptualize and apply soft power. In so doing, the examination of driving force behind China's soft power campaigns may shed light on the utility of the first two hypotheses. Meanwhile, the exploration of China's political application of soft power as a national project may verify the utility of the final two hypotheses.

This thesis consequently concludes that, first, China's soft power campaigns have been utilized to promote Chinese political, economic and culture interests in particular, rather than human interests or subnational interests. Second, China's soft power campaigns are a "two-level game"[14] as they target both domestic and international audiences. Third, the Chinese government is a dominant driver of China's soft power campaigns. Fourth, the Chinese government differentiates various agendas and target audiences, and considers country-specific preferences and nuanced situations for the implementation of its soft power. Overall, the conceptualization of soft power with Chinese characteristics and its political application as a national project demonstrates the Chinese government's grand strategic shift from a passive to a proactive peaceful rise. I suggest that soft balancing between China and the US may become increasingly commonplace in the near future.[15] Further, in one of the distinctive contributions of this thesis, I argue that China's soft power campaigns have an important *domestic* component, as they are intended to enhance China's nation-building and state-making in the 21st century. The future role of soft power in China's proactive peaceful rise largely depends on its

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[13] Nye, *The Future of Power*, 6.

[14] Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (1988): 427-60.

[15] I define soft balancing as a strategy to use nonmilitary tool (such as international institutions, economic statecraft, and diplomatic arrangements) to delay, frustrate, and undermine a country's aggressive unilateral policies. See Robert Anthony Pape, "Soft Balancing against the United States," *International Security* 30, no. 1 (2005): 10.

effectiveness in helping maintain a subtle equilibrium between what Wang describes as "two orders"—a US-led liberal international order and the CCP-led domestic order in China.[16]

Rethinking the Conceptualization of Soft Power

One of major contributions of this thesis is to provide a new conceptual framework of soft power. Nye's use of soft power terminology and its conceptualization is not fixed. In the late 1990s, Nye used the terminology of soft power less often than another one called "co-optive power". However, Nye devoted special attention and effort to the terminology of soft power, and accordingly, it has gained currency since the beginning of the 21st century.[17] The continuities and changes of Nye's conceptualization of soft power also merit attention. On one hand, soft power is consistently defined by Nye in behavioral terms and contrasted to hard power. On the other hand, the specific conceptualization of soft power has evolved in the last two decades. Simply put, Nye's conceptualization of soft power is perplexing and ambiguous in the beginning since the clear distinction between hard and soft power was not fully developed. However, it has increasingly become succinct and clear later thanks to his continuous efforts of conceptual refinement.[18] Consequently, soft power is succinctly conceptualized as a power of attraction rather than coercion and payment, and it mainly relies on resources including the attractiveness of a country's culture, political values and policies. The concept of soft power was further clarified since Nye attempted to specify the principal means that directly leads to the production of soft power. Nye's relatively clear definition of soft power, as a result, is presented in this way:

"Soft power is the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of

framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to

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[16] Jisi Wang, "The 'Two Orders' and the Future of China-U.S. Relations," accessed November 1, 2016. http://www.chinafile.com/reporting-opinion/two-way-street/two-orders-and-future-china-us-relations.
[17] Geraldo Zahran and Leonardo Ramos, "From Hegemony to Soft Power," in *Soft Power and US Foreign Policy*, ed. Inderjeet Parmar and Michael Cox (London and New York: Routledge 2010), 12-32.
[18] The process of Nye's changing conceptualization of soft power see, Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, chapter 2.

obtain preferred outcomes."[19]

Nye's efforts to refine the conceptualization of soft power are both welcomed and disputed. On one hand, some analysts argued that Nye's continuous efforts to deepen the understandings of soft power have successfully made it the most influential IR concept in the last two decades.[20] On the other, some scholars and experts remained unimpressed by his conceptual refinement of soft power. Simply put, they argued that Nye failed to address whether, when and how soft power resources can be assuredly translated into an intended policy outcome, also failed to measure the exact effectiveness of soft power in achieving what one wants.[21] As a result, soft power remains a contested concept in IR studies. This section takes Nye's relatively succinct and clear definition of soft power as an analytical starting point, and rethinks its further conceptualization.

Categorizing the interrelations between power and resources

The first step to clarify the conceptualization of soft power is to categorize the possible interrelations among soft power, hard power, smart power, "soft resources" and "hard resources".[22] Soft resources are generally equal to what Hayden renders as "intangible assets",[23] which include culture, values, political ideologies, knowledge, reputation,

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[19] Nye, *The Future of Power*, 21.

[20] For example, Sheng Ding, *The Dragon's Hidden Wings: How China Rises with Its Soft Power*, 54.

[21] For example, see Stevenb Rothman, "Revising the Soft Power Concept: What Are the Means and Mechanisms of Soft Power? ," *Journal of Political Power* 4, no. 1 (2011): 49-64; Todd Hall, "An Unclear Attraction: A Critical Examination of Soft Power as an Analytical Category," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3, no. 2 (2010): 189-211; Benjamin E. Goldsmith and Horiuchi Yusaku, "In Search of Soft Power: Does Foreign Public Opinion Matter for US Foreign Policy?" *World Politics* 64, no. 3 (2012): 557-9; Fan Ying, "Soft Power: Power of Attraction or Confusion?" *Place Branding & Public Diplomacy* 4, no. 2 (2008): 47-58.

[22] The terminology of soft resource and hard resource were first used to develop "a resource-based theory of soft power" by Geun Lee. According to his conceptual framework of soft and hard power, the only difference between soft and hard power lies in the tangibility of the resources rather than in the nature of behaviors. That is, both soft and hard power in terms of behavioral nature can be either "co-optive" or "coercive". In so doing, soft power is defined as the utilization of non-material or soft resources to exert influence on others, while hard power is in play when material or hard resources are employed to influence on others. I adopt the term of soft resource and hard resource and agree with Lee's definitions on both terms, but it seems that his resource-based theory of soft power is analytically problematic and requires reconsideration. That is why I try to develop a new conceptual framework of soft power. See Geun Lee, "A Theory of Soft Power and Korea's Soft Power Strategy," *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 21, no. 2 (2009): 205-18; "The Clash of Soft Powers between China and Japan: Synergy and Dilemmas at the Six-Party Talks," *Asian Perspective* 34, no. 2 (2010): 113-39.

[23] Craig Hayden, *The Rhetoric of Soft Power: Public Diplomacy in Global Contexts*(UK: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012), 5.

and so forth. In contrast, hard resources are visible assets mainly referring to such as the natural resources, military force, economic assets, financial leverage, human resources and mass communication technologies. A clear illustration of various possible connections among these concepts can theoretically help further refine Nye's conceptualization of soft power, and enable us to deepen the understandings of a country's actual soft power practices. The specific connections among these concepts are fully described in Figure1.

Figure 1: Various Relationships between Power and Resources

Soft Power (SP)   Hard Power (HP)

Soft Resources (SR)

Ⅰ : SR → SP   Ⅲ: SR → HP

Ⅱ: SP → SR   Ⅳ: HP → SR

Smart Power
= Ⅱ+Ⅳ+Ⅵ+Ⅷ

Hard Resources (HR)

Ⅴ : HR → SP   Ⅶ: HR → HP

Ⅵ: SP → HR   Ⅷ: HP → HR
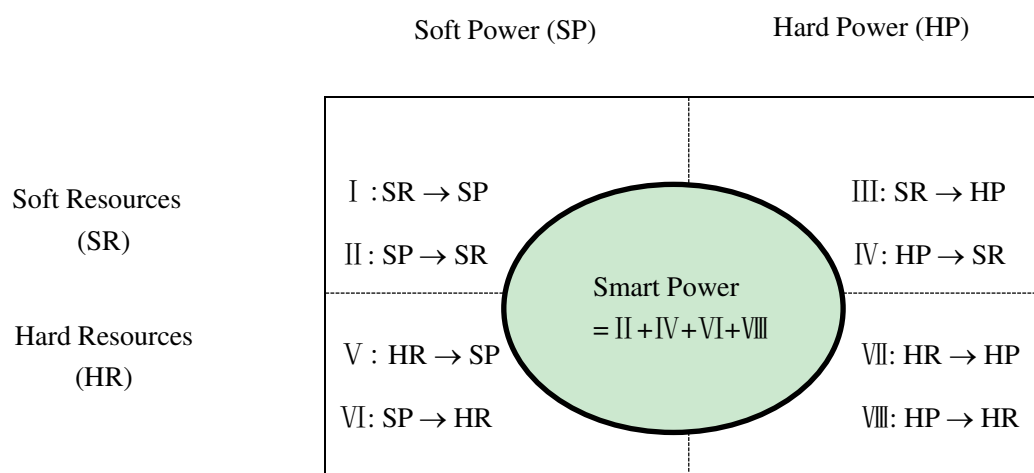
Notes: the symbol of "→" is a causal arrow.

Sources: compiled and made by the author

In the category I, it shows that soft resources may be used to achieve soft power. In turn, soft power may be exerted to secure soft resources in the category II. The basic conceptualization of soft power agreed by a great many scholars and experts including Nye, is founded on this categorization. The category III indicates the possibility that soft resources may be employed to achieve hard power. This line of understanding is partially linked to realist logic. Although realists are generally thought to give short shrift to soft power, traditionally they highlight the significance of soft resources in a sense that they may be employed for the sake of hard power.[24] For example, one of the leading classical realists—Morgenthau—took soft resources including "national

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[24] For example, see Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1946); Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

character", "national morale" and "the quality of government" into consideration when he analyzed the components of national power. He also suggested that policy-makers and scholars should not undervalue the significance of prestige. However, it does not mean that soft power matters as a result. To the contrary, his emphasis on the importance of soft resources aimed to demonstrate to the policy-makers how to organize soft resources to "control", "dominate", and even "conquer" target populations. As a result, it is not surprising that "cultural imperialism" is an integral part of power politics from the perspective of Morgenthau.[25]

It is important to note that the boundary between category I and the category III is not as sharp as it appears to be in theory. That is because Nye seemed to inflate soft and hard power in practice in the beginning as he argued that both of them could be used to "control" target populations, although he made a theoretical differentiation between them.[26] Therefore, Nye's conceptualization of soft power in this regard is arguably not so "soft" at all: soft power is the "iron fist" with the "velvet glove".[27] However, Nye increasingly realized that the ambiguity between category I and the category III might heavily undermine the analytical utility of soft power in contrast to hard power. As a result, Nye further refined the difference between soft and hard power in theory and practice. That is, soft power is substantially different from hard power in the nature of behavior rather than in the tangibility of the resources. If soft resources are used to "influence" or "affect" target audiences, soft power has more to say. Conversely, hard power is in paly as long as soft resources are utilized to either "control", "command" or "coerce" target audiences, or to "twist" their minds to "manipulate" them.[28] In so doing, the boundary between category I and the category III become clearer, notwithstanding the remaining ambiguity.

The category IV indicates that hard power may be exerted to secure soft resources. The

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[25] Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 5th ed. (New York: Knopf, 1973).
[26] Nye, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, 31-2.
[27] Robert Cooper, "Hard Power, Soft Power and the Global Goals of Diplomacy," in *American Power in the 21st Century* ed. David Held and Mathias Koenig-archibugi (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2004), 180.
[28] Nye, *The Future of Power*, 81.

American government's "coercive democratization" under the Bush administration is a good example in this regard.[29] Military attacks and invasions were justified to impose the professed liberal democratic values and institution on the target countries. As the soft resources of liberal democratic values are generally considered normatively "good", the process of wielding hard power for this sake seems to be justified, at least according to the logic of neo-conservatives in the US.[30] Another example related to the justification of hard power exerted for the promotion of soft resources is the "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P) sanctioned by the UN Security Council for the sake of human rights protection.[31]

Hard resources such as military force and economic wherewithal may be employed to pursue and even reinforce soft power, as the category V demonstrates. Nye has also increasingly paid attention to this category in his conceptualization of soft power. If a country's military force is dispatched to implement UN peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs), it may reinforce its global soft power.[32] It is also uncontroversial to suggest that a country's soft power will be promoted if some sorts of its economic resources are used for the humanitarian aid.[33] In turn, the exertion of soft power may be beneficial to its wielders to secure hard resources (category VI). As described in the literature review in the next chapter, there is an interesting argument that China's soft power campaigns in the developing world are driven by its desire for securing hard resources, including natural resources and energy in particular. The category VII and VIII pertaining to the interplay between hard resources and hard power is central to the realist school of thought.[34]

Smart power is exactly not "power" *per se* but a smart "strategy" to combine soft and

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[29] "Obama's Foreign Policy Must Combine Hard and Soft Power," *The Huffington Post*, 3 December, 2008.
[30] *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 63, 141.
[31] Monica Serrano and Thomas G. Weiss, eds., *The International Politics of Human Rights: Rallying to the R2P Cause?* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014).
[32] Shogo Suzuki, "Chinese Soft Power, Insecurity Studies, Myopia and Fantasy," *Third World Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (2009): 779-93.
[33] Javier Noya, "The Symbolic Power of Nations," *Place Branding* 2, no. 1 (2006): 53-67.
[34] For example, see John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2001).

hard power to obtain soft and/or hard resources under various circumstances.[35] The terminology of smart power comes into being as Nye sought to correct the wrong trend among the politicians and scholars being skewed to either soft or hard power. After all, hard and soft power is not mutually exclusive in practice. The idea to synthesize both hard and soft power in practice—smart power—seems to become more politically appealing among the practitioners of foreign policy. That is because it justifies the "contextual intelligence"[36] to select whatever appropriate from a gamut of policy tool in a given circumstance. Along this line of thought, practitioners of smart power are required to take—the target audiences, self-knowledge, the broader regional and global context and the instruments to be used—into account.[37] As a result, soft power is not necessarily a substitute for hard power, nor in the making of a foreign policy should soft power invariably outweigh hard power.[38] Overall, in a world where almost everything can be called smart, such as "smart bombs", "smart phones" and "smart blogs", it is thus no surprise to see the terminology of smart power gaining traction among various practitioners of foreign policy.

A new conceptual framework of soft power

The categorization of various possible interrelations between different types of power and different forms of resource is significant to advance a new conceptual framework of soft power that is defined in terms of behavior and beyond. As the debate revolving around the definition of soft power in a broad or narrow term is far from settled, it is important to synthesize some sorts of intellectual insights in this regard and produce a relatively rigorous and operable conceptual framework as a result.[39] In so doing, a three-level conception of soft power is developed: power of positive attraction, institutional and constitutive power. As Nye's theoretical framework of hard and soft

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[35] Nye, *The Future of Power*, xiv.
[36] *The Powers to Lead* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 87.
[37] Ernest J. Wilson, "Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616(2008): 110-24.
[38] Matthew Kroenig, Melissa McAdam, and Steven Weber, "Taking Soft Power Seriously," *Comparative Strategy* 29, no. 5 (2010): 425.
[39] The following academic works are accorded considerable attention in particular: Shaun Breslin*, "The Soft Notion of China's 'Soft Power'"* (London: Chatham House, 2011); Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*(London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1974); Barnett and Duvall, "Power in Global Governance," 1-32.

power founds on Lukes' three-dimensional view of power (see chapter 2), it lends further support to this conceptual framework of three-level soft power, albeit with significant revisions.

The first level of soft power refers to the positive attraction of culture, values, regimes, and policies directly seen from outsiders. The power of attraction is positive in a sense that it results in emulation rather than opposition from others. The power of positive attraction emerges from either the inherent attractiveness taken for granted by outsiders or its proactive promotion by the actors through persuasion in the form of public diplomacy. Public diplomacy, as a result, is inextricably linked to soft power. Public diplomacy generally refers to a country's engagement and communication with target foreign publics with an aim of influencing their pubic opinions and attitudes, and ultimately, their government's foreign policy decision-making.[40] In so doing, public diplomacy is mainly conducted through listening and advocacy, international exchange and broadcasting, cultural diplomacy and other strategic application of scientific knowledge and methods of public opinion research.[41]

The second level of soft power, institutional power, is similar to the "second face of power" as proposed by Bachrach and Baratz.[42] The capacity of agenda-setting and institution-building is part and parcel of institutional power. It enables some players to influence and even shape the behaviors or circumstances of "socially distant others" through indirect interactions.[43]

The third level of soft power is constitutive power working through the social relations

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[40] Benno H. Signitzer and Timothy Coombs, "Public Relations and Public Diplomacy: Conceptual Covergences," *Public Relations Review* 18, no. 2 (1992): 137-47; Eytan Gilboa, "Searching for a Theory of Public Diplomacy," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616(2008): 55-77; Gifford Malone, *Political Advocacy and Cultural Communication: Organizing the Nation's Public Diplomacy*(Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988).

[41] Manheim Jarol, *Strategic Public Diplomacy and American Foreign Policy: The Evolution of Influence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Nicholas J. Cull, *Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past* (Los Angeles, CA: Figueroa Press, 2009).

[42] Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, "Two Faces of Power," *The American Political Science Review* 56, no. 4 (1962): 947-52.

[43] Barnett and Duvall, "Power in Global Governance," 15-7.

of constitution. Constitutive power is essentially equivalent to the supreme dimension of power as advocated by Lukes.[44] Power is constitutive as it is generally considered to produce effects on the making of subjectivities or identities through either direct or diffuse constitutive relations. In this sense, the production and reproduction of meaning within social relations through the discourse and knowledge system becomes a key concern of constitutive power.[45]

This new conceptual framework corrects the growing tendency to broaden the definition of soft power to include almost all but military coercion. This framework also resists the trend to reduce the conceptualization of soft power to the power of positive attraction. Therefore, the triple level of soft power may become a framework of reference to analyze a country's conceptualization of soft power and its political application. China's soft power campaigns through public diplomacy (the globalization of CIs), the struggle for "discursive power" (*huayu quan*)[46] via the going-global project of state media, the propagation of "normative soft power"[47] and the proactive agenda-setting and institution-building particularly for the global economic governance, can be largely understood according to this new framework (see chapter 4).

Methodologies

Another contribution of this thesis is to draw on an IR theoretical methodology called "analytical eclecticism" to advance the understandings of China's soft power campaigns. The methodology of analytical eclecticism was primarily developed by Peter J. Katzenstein. In general, analytical eclecticism is a "problem-driven" rather than

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[44] Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*.

[45] Barnett and Duvall, "Power in Global Governance," 18-22.

[46] The definition of discursive power varies in the Chinese context. For example, discursive power is considered as "the right to speak", "the power of media", "soft power", or "diplomatic skills". Some equates discursive power with the "power discourse". Despite different understandings of discursive power in definition, struggling for China's international right to speak and shape a favorable image against the supposed foreign media's demonization of China, is a common concern underlying a series of discussion in this regard. See Kejin Zhao, "China's Rise and Its Discursive Power Strategy," *Chinese Political Science Review* (2016), doi:10.1007/s41111-016-0027-x.

[47] The normative soft power is understood as being an "ideological power" seeking to "shape the patterns of discourse" in regard to "basic principles and values" in the international arena. See Sibylle Scheipers and Daniela Sicurelli, "Normative Power Europe: A Credible Utopia?" *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 45, no. 2 (2007): 453.

"approach-driven" research methodology.[48] The key concern of this research methodology is to address IR issues and problems with intellectual and practical significance, but that are generally overlooked by the paradigm-bound researches. In so doing, on one hand, it seeks to draw on various concepts, logics, assumptions, methods, causal mechanisms and interpretations derived from different IR mainstream paradigms, including realism, liberalism and constructivism. On the other, it seeks to integrate them in a pragmatic form of "explanatory sketches".[49]

It should be noted that analytical eclecticism does not mean "anything goes".[50] It is a pragmatic combination of interconnected variables sourcing from existing IR mainstream research paradigms. For example, "power", "efficiency" and "identity"—key variables attached to the research paradigms of realism, IR liberalism and constructivism respectively—can be integrated into eclectic analyses and achieve more insightful answers as a result.[51]

An eclectic analysis of various theoretical approaches to the Chinese foreign policy can help us understand the motivations and implications of its recent policies in general, and its soft power campaigns in particular. That is, realism needs to be given precedence to explore Chinese foreign policies since it has heavily influenced the Chinese political and academic circles. However, the realistic account needs to be supplemented by the liberal and constructive insights, especially when soft power has gained ascendancy since the end of Cold War. The IR liberal mode of thought prefers to analyze constraints and opportunities for China's interactions with the US-led *liberal* international order. Further, the constructive approach seeks to account for China's foreign policies set in both domestic and international social structures. Domestically, it pays attention to the

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[48] Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, "Japan, Asian-Pacific Security, and the Case for Analytical Eclecticism," *International Security* 26, no. 3 (2001-2002): 184.

[49] Peter J. Katzenstein and Rudra Sil, "Rethinking Asian Security: A Case for Analytical Eclecticism," in *Rethinking Security in East Asia: Identity, Power, and Efficiency* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 6; Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*: 10.

[50] Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*: 16.

[51] For example, see Peter J. Katzenstein, *Rethinking Japanese Security: Internal and External Dimensions* (London: Routledge, 2008); Jae-Jung Suh, Peter J. Katzenstein, and Allen Carlson, eds., *Rethinking Security in East Asia: Identity, Power, and Efficiency* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2004).

role of Chinese strategic culture and the historical contingency in the making of Chinese foreign policies. Internationally, it is attentive to how the interactive process between China and the US-led international order influence the formation of Chinese identity. Both domestic and international constitutions may shed light on the making of Chinese identity and its foreign policy preferences.

The application of analytical eclecticism to the specific exploration of China's soft power campaigns merits further attention. This thesis hypothesizes that soft power is inextricably linked to the "national interest". Given Nye clearly argues that soft power "fits with realist, liberal or constructivist perspective",[52] it is logical to appropriate analytical eclecticism to examine the conceptualization of soft power and its political application as a national project. It is therefore reasonable to conceptualize the national interest by utilizing analytical eclecticism because of the hypothetical connection between soft power and the national interest (see chapter 2). In so doing, the specification of various forms and levels of national interest in accordance with the analytical eclectic approach is in order.

Regarding the forms of national interests, both material and ideational factors (including security, power, wealth, reputation and identity) are open to the analytical eclectic approach,[53] although which factors matter depends on a given case study. There are three major forms of national interest in driving China's soft power campaigns as far as I am concerned: political, economic and cultural interests. The focus on these forms of national interest further demonstrates the utility of analytical eclecticism to combine both high and low politics. There are also four levels of national interest: survival, vital, major, and peripheral interest.[54] Vital and major interests are key concerns for the state in peacetime, when survive is not threatened. The elaboration on three forms (political, economic and cultural) and two levels (major and vital) of national interest in line with

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[52] Joseph S. Nye, "Responding to My Critics and Conclusion," in *Soft Power and US Foreign Policy*, ed. Inderjeet Parmar and Michael Cox (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 219.
[53] Georg Sørensen, "The Case for Combining Material Forces and Ideas in the Study of IR," *European Journal of International Relations* 14, no. 1 (2008): 5-32.
[54] Donald E. Nuechterlein, *American Overcommitted: United States National Interests in the 1980s* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1985).

the eclectic mode of analysis, therefore, is prioritized in examining the driving force behind China's soft power campaigns.

Analytical eclecticism provides another insight to the exploration of China's soft power campaigns as it takes material/ideational structure, agency and process into consideration at the same time. The material and/or ideational structure account for the popularity of soft power concept and its political operationalization on the part of the Chinese government in face of structural constraints and opportunities. The attention paid to the properties of Chinese agency (the Chinese government in particular) in relation to its unique historical, political and cultural context, explains soft power with Chinese characteristics in contrast to the American soft power. The domestic and international interactive processes are important to elucidate China's identity-making, changing formations of its national interests, and the potential role of soft power in its strategic design.

The analytical eclectic approach may also shed light on the exploration of China's soft power campaigns in the international and domestic dimension. The promotion of comprehensive national power (CNP) and the building of national cohesion are two crucial concerns of China's soft power campaigns from the perspective of Chinese government.[55] While the realist and liberal approaches tend to focus on the international dimension of China's soft power campaigns related to the promotion of CNP, the constructivist approach is advantageous to unpack the forms, processes and the implications of China's national cohesion-building domestically along with its soft power campaigns.

Apart from the methodology of analytical eclecticism, this thesis also draws on field research in the form of interviews. As the methodology of analytical eclecticism generally depends on the secondary data including academic books, journals and other

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[55] Hu, "Firmly March on the Path of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive to Build a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects: Report to the CCP 18th National Congress." Accessed December 8, 2013. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/special/18cpcnc/2012-11/17/c_131981259.htm

document, it should be supplemented with the first-hand information. Therefore, semi-structured interviews (including face-to-face interviews and interviews through emails) are used. In so doing, I interviewed some leading Chinese scholars and experts who are specialized in this topic, and the Chinese officials who are informed of the policy-making of Chinese soft power and its political application. I also carried out interviews through emails with foreign scholars and experts who are attentive to the Chinese soft power. Both internal and external views on China's soft power campaigns are given an equal consideration as it adds a further relevance to the comparative study in this research project.

The Structure of Thesis

Having described the questions, hypotheses, central arguments, a new conceptual framework of soft power, and the methodologies applied for this research project, the following section will outline the thesis structure.

Chapter 1 surveys the scholarship centering on a core question: why and how have Chinese policy-makers utilized soft power in the 21st century? Most of researchers and analysts tend to answer this question more through the lens of realism, less in liberalism, and much less in the constructivist mode of thought. In so doing, the advantages and shortcomings of each paradigm used by different analysts for the examination of China's soft power campaigns will be critically analyzed. It finally concludes that analytical eclecticism is the most appropriate approach to examine China's soft power campaigns in theory and practice.

Chapter 2 sets forth four general hypotheses from the current soft power scholarship, in an attempt to explore the rationale and application of China's soft power campaigns. In this process, the theoretical connections between power, soft power and the national interest are further clarified. It finally concludes that soft power and the national interest are inextricably connected, and this link adds credibility to the application of analytical

eclecticism.

Chapter 3 examines the historical evolution of power tradition and its influence on the current soft power studies in China. This examination is crucial as it sets a cultural and historical backdrop for the following exploration of how Chinese politician, policy pundits and scholars have conceptualized Chinese soft power and contrasted it with American soft power. It concludes that Chinese soft power on one hand shares common features with that of US, such as their common focus on the close link between soft power and the national interest, between soft power and (comprehensive) national power in general and political power in particular. However, as argued by Chinese scholars and experts, Chinese soft power also demonstrates its Chinese characteristics in terms of nature, assumptions and resources made on the basis of its unique history, culture and national conditions compared to that of US. Overall, the unsettled identity dilemma between cultural Chineseness and Western modernization has significantly influenced the construction of soft power with Chinese characteristics in contrast to American soft power.

Chapter 4 addresses the processes, vehicles and impacts of China's application of soft power as a national project, and test four general hypotheses mentioned before. The first part seeks to summarize some salient features of Chinese policy decision-making linked to the initiative of soft power campaigns. Moreover, the political application of Chinese soft power in different domains and scopes is fully described in the second part. The global impacts of China's soft power campaigns are further examined in the last part. This chapter finally elicits several major conclusions according to the test of four general hypotheses. First, the national interest is the guiding force of China's soft power campaigns. Second, the Chinese government is a dominant driver of China's soft power campaigns. Third, China's soft power campaigns are both domestically and internationally oriented. Fourth, the Chinese government differentiates between various agendas and target audiences, and considers country-specific preferences and nuanced situations for implementing its soft power campaigns. Above all, China's global soft

power impacts so far are mixed, and its ranking is, more often than not, placed in the middle.

Chapter 5 explores major motives and incentives of China's soft power campaigns in the international arena as commonly believed. The core argument of this chapter is that China's global soft power campaigns are less reflective of the logic of appropriateness. This is because the consideration of soft power as morally good and appropriate to serve human interests comes second to the dictate of national interests, including political, economic and cultural interests. Simply put, soft power has been widely utilized by the Chinese government to (1) preserve cultural/ideological security, (2) reduce cultural trade deficit and facilitate the development of cultural or creative industries, (3) reshape a favorable international image, and (4) institutionalize its growing economic and political influence through agenda-setting and institution-building. The integration of both hard and low politics underlying China's soft power campaigns is distinctive. As a result, this chapter will briefly review the general guiding force of national interests for the political application of soft power, and then specify the key international factors driving China's soft power campaigns related to both hard and low politics. This empirical examination further demonstrates the utility of analytical eclecticism.

Chapter 6 develops a systematic analysis of China's soft power campaigns at the domestic level that is under-researched. National cohesion is a key concern of domestic soft power campaigns in the eyes of the regime as it is integrated into the formation of national identity, state strength, regime security, and the CCP's political legitimacy. The CCP's ideological reformulation, the harmonious society initiative, and the Patriotic Education Movement (PEM) are key agendas of national cohesion-building, and they have featured in the state-led soft power campaigns as a result. The domestic soft power campaigns demonstrate the institutional and constitutive power of the propaganda system over the Chinese society. This is because the propaganda system developed a two-pronged strategy to promulgate the official articulations seeking to shape public opinions, set agendas and build national identity. It has also been used to suppress the

unwanted developments that are seen to risk threatening the discursive hegemony of the CCP and its political legitimacy. Overall, China's domestic soft power campaigns are intended to enhance China's nation-building and state-making in the 21st century.

This thesis finally concludes that the state-led soft power campaigns in the early decade of the 21st century significantly reflect China's changing grand strategy from a passive to a proactive peaceful rise. Internationally, soft power has figured significantly in China's CNP, and served as a key strategic means to achieve China's core interests of seeking wealth, power and status. Domestically, the state-led soft power campaigns are intended to enhance China's nation-building and state-making in the 21st century. China's recent so-called "assertive" security and foreign policy does not suggest its deviation from peaceful rise. Rather, it brings China's emerging grand strategy of proactive peaceful rise based on its rising hard and soft power into sharp relief. "Peaceful" remains the key word on the part of the Chinese government. The future role of soft power in China's proactive peaceful rise largely relies on its effectiveness in helping maintain a subtle equilibrium between "two orders"—a US-led liberal international order and the CCP-led domestic order in China.

Chapter 1: A Literature Review of China's Soft Power Campaigns:

Peaceful Rise or Peaceful Ruse?

This chapter will survey the scholarship centering on a core question: *why and how have Chinese policy-makers utilized soft power in the 21st century?* Scholars and experts tend to answer this question more through the lens of realism, less in liberalism, and much less in constructivist mode of thought. Accordingly, the advantages and shortcomings of each paradigm used by different scholars and experts to examine China's soft power campaigns will be critically analyzed. Whether China's soft power campaigns reflect the Chinese government's proclaimed "peaceful rise",[1] or "peaceful ruse" as some foreign observers might argue, time will tell. Both of them are relevant currently. It finally concludes that analytical eclecticism is the most appropriate approach to conceptualize Chinese soft power and analyze its political application as a national project.

IR Realism and China's Soft Power Campaigns

Few would disagree that the realist paradigm remains an IR "industry standard", particularly in the study of power.[2] As a consequence of the core assumption of anarchy, realism argues that the nation state can only ensure security through self-help efforts.[3] Although realists do not always converge in terms of epistemologies and methodologies, realists generally agree that power is part and parcel of international politics.[4] More importantly, they generally prioritize coercive power, which is wielded on the basis of

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[1] Although the official term of "peaceful rise" was replaced by a less provocative catchphrase of "peaceful development", the central concern—reassuring China's neighboring states and the world that it will never seek hegemony even if China ascends into a strong and prosperous power in the future—remains unchanged. In this sense, "peaceful rise" is interchangeable with "peaceful development", notwithstanding some sorts of nuanced semantic differences between them. Therefore, I only use the term "peaceful rise" in this chapter for analytical purpose. See Rosita Dellios and R. James Ferguson, *China's Quest for Global Order: From Peaceful Rise to Harmonious World* (Lanham and New York: Lexington Books, 2013), chapter 4.

[2] Barnett and Duvall, "Power in Global Governance," 8.

[3] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Boston and New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1979).

[4] Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939*; Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*; Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.

visible hard resources mainly including military hardware and economic leverage.[5] As a result, little reference is made in realist accounts of the non-coercive exercises of power.[6] In short, what renders the realist conception of power "hard" is not only its *material* focus but also the stress put on the expression of power as a compulsion through *direct* interaction.[7]

According to the realist paradigm, scholarship related to China's soft power campaigns falls into two groups: one group subscribes to offensive realism, while the other is aligned with defensive realism. Both branches of realist thought suggest national security is a major determinant of perceived national interests. However, both of them differ in the way they understand the best strategy to achieve national security. Offensive realists believe that the best defense is a good offense and that power maximization can lead to absolute security. In contrast, defensive realists hold up the balance-of-power doctrine, and argue that security can be assured without the "hegemonic" dominance postulated by offensive realists. For defensive realists, power is nothing more than a means for strengthening national security. Power is not an end in itself as the offensive realists claim.[8] Mearsheimer summarizes the key difference between offensive and defensive realism in this way: "offensive realism parts company with defensive realism over the question of how much power states want".[9] This contradictory logic between defensive and offensive realism regarding the role of power in the struggle for national security is reflected in the following binary views of China's soft power campaigns.

From the perspective of defensive realism, China's soft power campaigns—acting as a

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[5] Guilio M. Gallarotti, *The Power Curse: Influence and Illusion in World Politics* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2010), 26-7.

[6] Utpal Vyas, *Soft Power in Japan-China Relations: State, Sub-State and Non-State Relations* (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), 18.

[7] Shaomin Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, 36-45.

[8] Glenn Herald Snyder, "Mearsheimer's World—Offensive Realism and the Struggle for Security," *International Security* 27, no. 1 (2002): 151-5; Feng Liu and Ruizhuang Zhang, "The Typologies of Realism," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 1, no. 1 (2006): 123; Shaomin Xu, "Survival, Power and Offensive Realism," in *Guoji Guanxi Mingzhu Xuandu [Classics in International Relations: Guides and Reviews]*, ed. Ruolan Fan (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2015), 86-99.

[9] Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 21.

"short shield for self-defense"[10]—are seen as primarily reactive to the international pressure of American hegemony, rather than as an expression of a direct power struggle with the US. The logic is straightforward. That is, the Chinese government seeks to use these campaigns to tone down the "China threat" thesis and forestall a potential US-led containment or encirclement against China. In general, China's soft power campaigns are defensive and peaceful.[11] Conversely, another group of external observers developed a negative—even an alarming—view of the Chinese government's soft power campaigns in accordance with the reasoning of offensive realism. Simply put, China's soft power campaigns are seen as closely linked to its calculated pursuit of hard power. Accordingly, Chinese soft power differs from its hard power in *degree* rather than in kind. Following this line of thought, the struggle for soft power between China and other countries is essentially a zero-sum game: one gaining soft power entails the loss of another.[12] The major concern of China's potential soft power challenges and its subsequent implications for American hegemony, as a result, has dominated the study of Chinese soft power in the US policy-informed research.[13] Some even argue that China's soft power buildup may threaten the West at large.[14]

The following section will detail how the conceptualization of Chinese soft power and its political application is viewed differently through the lens of defensive and offensive realism respectively. There are four binary views on the conceptualization of Chinese soft power and its political application. First, a broad definition of soft power in the Chinese context aims to counter Western threats or inflate Chinese threats. Second, China's soft power campaigns are for the sake of soft power or serve as a disguise for hard power. Third, China's soft power campaigns aim for anti-Western cultural

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[10] Mingjiang Li, "China Debates Soft Power," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 2, no. 2 (2008): 300.

[11] For example, see Jean A. Garrison, "China's Prudent Cultivation of 'Soft' Power and Implications for U.S. Policy in East Asia," *Asian Affairs* 32, no. 1 (2005): 25; Johannes Dragsbaek Schmidt, "China's Soft Power Diplomacy in Southeast Asia," *The Copenhagen Journal of Asia Studies* 26, no. 1 (2008): 26; Joel Wuthnow, "The Concept of Soft Power in China," *Issue & Studies* 44, no. 2 (2008): 8; Mingjiang Li, "China Debates Soft Power," 307; Robert G. Sutter, *China's Rise in Asia: Promises and Perils* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005).

[12] Ian Hall and Frank Smith, "The Struggle for Soft Power in Asia: Public Diplomacy and Regional Competition," *Asian Security* 9, no. 1 (2013): 1-18; Shogo Suzuki, "Chinese Soft Power, Insecurity Studies, Myopia and Fantasy," 781.

[13] "The Myth and Reality of China's 'Soft Power' " in *Soft Power and US Foreign Policy*, ed. Inderjeet Parmar and Michael Cox (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 205; Shaun Breslin, "Understanding China's Regional Rise: Interpretations, Identities and Implications," *International Affairs* 85, no. 4 (2009): 828-9.

[14] For example, see Peter Van Ham, "China's Rise and Europe's Fall: Time to Start Worrying," *European View* 10, no. 1 (2011): 107-14.

imperialism or serve Chinese cultural imperialism. Last, China's advocacy of normative soft power signals its intention as a status-quo power or for a revisionist new hegemony.

A broad definition of Chinese soft power: countering or inflating threats

A starting point to examine the conceptualization of Chinese soft power and its political application is an accustomed definition of soft power. There is an increasing trend to expand Nye's original definition,[15] even to the extent that some analysts complain, "soft power now seems to mean everything".[16] A similar trend occurs as analysts started to broaden China's soft power portfolio to include all but the military and security realm.[17] Nye's original formulation of soft power based on attractive culture and values, as well as moral and legitimate diplomacy seen from target audiences, continues to count. However, Nye's "carrots" (such as foreign aid, investments and trade) and "sticks" (such as unilateral economic sanction) are also included as key components of Chinese soft power. The conceptual reformulation of soft power in the Chinese political and academic circles and its political implications are viewed differently through the prism of defensive and offensive realism.

From the perspective of defensive realism, enriching a descriptive meaning of soft power is a function of China's ascendancy under the shadow of American hegemony and its shortage of key soft resources in comparison to the US. Chinese experts and scholars have significantly reformulated the concept of soft power originally developed by Nye,[18] and accordingly, the concept of "soft power with Chinese characteristics"

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[15] For example, see Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 135.

[16] Leslie H. Gelb, *Power Rules: How Common Sense Can Rescue American Foreign Policy* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 28.

[17] For example, see Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*, 6; Congressional Research Service, *China's Foreign Policy and 'Soft Power' in South America, Asia, and Africa* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2008), 3; Thomas Lum, Wayne M. Morrison, and Bruce Vaughn, "China's 'Soft Power' in Southeast Asia" (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 2008), 1-2; Barthélémy Courmont, "What Implications for Chinese Soft Power: Charm Offensive or New Hegemony?," *Pacific Focus* 28, no. 3 (2013): 360.

[18] Hongying Wang and Yeh-Chung Lu, "The Conception of Soft Power and Its Policy Implication: A Comparative Study of China and Taiwan," 425-47; Li, "China Debates Soft Power," 287-308; Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, chapter 3.

gained currency.[19] Chinese policy-makers and scholars obviously share some common understandings of soft power with Nye about its nature of attraction by definition and its key feature of political application. However, Chinese politicians and scholars believe that, the concept of soft power was originally formularized and further developed by those who base on US and attempt to maintain American hegemonism, as further examined in chapter 3. Therefore, the concept of soft power originally developed in reference to the US requires readjustment in the specific context of China's increasing influence, which is far from making it a peer competitor of US.[20]

China's lack of attractive soft resources such as modern popular culture, liberal values and a democratic regime—all are the standard components of soft power as it is widely understood—further explains Chinese politicians and scholars' motivation to broaden the definition of Chinese soft power.[21] If Nye's formulation and logic of soft power is strictly applied in the Chinese context, Chinese soft power will be largely discounted in the first place.[22] If it were true, there is no need to "talk up" Chinese soft power.

Regarding the political implications of developing a broad definition of soft power in China, Chinese politicians, pundits and scholars increasingly see it through a prism of Chinese traditional thought: Chinese soft power in a broad sense—as a manifestation of Chinese *Wangdao* (humane authority)—is by and large defensive and peaceful. In contrast, American soft power is generally seen as aggressive or as *Badao* (hegemonic authority). [23] Notwithstanding the problem of oversimplification however, Chinese traditional mode of thought on *Wangdao* is more or less in line with the logic of

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[19] Glaser and Murph, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics," 10-27.

[20] Yong Deng, "The New Hard Realities: 'Soft Power' and China in Transition," in *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics*, ed. Li Mingjiang (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), 64, 74; Sheng Ding, *The Dragon's Hidden Wings: How China Rises with Its Soft Power*, 23-28; "Analyzing Rising Power from the Perspective of Soft Power: A New Look at China's Rise to the Status Quo Power," *Journal of Contemporary China* 19, no. 64 (2010): 265.

[21] For example, see Mingjiang Li, "Domestic Source of China's Soft Power Approach," *China Security* 5, no. 2 (2009): 34-49; Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*, 229-30; Ding, *The Dragon's Hidden Wings: How China Rises with Its Soft Power*, 167-8; Jacques deLisle, "Soft Power in a Hard Place: China, Taiwan, Cross-Strait Relations and U.S. Policy," *Orbis* 54, no. 4 (2010): 521; David Shambaugh, "China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order," *International Security* 29, no. 3 (2004): 77-8.

[22] Yongjin Zhang, "The Discussion of China's Soft Power and Its Discontents," in *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics*, ed. Mingjiang Li (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), 57.

[23] A brief review of both "Wangdao" and "Badao" see David Shambaugh, *Beautiful Imperialist: China Perceives America (1972-1990)* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 78-84.

defensive realism, while *Badao* is similar to the offensive realist thought. Above all, the Chinese political circles and its scholarly community adhering to defensive realism take into account the external threat of American hegemony generally and American soft power in particular, and necessitate the reconceptualization of soft power to incorporate some "hard" factors.

Standing in a direct contrast to the defensive realist reading of China's broad definition of soft power, observers subscribing to offensive realism are likely to see it in a negative light. Therefore, the broader the definition of Chinese soft power is, the more likely it is to confirm expectations about multiple threats to the West.[24] If this is the case, then the rise of Chinese soft power may result in a "soft power version of Chinese threat thesis",[25] and may call for America's rebalance against China's rising soft power.[26]

The offensive realist concern of China's wide definition of soft power is not baseless. Arguably, utilization of hard resources—economic and financial leverage as well as trade advantages—is particularly relevant if not always effective. There are confirming examples that the Chinese government can and does translate its hard resources into political influence in the form of coercion and payment rather than attraction.[27] For example, the Chinese government's sophisticated "cheque-book diplomacy" involving the use of its huge reserve assets of dollar in exchange for the recipients' recognition of "one-China" policy is illustrative.[28] Moreover, in the case of Chinese foreign aid and outbound investment to the North Korea, China's economic power "misfires badly", and finally failed to improve its global soft power.[29] There is also a "Dalai Lama Effect" with regard to the Chinese government's determination to use its trade ties to punish

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[24] Shaun Breslin, *The Soft Notion of China's "Soft Power"*, 4.

[25] Chi Zhang, "Zhongguo Ruanshili Jueqilun Shi Weixielun Xinbanben [The Rise of Chinese Soft Power as a New Version of 'China Threat Thesis']," *Lianhe Zaobao*, January 26, 2006.

[26] Renato Castro De Castro, "Confronting China's Charm Offensive in East Asia: A Simple Case of Fighting Fire with Fire?," *Issues & Studies* 45, no. 1 (2009): 71-116.

[27] James Reilly, "China's Economic Statecraft: Turning Wealth into Power" (Sydney: Lowy Institute for International Policy, 2013); Daniel W. Drezner, "Bad Debts: Assessing China's Financial Influence in Great Power Politics," *International Security* 34, no. 2 (2009): 7-45; Jean-Marc F. Blanchard, "China's Grand Strategy and Money Muscle: The Potentialities and Pratfalls of China's Sovereign Wealth Fund and Renminbi Policies," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 4, no. 1 (2011): 31-53.

[28] Marc Lanteigne, "Water Dragon? China, Power Shifts and Soft Balancing in the South Pacific," *Political Science* 64, no. 1 (2012): 30-37.

[29] "Can't Buy Me Soft Power," *The Economisit* 407, no. 8833 (2013): 44.

countries that officially received the Dalai Lama at the highest political level, by instantly reducing their exports to China.[30]

It is thus hardly surprising that external observers tended to take an expansive view of China's soft power "arsenal" and ignored the confirming evidence of China's real attempt to use hard resources to produce soft power rather than hard power under some circumstances. Therefore, the elevation of China's actual soft power "to a status it does not deserve", as Barr writes, actually adds to a perception of China as a rising and threating power.[31] Soft power in this sense is building a foundation for China's regional dominance at the cost of American.[32] Some even argue that it serves China's grand strategy of seeking global hegemony.[33]

Soft power campaigns as a disguise for seeking hard power

The defensive-offensive binary views on the driving force behind China's soft power campaigns also merit attention. While the defensive realist perspective highlights China's soft power campaigns for its peaceful rise, the offensive realist perspective emphasizes China's central concern of seeking hard power hidden in its soft power campaigns. Contradictory interpretations of China's using Zheng He's seven voyages to Southeast Asia, Southern Asia and Africa from 1405 to 1433 as its maritime soft power campaign are illustrative.[34]

The 600th anniversary of Zheng He's expeditionary voyage in 2005 is optimal for the Chinese government to propagate its "peaceful rise" in general and maritime soft power campaign in particular.[35] Zheng He, Chinese soft power and peaceful rise are bound

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[30] Andreas Fuchs and Nils-Hendrik Klann, "Paying a Visit: The Dalai Lama Effect on International Trade," *Journal of International Economics* 91, no. 1 (2013): 164-77.
[31] Barr, *Who's Afraid of China? The Challenge of Chinese Soft Power*, 23.
[32] Susan Windybank, "The China Syndrome," *Policy* 21, no. 2 (2008): 28.
[33] Steven Mosher, *Hegemon: China's Plan to Dominate Asia and the World* (New York: Encounter Books, 2001).
[34] Edward L. Dreyer, *Zheng He: China and the Oceans in the Early Ming Dynasty, 1405-1433* (New York: Pearson Education, 2007).
[35] See the detail on the website: http://www.cctv.com/geography/special/C14148/01/index.shtml, accessed November 1, 2016.

together consequently. The Chinese government since then had frequently disseminated two interconnecting points: one is the peacefulness of Zheng He's expeditionary voyage and the other is the victimization and sufferings of Chinese people and other people who lived in the shadow of Western and Japan's imperialistic expansion and colonization historically.

The Chinese government has continuously invoked Zheng He's seven peaceful expeditionary voyages as part of a soft power campaign to positively justify China's peaceful rise to a global power.[36] The Chinese government and senior politicians often claimed that China had never occupied any territory during Zheng He's maritime voyages.[37] Additionally, the historical "fact" of Zheng He's peaceful voyage was also used by the Chinese government to starkly contrast with the Western and Japan's imperialistic invasion and colonization in Southeast Asia, South Asia and Africa historically. The memories of China's victimization during "the century of humiliation" from 1840s to 1940s remain at the forefront of national psyche. China's soft power campaigns, therefore, attempt to portray a negative image of "Otherness"—mainly in reference to the West (the US in particular) and Japan—and discredit their influence in Southeast and Southern Asia, and in Africa. The positive Chinese Self that is defined according to the negative exclusion of alien Otherness, as a result, adds relevance to China's building of "negative soft power",[38] and forms a quintessential part of "Chinese exceptionalism".[39] In this sense, the political implications of China's maritime soft power campaign via Zheng He are straightforward. That is, like ancient Chinese naval power demonstrated in Zheng He's peaceful voyage, Barr writes that not only is China's modern sea power not to be "feared", it is also "*welcomed*" [Italic mine].[40] In short, China's soft power campaigns via the popularization of Zheng He,

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[36] Fa'an Wang ed., *Zhongguo Heping Fashan Zhong De Qiangjun Zhanlve [China's Strategy for Invigorating the Armed Forces amid Peaceful Development]* (Beijing: Military Science Press, 2011), chapter 1.

[37] For example, see *White Paper on China's Peaceful Development* (Beijing: State Council Information Office, 2011); Keqiang Li, "Full Text of Premier's Speech at the 10th Asia Summit," accessed January 18, 2017. http://english.gov.cn/premier/speeches/2015/11/25/content_281475241888610.htm

[38] William A. Callahan, "Identity and Security in China: The Negative Soft Power of the China Dream," *Politics* 35, no. 3-4 (2015): 216-29.

[39] Feng Zhang, "The Rise of Chinese Exceptionalism in International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 2 (2013): 305-28.

[40] Barr, *Who's Afraid of China? The Challenge of Chinese Soft Power*, 86.

according to the defensive realist reading, primarily seeks to ameliorate the China threat thesis and facilitate China's peaceful rise without triggering US-led containment against China.

The modern revitalization of Zheng He and its key role in China's maritime soft power campaigns for peaceful rise, however, are disputed by external observers. They assert that China's maritime soft power campaign is mainly designed to reinforce and legitimize China's expansion of sea power to sustain its rising economy through protecting its uninterrupted import of energy and natural resources.[41] China's recent so-called "assertiveness" in security and foreign policy towards South China Sea (SCS) maritime disputes, as examined in chapter 4, seems to lend credence to the actual concern about China's hard power rather than soft power. To sum up, China's "soft" maritime power campaign manifests its second "self-strengthening movement"[42] in search for power and wealth,[43] according to the offensive realist reading. Along this line of reasoning, China's peaceful rise rhetoric stops at the water's edge.

Anti-Western cultural imperialism or Chinese cultural imperialism

The Chinese self-presentation of its *cultural* soft power offensive against Western cultural imperialism contrasts sharply to the external perception of seeing it indicative of Chinese cultural imperialism. The state-led public diplomacy of global expansion of CIs and the Chinese state media are particularly relevant in demonstrating this contradiction. Before proceeding further, a relatively clear definition of cultural imperialism is in order.

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[41] Ibid., 80-90; Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, "China's Energy-Driven 'Soft Power'," *Orbis* 52, no. 1 (2008): 127-8; Toshi Yoshihara, "China's 'Soft' Naval Power in the Indian Ocean," *Pacific Focus* 25, no. 1 (2010): 59-88; James R. Holmes, "Soft Power at Sea: Zheng He and China's Maritime Diplomacy," *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 28(2006): 95-106.

[42] The first "self-strengthening movement" refers to the Qing dynasty's military and political reform in the second half of the 19th century. It attempted to make Western institutions and military innovation adapt to the Chinese needs. A detailed analysis see chapter 3.

[43] Chih-Yu Shil and Teng-Chi Chang, "Zhongguo Jueqi De Renshilun Jiqi Xushi Yangsheng [The Epistemology of China's Rise and Its Narrative Derivatives]," *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi [World Economics and Politics]*, no. 1 (2010): 51.

The concept of cultural imperialism is contested,[44] but it is important to clarify its broad and narrow definition since both of them matter in explaining the defensive-offensive dichotomization regarding China's cultural campaigns. Cultural imperialism in a broad sense, according to Morgenthau, refers to "the most subtle policy" aiming to "conquest and control of the minds of men", and it is often used as an instrument to strengthen or reverse the power relationship between two nations.[45] Cultural imperialism in this vein is neither necessarily a prerogative of great powers, nor a privilege of developed countries. In comparison, cultural imperialism in a narrow sense is the sum of processes through which strong or core states use their culture and media in a subtle way to dominate the weak or peripheral states—by systematically corroding indigenous values and cultures and imposing cultural values on them directly or indirectly.[46] Therefore, cultural imperialism in theory and practice is locked in a relationship of inherent inequality: core-periphery; developed-underdeveloped; dominant-subordinate and strong-weak.[47] Little has changed in reference to the dominance of the North in cultural and media flows, albeit its dominance occasionally complicated by the counter-flows from the South to the North.[48] Although the assertion of cultural imperialism, more often than not, fails to settle on an empirical grounding,[49] powerful countries and their cultural radiation—America and the way of Americanization in particular—are often to blame for cultural imperialism.[50]

From the Chinese perspective, the global promotion of cultural soft power through the expansion of CIs and Chinese state-media is an active defense against Western cultural

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[44] John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction* (London: Printer Publishers, 1991).

[45] Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 61.

[46] Leslie Sklair, *Sociology of the Global System* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1995), 151; Herbert I. Schiller, *Communication and Cultural Domination* (New York: International Arts & Science Press, 1976), 9; Chin-Chuan Lee, *Media Imperialism Reconsidered: The Homogenizing of Television Culture* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1980), 68; Anthony Smith, *The Geopolitics of Information: How Western Culture Dominates the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 13.

[47] Colin Sparks, "Media and Cultural Imperialism Reconsidered," *Chinese Journal of Communication* 5, no. 3 (2012): 283.

[48] Daya Kishan Thussu, *International Communication: Continuity and Change*, 2nd ed. (London: Hodder Arnold, 2006), 99.

[49] Carl Patrick Burrowes, "Twenty Years of Cultural Imperialism Research: Some Conceptual and Methodological Problems" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Communication Association, Florida, 20-25 May, 1992), 9.

[50] Sklair, *Sociology of the Global System*, chapter 5; Josef Joffe, "The Perils of Soft Power," *New York Times Magazine*, May 14, 2006, 15-7.

imperialism in general and the American cultural imperialism in particular.[51] In so doing, Chinese political and academic circles focus on the narrow dimension of cultural imperialism. In terms of global expansion of CIs, the primary concern is how to promote global attractiveness of Chinese culture and language, and then seek to counter-balance the Western cultural imperialism characterized by the "self-centered value system of the West".[52] China's efforts have paid off so far given external observers have increasingly agreed that the globalization of CIs improves China's cultural soft power, albeit not free of challenges in its fulfillment.[53] Regarding the "going-global" project of Chinese state media, its priority comes down to balancing the "uneven pattern of international communication", and making Chinese voices heard in any location where Western media outlets have a strong presence and influence in shaping opinions on and perceptions of China.[54] In short, China's global cultural offensive is supposed to be an active defense against Western cultural imperialism.

Despite the positive reading of China's cultural soft power campaign, the negative interpretation according to the broad understanding of cultural imperialism should be given equal consideration. That is, China's rising economic power and political influence in the last three decade has laid a strong material foundation for China to seek controlling the hearts and minds" of target audiences in a subtle way through the global expansion of its cultural resources and media outlets. Chinese political and academic circles' penchant to confuse and conflate the discourse of soft power, public diplomacy and external propaganda, further explains the negative perceptions of China's cultural

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[51] Falk Hartig, "How China Understands Public Diplomacy: The Importance of National Image for National Interests," *International Studies Review* (2016), doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/isr/viw007; Mingjiang Li, "China Debates Soft Power," 302; Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "Learning from the EU? China's Changing Outlook toward Multilateralism," in *China and the New World Order*, ed. Gungwu Wang and Yongnian Zheng (London/New York: Routledge, 2008), 209.

[52] Wang and Lu, "The Conception of Soft Power and Its Policy Implication: A Comparative Study of China and Taiwan," 428.

[53] For example, see David M. Lampton, *The Three Faces of Chinese Power: Might, Money, and Minds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 157; Jeffery Gil, "China's Confucius Institute Project: Language and Soft Power in World Politics " *The Global Studies Journal* 2, no. 1 (2008): 59-72; Xiaolin Guo, "Repackaging Confucius: PRC Public Diplomacy and the Rise of Soft Power" (Stockholm: Sweden Institute for Security and Development Policy, 2008); Rui Yang, "Soft Power and Higher Education: An Examination of China's Confucius Institutes," *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 8, no. 2 (2010): 235-45; Sheng Ding and Robert A. Saunders, "Talking up China: An Analysis of China's Rising Cultural Power and Global Promotion of the Chinese Language," *East Asia* 23, no. 2 (2006): 3-33.

[54] Gary D. Rawnsley, "To Know Us Is to Love Us: Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting in Contemporary Russia and China," *Politics* 35, no. 3-4 (2015): 279-80.

soft power campaign.[55] That is why Shi suggests that China's charm offensive should be re-oriented to the "charm defensive".[56]

It is therefore not surprising to see that criticism—even hostility—against CIs abound, particularly in the West. Critiques of "Trojan horse with Chinese characteristics", "cultural/religious invasion", "cultural conquest", "external propaganda", "brainwashing" and even "spy agency", have been raised against CIs on and off in some quarters.[57] It is also not surprising to note that some observers called for more serious attention to China's increasing presence and role in the "mediascape" that refers to the printed and electronic media in the "global cultural flows".[58] By particularly examining China's state media rapidly penetrating into the Global South in recent years, recent research reveals that China has been attempting to make inroads into the regional and even global influence of Western media, and to increase its sphere of influence there.[59] As a result, China's cultural soft power campaign is not immune from the practice of cultural imperialism, and it was used as a supplement to China's expanding economic and political influence.

Interestingly, cultural imperialism can be used for or against China's efforts in its cultural soft power campaigns. The Chinese side applies to defensive realist logic to justify its cultural soft power campaign as a balance against the dominant influence of Western culture and media. However, there is also a possibility that external observers interpret China's cultural campaign as an embodiment of Chinese cultural imperialism, characterized by the offensive realist logic of seeking power and domination in

[55] David Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 216.

[56] Anbin Shi, "Re-Orienting the 'Charm Offensive' to the 'Charm Defensive': A Critical Review of Chinese Media Development in Africa," *African Journalism Studies* 36, no. 1 (2015): 135-40.

[57] Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, 16-7.

[58] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

[59] For example, see Douglas Farah and Andy Mosher, "Winds from the East: How the People's Republic of China Seeks to Influence the Media in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia" (Washington DC: Center for International Media Assistance, 2010); Iginio Gagliardone and Sam Geall, "China in Africa's Media and Telecommunications: Cooperation, Connectivity and Control" (Oslo: Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Center, 2014); Fackson Banda, "China in the African Mediascape: A Critical Injection," *Journal of African Media Studies* 1, no. 3 (2009): 343-61; Gabriël J. Botma, "Cultural Flows in the Chinese Empire: The Case of Africa," *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies* 34, no. 3 (2013): 6-24.

whatever forms. The defensive-offensive binary views of China's soft power campaigns also display in the hot debate of China's normative soft power, as the following section describes.

Normative soft power, Tianxia, and new hegemonism

China's normative soft power has increasingly garnered attention, as analysts believe that it is timely and meaningful to examine the normative aspirations driving China's ascendancy and its implications for the world order in the future.[60] Normative soft power is understood as being an "ideological power" seeking to "shape the patterns of discourse" concerning "basic principles and values" in the international arena.[61] The existence of Chinese normative soft power and its role in motivating China's rise are debatable. Some argue that China's normative soft power is under developed. This is because China falls short of having a world vision referring to the "highest-level national principles about the general shape of international relations and a country's role in it".[62] Another reason is that China continues to stick to its "defensive" view of Westphalian system of sovereignty—crystalized in its professed "Five Principles of Co-existences"—as the guiding force for managing its foreign relations.[63] However, analysts observe that ancient Chinese norms have been increasingly revisited and reconstructed to justify China's aspirational role in the world commensurate with its growing influence.[64] The ancient Chinese normative concept of "*Tianxia*" (literally translated as "All-under-Haven")—ruling the whole world by a sage king by dint of virtue and rites[65]—is particular relevant in the following discussions of China's normative soft power. Chinese observers tend to cast a positive light on China's

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[60] Mark Chou, "Projections of China's Normative Soft Power," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 69, no. 1 (2015): 104-14; Emilian Kavalski, "The Struggle for Recognition of Normative Powers: Normative Power Europe and Normative Power China in Context," *Cooperation and Conflict* 48, no. 2 (2013): 252-8.

[61] Sibylle Scheipers and Daniela Sicurelli, "Normative Power Europe: A Credible Utopia?" 453.

[62] Feng Zhang, "Rethinking China's Grand Strategy: Beijing's Evolving National Interests and Strategic Ideas in the Reform Era," *International Politics* 49, no. 3 (2012): 339.

[63] Michael Cox, "Power Shifts, Economic Change and the Decline of the West?," *International Relations* 26, no. 4 (2012): 377; Yongjin Zhang, "China and Liberal Hierarchies in Global International Society: Power and Negotiation for Normative Change," *International Affairs* 92, no. 4 (2016): 802-3.

[64] William A. Callahan, "Sino-Speak: Chinese Exceptionalism and the Politics of History," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 71, no. 1 (2012): 33-55.

[65] Joseph Chan, "Territorial Boundaries and Confucianism," in *Confucian Political Ethics*, ed. Daniel A. Bell (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 69

normative soft power since they believe that China can provide the world with an alternative model in terms of political and economic development together with the management of international affairs.[66] To the contrary, non-Chinese observers are more likely to see it as China's long-term ambition to struggle for global hegemony.[67]

Among various accounts of China's future role in the world, the Chinese Confucian concept of *Tianxia* has been successfully renewed by the contemporary Chinese intellectual Zhao Tingyang, and has already captured wide attention within China and abroad.[68] Inside China, there has been an explosion of interest in the concept of *Tianxia* in both academic and policy circles. Chinese political leaders, IR realists and liberals, and quasi-intellectuals can take different parts of this account to develop customized arguments and/or policies. Meanwhile, external analysts and policy pundits have been acutely aware of—even actively engaged in—this new wave of theoretical discussions on *Tianxia*, and accorded great attention to its political implications. As a result, according to Callahan, "Tianxia is presented as a utopia that has practical applications".[69]

As a key modern interpreter, Zhao grounded his *Tianxia* thesis on a fundamental premise—it is the "failed world" rather than "failed states" that becomes the root cause of "illness" in the world today. The wholeness of the world is more than the sum of nation states. In so doing, the Chinese universalism of *Tianxia* system advocates the guiding political principle of "inclusion of all"—nothing is left out and no one is treated as an outsider in the world. Furthermore, the wholeness of the world is safeguarded by a "world institution" made on the basis of this-worldly intrinsic values of coexistence,

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[66] Tongdong Bai, *China: The Political Philosophy of the Middle Kingdom* (London: Zed Books, 2012).
[67] William A. Callahan, "Tianxia, Empire, and the World: Chinese Visions of World Order for the Twenty-First Century," in *China Orders the World: Normative Soft Power and Foreign Policy*, ed. William A. Callahan and Elena Barabantseva (Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2011), 91-117.
[68] For example, see Fei-Ling Wang, "Between Tianxia and Westphalia: China Searches for Its Position in the World" (paper presented at the APSA Annual Meeting Paper, Seattle, 2011); William A. Callahan, "China's Strategic Futures," *Asian Survey* 52, no. 4 (2012): 617-42; Allen Carlson, "Moving Beyond Sovereignty? A Brief Consideration of Recent Changes in China's Approach to International Order and the Emergence of the Tianxia Concept," *Journal of Contemporary China* 20, no. 68 (2011): 96-102; Feng Zhang, "The Tianxia System: World Order in a Chinese Utopia," *Global Asia* 4, no. 4 (2009): 108-12; June Teufel Dreyer, "The 'Tianxia Trope': Will China Change the International System?," *Journal of Contemporary China* 24, no. 96 (2015): 1015-31.
[69] "Tianxia, Empire, and the World: Chinese Visions of World Order for the Twenty-First Century," 94.

cooperation and harmony but not uniformity among all peoples under the heaven. As a result, the *Tianxia* system is characterized by humane authority (cultural attraction and ruling by virtue) and repudiation against endless expansion. The *Tianxia* system thus contrasts significantly to the anarchic Westphalian system that is marked with bargaining even conflicts between different national interests, and accordingly, a precarious balance of power.[70]

Zhao's thesis of *Tianxia* system is strongly held but equally strongly disputed. On one hand, some top IR theorists in China endorsed Zhao's significant contributions to the Chinese School of International Relations, which may be the wave of the future, as Qin suggested.[71] On the other, Zhao's reformulation of *Tianxia* has been heavily criticized by scholars from both China and abroad. I hypothesize that the sharpest criticism against Zhao's elaboration on *Tianxia* does not come from its logical inconsistence and flawed analysis,[72] but from its political implications, which is why it is relevant and significant. For example, Callahan asserts that Zhao's *Tianxia* thesis implies for "excluding the West", "guiding the masses", and "conquering and converting other nationalities".[73] In essence, for Callahan, the Chinese *Tianxia* system represents a "patriotic form of cosmopolitanism", and equates to "a new hegemony" in the 21st century, whereby imperial China's hierarchical governance is updated.[74] Additionally, by asserting that Zhao's *Tianxia* thesis laid an intellectual foundation for Hu's official initiative of "harmonious world" of seeking enduring peace and common prosperity,[75]

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[70] Tingyang Zhao, *Tianxia Tixi: Shijie Zhidu Zhexue Daolun [the Tianxia System: A Philosophy for the World Institution]* (Nanjing: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe, 2005); *Huai Shijie Yanjiu: Zuowei Diyi Zhexuede Zhengzhi Zhexue [Investigations of the Bad World: Political Philosophy as the First Philosophy]* (Beijing: Chinese People's University Press, 2009); "Rethinking Empire from a Chinese Concept 'All-under-Heaven' (Tian-Xia)," *Social Identities* 12, no. 1 (2006): 29-41; "A Political World Philosophy in Terms of All-under-Heaven (Tian-Xia)," *Diogenes* 56, no. 1 (2009): 5-18; "The 'China Dream' in Question," *Economic and Political Studies* 2, no. 1 (2014): 127-42.

[71] Yaqing Qin, "The Possibility and Inevitability of a Chinese School of International Relations Theory," in *China Orders the World: Normative Soft Power and Foreign Policy*, 40-7; "Why Is There No Chinese International Relations Theory?," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 7, no. 3 (2007): 313-40.

[72] For example, see Shuguang Zhang, "Tianxia Lilun He Shijie Zhidu [Tianxia Thesis and the World Order]," in *Zhongguo Shuping [China Book Review]*, ed. Zhenglai Deng (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Press, 2006), 18-30.

[73] Callahan, "Tianxia, Empire, and the World: Chinese Visions of World Order for the Twenty-First Century," 102-06.

[74] Ibid., 111.

[75] For example, see Lanxin Xiang, *Chuantong Yu Duiwaiguanxi [Chinese Tradition and Chinese Foreign Relations]* (Shanghai: Sanlian chubanshe, 2007), 40; Daniel A. Bell, "War, Peace, and China's Soft Power: A Confucian Approach," *Diogenes* 56, no. 1 (2009): 30; Zhaoguang Ge, "Dui Tianxia De Xianxiang: Yige Wutuobang Xianxiang Beihou De Zhengzhi, Sixiang Yu Xueshu [The Political, Intellectual and Academic Concern behind the Imagination of Tianxia]," accessed November 1, 2016. http://www.aisixiang.com/data/92884.html.

some observers discuss that the Chinese government's "lofty goal" of building a harmonious world reveals nothing but China's hidden ambition of "harmonizing the world" in the long run.[76]

There is a rising trend in the Chinese policy and academic circles to construct history to justify the Chinese government's political agenda, particularly in reference to its view of justice and right place in the world.[77] The recent political application of *Tianxia* thesis clearly manifests this trend. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that external observers tend to view this thesis with a great "grain of salt". For example, June Teufel Dreyer notes that, rewriting the history of *Tianxia* with an attempt to advance a "distorted" political agenda is "at best disingenuous and at worse dangerous".[78] Above all, the political implications of *Tianxia* thesis are more relevant than its theoretical debate.

Zhao complained that his *Tianxia* thesis was over-interpreted given that his primary concern is to establish a philosophical and intellectual foundation for a world institution. Zhao also argued that the harmonious world is a long-term mission voiced by China but for the world. Put another way, building a harmonious world by no means insinuates a China-led harmonization of the world.[79] Like Zhao, the official agenda of harmonious world was positively interpreted in China.[80] It is required to promote a global harmonious inclusiveness not by force, but through self-improvement and self-restraint.[81] However, due to the China-centric assumption attached to the revival of *Tianxia* thesis, the external anxiety upon China's ambition to seek a new hegemony under the guise of *Tianxia* or harmonious world, has not yet been convincingly

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[76] For example, see Callahan, "Conclusion: World Harmony or Harmonizing the World?" *In China Orders the World: Normative Soft Power and Foreign Policy*, 249-69; "Sino-Speak: Chinese Exceptionalism and the Politics of History," 33-55; Lanxin Xiang, "Jieyan Jueqi, Shenyan Hexie [Stop Talking up China's Rise, Be Careful in Discussing the Harmonious World]," *Lianhe Zaobao*, 26 March, 2006. For an overview of criticism against the "harmonious world", see Qian Cheng, "Challenge for China's Harmonious Diplomacy," in *China's Soft Power and International Relations*, 123-34.

[77] For example, see Suisheng Zhao, "Rethinking the Chinese World Order: The Imperial Cycle and the Rise of China," *Journal of Contemporary China* 24, no. 96 (2015): 961-82.

[78] June Teufel Dreyer, "The 'Tianxia Trope': Will China Change the International System?," ibid.: 1031.

[79] Tingyang Zhao, "Guanyu Hexie Shijie De Sikao [On 'Harmonious Word']," *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi [World Economics and Politics]*, no. 9 (2006): 1.

[80] Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, 290-6.

[81] Chih-yu Shih, "The West That Is Not in the West: Identifying the Self in Oriental Modernity," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 23, no. 4 (2010): 537-60.

addressed.

The external apprehension of China's hegemonic ambition masked in the popular rhetoric of *Tianxia* has pushed a group of Chinese scholars to further develop a "neo-*Tianxia* system" or "*Tianxia* system 2.0". The updated version of *Tianxia* thesis seeks to write off the Sino-centric and hierarchical assumption of the old version, and attach greater significance to some key norms. First, respect the equality of sovereignty of nation states. Second, adopt the essence of Chinese empire particularly related to its cultural/religious pluralism and political integration. Last, identify overlapping values and principles among different civilizations for grappling with global problems. This new version of *Tianxia* system resembles new cosmopolitanism, and may carry a positive implication for not only Chinese domestic politics but for "the community of common destiny" (*mingyun gongtongti*) in East Asia.[82] However, this updated version of *Tianxia* system has generally been overlooked by external observers thus far.

As China's successful economic take-off in the last 30 years catapulted it into the international spotlight, it is timely to explore China's normative soft power in order to understand its future trajectory. The above discussions and debates revolving around the *Tianxia* thesis introduced by Zhao and the harmonious world advocated by the Chinese government are instructive. Overall, the recent rejuvenation of *Tianxia* thesis and the propagation of harmonious world (the community of common destiny recently) may illuminate China's attempts to transcend the West-centric universalism.[83] That is, Chinese thinkers attempted to turn the West-centric "monologue-oriented universalism" to a non-Western-centric "dialogue-oriented universalism". While the former refers to what Tong states as the thinking and practice that "one subject can unilaterally decide what is of universal validity for all", the latter emphasizes on "the priority of the right to

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[82] For example, see Qing Liu, "Chongjian Quanqiu Xiangxiang: Cong 'Tianxia' Lixiang Zouxiang Xinshijie Zhuyi [Reimaging the Global: From 'Tianxia' to New Cosmopolitanism]," *Xueshu Yuekan [Academic Monthly]* 47, no. 8 (2015): 5-14; Jilin Xu and Qing Liu, eds., *Xin Tianxia Zhuyi [New Tianxia-ism]* (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2015); Xiao Ren, "Lun Zhongguo De Shijie Zhuyi [On China's Cosmopolitanism]," *World Economics and Politics*, no. 8 (2014): 30-45.

[83] Shijun Tong, "Chinese Thought and Dialogical Universalism," in *Europe and Asia beyond East and West*, ed. Gerard Delanty (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), 549-66; Astrid H. M. Nordin, "Futures beyond 'the West'? Autoimmunity in China's Harmonious World," *Review of International Studies* 42, no. 1 (2016): 156-77.

communication over other rights".[84] In so doing, it is more relevant for China's defensive realist thinking since its primary concern is to preserve the right of communication to express Chinese ideas and values (such as Tianxia and harmonious world) to alleviate the external fear of a China threat.[85] In contrast, some external analysts and policy pundits are inclined to consider *Tianxia* and harmonious world as a euphemism of Chinese hegemony in the 21st century, according to the logic of offensive realism. This offensive realist account of China's normative soft power resonates with Mearsheimer's assertion when his book—*The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*—was translated into Chinese: Chinese elites will arguably use idealistic discourse to euphonize China's foreign policy in order to maximize its power, if China continues to rise in the future.[86]

Chinese soft power and hard consequences

It is widely agreed that defensive realism has come to the fore in shaping security strategy, mainly because some of the predictions of offensive realism have not been realized so far.[87] China's grand strategic design and policy making, as a result, tends to align with the logic of defensive rather than offensive realism: the Chinese government has become increasingly sophisticated to pursue national security and economic development rather than reckless power acquisition and influence in post-Mao era.[88] China's soft power campaigns are therefore much more in line with China's defensive than offensive realist thinking. That said, the offensive realist logic still significantly shapes external observers' understanding of China's soft power campaigns. China's soft power campaigns, therefore, face hard consequences.

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[84] Shijun Tong, "Varieties of Universalism," *European Journal of Social Theory* 12, no. 4 (2009): 449-63.

[85] Chih-Yu Shih, *Sinicizing International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 20.

[86] John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, trans. Xiaosong Tang and Yiwei Wang (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Press, 2008), 34.

[87] Shiping Tang, *A Theory of Security Strategy for Our Time: Defensive Realism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); *Social Evolution of International Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[88] For example, see "From Offensive to Defensive Realism," in *China's Ascent: Power, Security, and the Future of International Politics*, ed. Robert S. Ross and Zhu Feng (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2008), 161-2; Andrew Scobell, *China's Use of Military Force: beyond the Great Wall and the Long March* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Tiewa Liu, "Chinese Strategic Culture and the Use of Force: Moral and Political Perspectives," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23, no. 87 (2014): 556-74.

From the perspective of offensive realism, China's soft power campaigns are not so soft at all at several dimensions. First, the Chinese government projected soft power in an attempt to acquire hard resources (such as energy and natural resources) to feed China's surging economy, and justify the expansion of Chinese sea power. Second, the Chinese government also used media and culture in a sophisticated way to influence the minds and hearts of target population in the form of cultural imperialism. Third, the popularization of *Tianxia* thesis as a manifestation of increasing prominence of China's normative soft power, and the Chinese government's calling for building a harmonious world or a community of common destiny in practice, reveal China's long-term ambition of seeking global hegemony. In so doing, it is no wonder that a broad definition of soft power in the Chinese context, which includes both hard and soft factors, added to a perception of China's soft power campaigns as a rising threat. For example, Erich Follath contends that, "China's soft power is a threat to the West", as it was tapped by the Chinese government to get what it desires and to wrong-foot the West at every turn.[89] China's soft power campaigns, in this sense, reflect not so much peaceful rise than a peaceful ruse.

The strategic response to China's soft power projection, therefore, is to know and prepare for countering China. Many foreign strategic thinkers and analysts learn and explore Chinese language, history and culture not because of their inherent attractiveness, as Chinese academic and policy circles would suggest. Rather, it is out of the fear of China's rising economic and military power, and a belief that understanding Chinese culture is a precondition to counter China's rise.[90] Some even suggested that the American government should be fully aware of the growing threat derived from China's soft power campaigns, and bring all its advantages to bear on meeting China's soft power challenges if necessary. No one stated this view as bluntly as Joshua Kurlantzick, who claims that China's rising soft power will challenge the US given the emergence of China's soft power has already been strategically influencing US foreign

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[89] Erich Follath, "China's Soft Power is a Threat to the West," *Der Spiegel*, July 28, 2010.
[90] Eric Hyer, "Soft Power and the Rise of China: An Assessment," *China Review International* 18, no. 1 (2011): 9.

policy: China could exert its influence in a growing clash over resources.[91] Therefore, he suggests Washington should probe when China will utilize its soft power to achieve "hard objectives" at odds with the US interests, and prepare to balance China's rising soft power when necessary.[92]

Critical and sceptical views alike about China's soft power campaigns have not gone unnoticed. Chinese experts and scholars have paid much attention to these views as they feel worried that they may add to a "masqueraded claim of the 'China threat'".[93] As long as those critical views prevail, China's utilization of soft power for the sake of watering down the China threat thesis may fail, as it is likely to stoke rather than soothe the fear of China's rising threat. This is the paradox of China's soft power campaigns. After all, power by any other name would sound as ontologically threatening.[94]

The strengths and weaknesses of realist explanation

The explanation of China's incentives to promote and wield soft power through the lens of realism has both strengths and weaknesses. The realist paradigm has been prioritized to account for China's soft power campaigns, given Chinese politicians, pundits and scholars are heavily influenced by the realist mode of thought.[95] National interests defined in terms of politico-strategic security assurance and power accumulation—both are major concerns of defensive and offensive realism—explain the Chinese government's determination to promote and wield soft power in the early 21st century. Specifically speaking, China's soft power campaigns cannot be fully explained without taking the emerging security dilemma between a rising China and a status-quo America into account. That is, America's increasing concern of China's utilization of soft power

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[91] Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*, 206.
[92] "China's Charm: Implications of Chinese Soft Power" (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006), 7.
[93] Zhang, "The Discussion of China's Soft Power and Its Discontents," 59.
[94] David M. Lampton, *The Three Face of Chinese Power: Might, Money and Minds*, 148.
[95] Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*: 27-44; "International Relations Studies in China: History, Trends, and Prospects," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 11, no. 3 (2011): 339-72; Thomas J. Christensen, "Chinese Realpolitik," *Foreign Affairs* 75, no. 5 (1996): 37-52; Andrew J. Nathan and Bruce Gilley, *China's New Rulers: The Secret Files* (London: Granta, 2003), 226-227; Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

to undermine American hegemony, and China's prolonged anxiety about America's use of soft power to threaten China's national security, abort its ascendancy and frustrate its international aspiration, have significantly demonstrated the strategic distrust between both great powers.[96] In this sense, the realists are right to point out that China's moving towards soft power does not mean that it will turn its back on hard power. Hard power remains the cornerstone of China's CNP to protect national security and promote its international status. Realism also correctly points out that soft power campaigns might risk becoming a zero-sum game, simply because any form of power can logically make enemies and become risky.[97] That being said, the shortcomings of realistic explanation should not be ignored, as the following section explains.

First, the conceptualization of national interests in high politics, with reference to national security and power accumulation underlying China's soft power campaigns, is too narrow. The Chinese government has devoted special attention to the low dimension of international politics, including cultural security, cultural trade and the development of cultural industry, discursive power and its international image. Those factors are not adequately explained by the realist paradigm. As a result, they will be further explored in chapter 5.

Second, the realist model gives a short shrift to the domestic dynamics of China's soft power campaigns, I suggest. The domestic concern is part and parcel of China's soft power campaigns. For example, Chinese leaders—such as former President Hu and current president Xi—all stressed the significance of Chinese national cohesion-building underscored by the promotion of Chinese soft power. Therefore, the explanatory insufficiency of both defensive and offensive realism regarding the domestic motivation of China's soft power campaigns will be addressed in chapter 6.

Third, both defensive and offensive realist explanations of China's soft power

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[96] Kenneth G. Lieberthal and Jisi Wang, "Addressing US-China Strategic Distrust" (Washington DC: Brookings Institute, 2012).
[97] Joffe, "The Perils of Soft Power."

campaigns tend to subscribe to the logic of zero-sum games, characterized by the conflict of interests in international anarchy. Nonetheless, given soft power is exercised in a variety of domains (issue-agendas) and scopes (target-audience), it is possible to ascertain a positive-sum game along with soft power campaigns in a specific domain and scope. For example, Nye and Wang argue that the rise of Chinese soft power will not necessarily end in an inevitable rivalry between China and the US, if China can use its soft power to further cooperation with the US rather than to upset the US-led international order.[98] Another observer even suggests that the Confucian China and Jeffersonian America together could provide a unified moral leadership in the future "One World order".[99] The potential of positive-sum games in this sense motivates analysts to rethink the role of soft power, beyond the realist model, in China's grand strategic thinking and its implications for the international order. That is why the realist account on China's soft power campaigns requires supplements of liberal insights.

IR Liberalism and China's Soft Power Campaigns

Although the realist paradigm dominates the study of China's soft power campaigns, its explanatory inadequacy necessitates that it is supplemented by IR liberalism and constructivism. Let us consider the IR liberal and constructivist paradigm on China's soft power campaigns in turn.

IR liberalism and soft power

The liberal thought in IR is a broad and heterogeneous church,[100] but five strands of IR liberalism have gained currency. They include ideational liberalism, republican/democratic liberalism, commercial and sociological liberalism, and

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[98] Joseph S. Nye and Jisi Wang, "The Rise of China's Soft Power and Its Implications for the United States," in *Power and Restraint: A Shared Vision for the U.S.-China Relationship*, ed. Richard Rosecrance and Guoliang Gu (New York: Public Affairs, 2009), 33-4.

[99] Peter T. C. Chang, "Confucian Pluralism and China's Dream of a Harmonious World," *China Information* 28, no. 3 (2014): 398-400.

[100] For example, see James L. Richardson, "Contending Liberalisms: Past and Present," *European Journal of International Relations* 3, no. 1 (1997): 5-33.

regulatory/institutional liberalism.[101]

Ideational liberalism suggests that, the domestic collective identities and values largely shape the state preferences. Foreign policy in this sense is an effort to realize these values and identities that have won out domestically. Collective identities, political values and ideologies, and socioeconomic regulation are key concerns of ideational liberalist thought.[102]

Republican or democratic liberalism centers on the "democratic peace" theory, which posits that: liberal states do not fight each other, while conceding that they may engage in armed conflicts with non-liberal states.[103] The pacifying effect of democratic dyads is generally attributed to (1) democratic norms of peaceful conflict resolution through negotiation and compromise, (2) democratic institutional constraints on executive authority according to the system of checks and balances, and (3) the interdependence of commercial interests.[104] The dichotomization between liberal and non-liberal regimes or zones is integral to the democratic peace theory.[105] It adds logical relevance to the "liberal imperialism" that seeks to discipline and democratize the non-liberal zones through a wide range of interventionist, intrusive, or even coercive actions, without requiring the consent on the part of the latter.[106]

Commercial or economic liberalism involves a key claim that economic actors in a free market economy are driving forces behind a liberal and peaceful international order.

[101] Georg Sørensen, "Liberalism of Restraint and Liberalism of Imposition: Liberal Values and World Order in the New Millennium," *International Relations* 20, no. 3 (2006): 255; Joseph S. Nye, "Review: Neorealism and Neoliberalism," *World Politics* 40, no. 2 (1988): 245-6; Michael W. Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *The American Political Science Review* 80, no. 4 (1986): 1151-69; Andrew Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics," *International Organization* 51, no.4 (1997): 513-53.

[102] "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics," 525-8.

[103] Michael W. Doyle, *Liberal Peace: Selected Essays* (London: Routledge, 2012); *Ways of War and Peace* (New York: Norton, 1997); Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[104] John R. Oneal et al., "The Liberal Peace: Interdependence, Democracy, and International Conflict, 1950-85," *Journal of Peace Research* 33, no. 1 (1996): 11-28; Doyle, *Liberal Peace: Selected Essays*.

[105] Ian Clark, "Democracy in International Society: Promotion or Exclusion?," *Millennium–Journal of International Studies* 37, no. 3 (2009): 563-81; Christopher Hobson, "Democracy as Civilisation," *Global Society* 22, no. 1 (2008): 75-95; Yongjin Zhang, "The Standard of 'Civilisation' Redux: Towards the Expansion of International Society 3.0?," *Millennium–Journal of International Studies* 42, no. 3 (2014): 674-96.

[106] Beate Jahn, "Kant, Mill, and Illiberal Legacies in International Affairs," *International Organization* 59, no. 01 (2005): 177-207.

Economic interdependence, free trade and investment, and privatized economic activities, are topics of frequent discussions in this regard.[107] Sociological liberalism presupposes the transformative effect of transnational civil society on national attitudes and definitions of national interests through transnational contacts, communications, networks, and even coalitions. Therefore, transnational civil society is assumed to play a key role in promoting international peace and cooperation.[108]

Last but not least, regulatory or institutional liberalism, or neoliberal institutionalism, emphasizes the significant role of international institutions/regimes in altering state preferences and changing state behaviors. Therefore, their potential utility (such as reducing coordination costs, raising the cost of cheating and diffusing information) in promoting transnational cooperation and global order in an anarchic world, is given greater attention.[109] The concept of an institution is interchangeable with regime for the purpose of this discussion, and refers to a whole range of norms, rules, and procedures that restrains or enables a state's behavior, around which the actors' calculative expectations overlap in a given issue-agenda.[110] While sharing some common assumptions (such as the structural impact of an anarchic international system and the rationality of states) with neorealism, IR neoliberalism focuses on the political "processes" of learning and redefining national interests, as catalyzed by international frameworks and regimes. As a result, absolute gains, policy reciprocity, asymmetric interdependence, positive-sum games, cooperation, multilateralism and utilities of international institutions are analytical locus in this field.[111]

Five branches of IR liberal thought mentioned above are interconnected, and supposed to validate the liberal international order guided by liberal values, including freedom,

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[107] For example, see Richard N. Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State* (New York: Basic Books, 1986).

[108] James N. Rosenau, "Citizenship in a Changing Global Order," in *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics*, ed. James N. Rosenau and E. O. Czempeil (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 272-94.

[109] Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 3rd ed. (New York: Longman, 2001); Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

[110] Stephen D. Krasner, ed. *International Regimes* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983).

[111] Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, eds., *International Relations*, 7th ed. (New York and San Francisco: Pearson Longman, 2006), 99-105; Keohane, *After Hegemony*.

equality, openness, social justice, etc.[112] Therefore, the IR liberalism sheds light on the conceptualization of soft power and its political application in the current *liberal* international order. Liberalism's emphasis on the attractiveness of soft power resources and the role of persuasive argument in the political application of soft power, are particularly relevant.

IR liberalism devotes special attention to soft resources, including attractive culture and political values, as well as legitimate and moral foreign policies perceived by outsiders. The attractiveness of soft resources is closely bound up with the prevailing and even allegedly universally *liberal* values, embodied in the making of national identity, political regimes, and socioeconomic regulations, according to IR liberalism. Therefore, countries that have democratic regimes and similar economic liberalization are more likely susceptible to each other's soft power. Ideational and republican liberalism, in this sense, provide an insight to the making of soft power. As the US has been the driving force behind the liberal international order since the end of WWII,[113] the liberal foundation of American hegemonism, as a result, becomes a benchmark for analyzing and comparing soft power around the world. Nye points it out clearly in this way:

> "The universality of a country's culture and its ability to establish a set of favorable rules and institutions that govern areas of international activity are critical sources of power. The values of democracy, personal freedom, upward mobility, and openness that are often expressed in American popular culture, higher education, and foreign policy contribute to American power in many areas".[114]

Regarding the political function and application of soft power, persuasion is the key. Soft power is applied as a social construct through the exercise of public diplomacy, characterized by persuasive argument in an attempt to convert foreigners to become

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[112] Liberal International, "The Liberal Agenda for the 21st Century: The Quality of Liberty in Open Civic Societies" (Oxford: Congress of Liberal International, 1997).
[113] Robert O. Keohane, "Twenty Years of Institutional Liberalism," *International Relations* 26, no. 2 (2012): 127.
[114] Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone*, 11.

attracted to the persuaders' own values.[115] Two significant implications for liberal thinking occur. Effective persuasion firstly requires a functioning marketplace of ideas in an intended target society, where attracting an audience towards the allegedly universally liberal values and influencing the target elites' policy-making can take place.[116] Another implication is that non-state actors are primary drivers of public diplomacy, while the state is at best a supporter. This is because soft resources—compared with hard resources—are intangible, and more importantly, beyond the full control of state. Furthermore, soft power rests more than hard power on the existence of willing interpreters and receivers, as this thesis demonstrates.[117] As a consequence, sociological liberalism—which focuses on the transformative impacts on national attitudes and definitions of national interests through communications, contacts, networks, and coalitions in the transnational civil society—adds relevance to the role of persuasion in the political application of soft power in the current liberal international order. Public diplomacy, seen through the prism of sociological globalism, is "relationship-centered" and a "two-way street" in the 21st century.[118]

Institutional liberalism is also relevant for the discussion of soft power. Soft power is in play if a country is able to (1) set and advance its own agendas in international institutions; (2) have its positions embraced by other members of international society; (3) deflect and even delegitimize objectionable proposals from others; (4) shape other countries' preferences; and (5) build coalitions.[119] Arguably, countries possessing richer soft power resources are less disposed to use coercion and side payments to get what they want. The liberal international order and the common exercise of soft power through agenda-setting and institution building, as a result, reinforce each other.[120]

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[115] Michael Pfau and Hua-Hsin Wan, "Persuasion: An Intrinsic Function of Public Relations," in *Public Relations Theory II*, ed. Carl Botan and Vincent Hazleton (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2006), 101-36; John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *The Emergence of Noopolitik: Toward an American Information Strategy* (Santa Monica: National Defense Research Institute, RAND, 1999).

[116] Matthew Kroenig, Melissa McAdam, and Steven Weber, "Taking Soft Power Seriously," 412-31.

[117] A detailed examination see chapter 2, hypothesis 3 (H3).

[118] Seong-Hun Yun, "Relational Public Diplomacy: The Perspective of Sociological Globalism," *International Journal of Communication* 6 (2012): 2199-219.

[119] Gang Chen, "China's Climate Diplomacy and Its Soft Power," in *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics*, ed. Mingjiang Li (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2009), 227.

[120] For example, see Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*.

The liberal quality of soft power, examined through the lens of IR liberalism, is best summarized by Nye in his later definition of soft power. That is, "soft power is 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."[121]

IR liberalism and China's soft power campaigns

As China's soft power campaigns are undertaken against the backdrop of liberal international order, IR liberalism can be employed to explain China's soft power campaigns in both a negative and a positive light.

For the negative side, influenced by the binary logic of authoritarian against democratic regimes, IR liberalists tend to locate China's soft power campaigns in a broad context that, an illiberal state is rising to challenge the liberal international order led by the West in general and the US in particular.[122] China's authoritarian regime is the "Achilles' heel" of China's soft power campaigns.[123] For example, Kalathil bluntly writes that, the underbelly for China is not its soft power policies but the "underlying nature of the regime itself".[124] As a result, the government-led soft power campaigns through various vehicles of public diplomacy—including the globalization of CIs and the Chinese state media, and the discussions and sophisticated export of "Beijing Consensus"—has suffered intensive scrutiny, and even been heavily criticized by Western observers in particular.[125] Even the recent building of inclusive multilateral institutions such as the

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[121] *The Future of Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), 21.

[122] For example, see Elizabeth C. Economy, "The Game Changer: Coping with China's Foreign Policy Revolution," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 6 (2010): 142-53; Naazneen Barma and Ely Ratner, "China's Illiberal Challenge," *Democracy: A Journal of Ideas*, no. 2 (2006): 56-68; Christopher Layne, "China's Challenge to US Hegemony," *Current History* 107, no. 705 (2008): 13-8.

[123] For example, see Lampton, *The Three Face of Chinese Power: Might, Money and Minds*, 118-52; Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*; Suisheng Zhao, "The Prospect of China's Soft Power: How Sustainable?" in *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics*, 247.

[124] Shanthi Kalathil, "China's Soft Power in the Information Age: Think Again" (Washington DC: Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, 2011), 9.

[125] For example, see Ingrid d' Hooge, "Public Diplomacy in the People's Republic of China," in *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, ed. Jan Melissen (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 89; Stefan Halper, *The Beijing Consensus: How China's Authoritarian Model Will Dominate the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Basic Books, 2010); Mingsheng Li and Frank Sligo, "Chinese Media Going Global: Issues of Perception and

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) was strongly resisted by the US and Japan. Therefore, some would have us believe that China's state-led public diplomacy does not promote, but actually hinders Chinese soft power.[126] Chinese soft power is effective only if the full talents of Chinese civil society are unleashed by the Chinese government, as Nye asserts.[127] In short, China's rise would not be peaceful unless China becomes more politically liberal.[128]

IR liberalism also helps illuminate the potentially positive motivations and implications of China's soft power campaigns. This is because China has actually learned from and adapted to the liberal international order since the start of reform and opening up policy in the late 1970s, albeit full of twists and turns during this process. China's extensive economic liberalization and its intensive integration with the liberal international order have significantly driven Chinese foreign policy towards becoming a responsible status-quo power.[129] Even if China's ascendancy continues, the resilience, easy accessibility and openness of liberal international order remain capable of accommodating a stronger China, and has the potential to make any future power shift peaceful and on terms that are beneficial to the US.[130] As China has benefited much from the liberal international order, it is reasonable for China to uphold rather than to upset it.[131] Along this line of reasoning, the Chinese government's soft power enterprise

Credibility," *China Media Research* 8, no. 3 (2012): 116-27; Andrew J. Nathan, "China's Challenge," *Journal of Democracy* 26, no. 1 (2016): 156-170.

[126] Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*, 268.

[127] Joseph S. Nye, "What China and Russia Don't Get About Soft Power," accessed 1 May, 2013. http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/04/29/what_china_and_russia_don_t_get_about_soft_power?page=0,0.

[128] Barry Buzan, "China in International Society: Is 'Peaceful Rise' Possible?" *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3, no. 1 (2010): 32; Aaron L. Friedberg, "Hegemony with Chinese Characteristics," *The National Interest*, no. 114 (2011): 27; Dan Blumenthal and William Inboden, "Toward a Free and Democratic China," *The Weekly Standard* 20, no. 34 (2015): 26-32.

[129] For example, see Susan L. Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 107-08; David Shambaugh, "Return to the Middle Kingdom? China and Asia in the Early Twenty-First Century," in *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics* ed. David Shambaugh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 24-25; Liping Xia, "China: A Responsible Great Power," *Journal of Contemporary China* 10, no. 26 (2001): 17-25; Chengxin Pan, "'Peaceful Rise' and China's New International Contract: the State in Change in Transnational Society," in *Chinese State in Transition: Process and Contests in Local China*, ed. Linda Chelan Li (London: Routledge, 2009), 127-44; Alastair Iain Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?" *International Security* 27, no. 4 (2003): 5-56.

[130] G. John Ikenberry, "The Future of the Liberal World Order: Internationalism after America," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 3 (2011): 56-68; "The Rise of China and the Future of the West: Can the Liberal System Survive?" *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 1 (2008): 23-37.

[131] Shaun Breslin, "China and the Global Order: Signalling Threat or Friendship?" *International Affairs* 89, no. 3 (2013): 615-34; Gregory Chin and Ramesh Thakur, "Will China Change the Rules of Global Order?," *The Washington Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (2010): 119-38.

vividly represents its incentives to continue engaging with the US-led liberal international order, and rise peacefully from within.[132] In particular, China's soft power campaigns are viewed positively through the prism of sociological, institutional and commercial liberalism respectively.

Sociological liberalism accounts for China's state-led soft power campaigns (such as the going-global project of CIs and Chinese state media outlets) that have been carried out particularly towards the target Western society in a short term. The Chinese government is acutely aware of the fully-fledged civil society in Western countries ripe for China to actively express its positions and shape its positive image through a series of soft power campaigns.[133] Analysts observes that, universities, think tanks, entertainment industries, TV stations, radios, newspapers, Internet—even leading political, business and intellectual figures in Western societies—have been widely exploited by the Chinese government to help express and reinforce Chinese voices and positions in a more credible way.[134] That is what Chinese officials and analysts describe as: "borrowing a boat to go to sea" (*jiechuan chuhai*).[135] Therefore, how to enhance transnational communication, contacts, networks, and coalitions with Western civil society has become a major concern of China's public diplomacy, albeit with both positive and negative outcomes so far. In short, for the Chinese part, China's public diplomacy that carries with an implication of sociological liberalism may function as a "lubricant" for China's peaceful rise and serve its "soft rise" in the long haul.[136]

Institutional liberalism also casts a positive light on China's soft power campaigns that

[132] Wanfa Zhang, "Tapping Soft Power: Managing China's 'Peaceful Rise' and the Implication for the World," in *New Dimensions of Chinese Foreign Policy*, ed. Sujian Guo and Shiping Hua (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2007), 124-5; Ding, "Analyzing Rising Power from the Perspective of Soft Power: A New Look at China's Rise to the Status Quo Power," 252-72; *The Dragon's Hidden Wings: How China Rises with Its Soft Power*, 32-7; Jaewoo Choo, "Ideas Matter: China's Peaceful Rise," *Asia Europe Journal* 7, no. 3-4 (2009): 402.

[133] "News Analysis: Time for Stronger China's Voice to Be Heard," accessed 1 November, 2016. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-02/23/c_135124353.htm.

[134] For example, see Mareike Ohlberg and Bertram Lang, "How to Counter China's Global Propaganda Offensive," *The New York Times*, 21 September, 2016; Greg Sheridan, "Chinese Influence Runs Deep to Favour Official Beijing Policy," *The Australian*, 10 September, 2016.

[135] Wendy Su, *China's Encounter with Global Hollywood* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2016), 164; Xiangmin Zeng and Xiaoying Zhou, "Xinlun: Yong Guoji Shengyin Jianghao Zhongguo Gushi [A New Perspective: Using International 'Mouth' to Tell Chinese Stories Well]," *People's Daily*, 18 March, 2016.

[136] Yiwei Wang, "Public Diplomacy and the Rise of Chinese Soft Power," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, no. 257 (2008): 270.

seek to achieve China's great power status without necessarily antagonizing the US through its sophisticated statecraft of agenda-setting and institution-building.[137] A great power's status arguably does not only rest on a country's great material capability, but also relies on the external recognition of its role and responsibility— international legitimacy in other words—fulfilled within a socially constructed international order.[138] The latter consideration is intimately associated with a great-power aspirant's soft power. As China cannot rise as a great power apart from liberal international order, its rising material power will not automatically translate into global influence, as many Chinese people have so long desired. Therefore, the manner and sources of its search for recognition becomes a key concern of Chinese government during its long march in search for wealth and power.[139] Given multilateral institutions embedded in post-WWII liberal international order play a formal and crucial role in identifying great powers through their roles and responsibilities, China's great power status will be reviewed according to its role in the global security, economic, financial, and environmental institutions.[140] China's well-calculated soft power campaigns—revolving around its participation, reform, and even establishment of international institutions in a subtle and shrewd way—may add credence to the liberal institutional explanation. Overall, China's evolving policy towards international institutions has gained significant recognition of its would-be great power status from other major, middle and small powers, notwithstanding the limits to a process that is still underway.[141]

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[137] Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, 155-9; Yuan-kang Wang, "China's Response to the Unipolar World: The Strategic Logic of Peaceful Development," *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 45, no. 5 (2010): 554-67; Xin Li and Verner Worm, "Building China's Soft Power for a Peaceful Rise," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 16, no. 1 (2011): 81-3.

[138] For example, see Ian Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2011); David A. Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2009); Catherine Jones, "Constructing Great Powers: China's Status in a Socially Constructed Plurality," *International Politics* 51, no. 5 (2014): 597-618; Shuyong Suo, *Daguo Chengzhang de Luoji [The Logic of the Great Power Growth]* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2006).

[139] Orville Schell and John Delury, *Wealth and Power: China's Long March to the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Random House, 2013), chapter 15.

[140] Jones, "Constructing Great Powers: China's Status in a Socially Constructed Plurality," 597-618; Zhang, "China and Liberal Hierarchies in Global International Society: Power and Negotiation for Normative Change," 795-816; Chen, "China's Climate Diplomacy and Its Soft Power," 225-43; James F. Paradise, "The Role of 'Parallel Institutions' in China's Growing Participation in Global Economic Governance," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 21, no. 2 (2016): 149-75.

[141] Stephen Olson and Clyde Prestowitz, "The Evolving Role of China in International Institutions," (Washington DC: The Economic Strategic Institute, 2011).

The Chinese government also addresses its economic concern underlying its soft power campaigns in a way that is, more or less, consistent with the logic of commercial liberalism. For example, despite facing a serious challenge of China's so-called rising "cultural trade deficit",[142] the Chinese government does not simply raise protectionism as a bulwark against international free trade of cultural goods and services. Rather, the Chinese government is pushing forward liberalization and reform in cultural sectors, and facilitating the building of cultural/creative industries with great vigor in an attempt to boost the competiveness of Chinese cultural enterprises in the global cultural market. Unfortunately, external observers tend to neglect the Chinese government's liberal mode of thought on this matter, and it will be critically examined in chapter 5.

After reviewing the theoretical utility of IR liberalism in explaining the conceptualization of Chinese soft power and its political application, this section concludes that both negative and positive explanations equally account. The negative account highlights that the Chinese government is exploiting soft power as a sophisticated ruse to undermine the US-led liberal international order in the long term. In contrast, the positive account emphasizes that the Chinese government is wielding soft power to benefit from liberal international order and pursue its peaceful rise from within. That is, China prefers to reform rather than revolutionize the liberal international order. To sum up, China's soft power campaigns, from the perspective of IR liberalism, are indicative of either a peaceful ruse or a peaceful rise.

The strengths and weaknesses of liberal explanation

IR liberalism plays an important role in helping understand China's soft power campaigns. After all, the construction of current international order is contextually derived from liberal bias.[143] This section will summarize the strengths of five strands of IR liberalism in examining the motivations and implications of China's global soft

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[142] Helmut K. Anheier and Yudhishthir Raj Isar, *Cultures and Globalization: Conflicts and Tensions* (London: Sage Publication, 2007), 174.

[143] Jones, "Constructing Great Powers: China's Status in a Socially Constructed Plurality," 599.

power campaigns, and subsequently, turn to the weaknesses of liberal explanation.

Ideational and democratic liberalism elucidate impediments and challenges of China's efforts to improve its soft power particularly in Western society, while sociological liberalism discusses the opportunities for its further campaigns through the transnational communication, contacts, networks, and even coalitions. China's soft power campaigns, as a result, captures further attention as both challenges and opportunities coexist.

Institutional liberalism throws Chinese soft power into sharp relief according to the Chinese government's policy and behavior in the participation, reform, and even establishment of international institutions. China is achieving progress, despite the lack of a governmental account of the nexus between Chinese soft power and its evolving policy towards international institutions. Institutional liberalism matters because China needs to seek recognition as a great power status in a legitimate way through its interaction with dominant international institutions. How to wield soft power to gain full recognition as a great power when China continues to rise in terms of hard power, therefore, remains a key concern of the Chinese government. Finally, commercial liberalism highlights China's liberal approach towards the deep reform of cultural sectors and its further development of cultural/creative industries to possibly reduce cultural trade deficit. The economic motivation of China's soft power campaigns in this vein is poorly researched, but this gap will be filled in chapter 5.

Despite the strengths of liberal explanations related to China's soft power campaigns, its analytical insufficiencies also deserve attention. One fallacy of liberal explanation comes down to its supposed dichotomization between liberal and non-liberal regimes or zones. Another is the lack of the exploration of China's *domestic* soft power campaigns.

By taking the binary logic of democratic liberalism for granted, many external observers asserted that Chinese soft power would fail because it is driven by an illiberal regime. However, this assertion calls for reconsideration. As discussed through this thesis, soft

power is exercised within a specific scope and a domain. According to a comprehensive survey of China's soft power campaigns in chapter 4, it finds that the Chinese government has developed diverse schemes to deal with different scopes and domains. In terms of scope, Western countries (US and European countries in particular), China's neighbors, developing countries, international institutions, and even domestic constituency are key target audiences of China's soft power campaigns. Also, in terms of domain, cultural agendas (such as cultural security, trade and exchanges), global media and communications, Chinese image-building, Chinese economic development model, China's evolving engagement with international institutions and Chinese foreign policies (such as foreign aid and assistance), are particularly relevant.

Although China's soft power campaigns are strongly disputed in Western countries where liberal values are deeply entrenched, the failure of China's soft power campaigns at large is not a foregone conclusion. If China's soft power campaigns inevitably fail in Western countries as is commonly believed, the state-led soft power campaigns will be suspended, and even withdrew as a result. However, interestingly, the Chinese government has continued to invest heavily in various vehicles of public diplomacy that targets Western audiences. If taking China's soft power campaigns in other domains and scopes into consideration, China's soft power campaigns have not necessarily failed. At the very least, the overall impact of China's soft power campaigns is mixed so far. Therefore, it is less a case to emphasize the negative impact of China's illiberal regime on its soft power campaigns, but more to ascertain how the Chinese government as an authoritarian regime has continuously drive soft power campaigns to persuade global audiences. While the former is normative and the latter is analytical, a further systemic examination of the latter part will push observers to revisit the former normative base of liberalism.

Another analytical insufficiency of IR liberalism comes down to its inattention to the domestic dynamics of China's soft power campaigns. IR liberalism generally explains state behaviors through a "two-stage process": the identification of state preferences

constituted by some subset of domestic society in the first place, and the subsequent strategic interactions among states.[144] In this sense, IR liberalism logically has to privilege the domestic preferences of China's soft power campaigns. However, the reality of China's illiberal political system belies the presupposition of IR liberalism regarding the making of state preferences. As a result, on one hand, democratic and ideational liberalism are utilized to criticize China's illiberal regime for their alleged ineffectiveness of China's soft power campaigns and its threat against the liberal international order, and to suggest that the emerging Chinese civil society *should* be unleashed to drive China's soft power campaigns. On the other, sociological, commercial, and institutional liberalism focus on the interactive process of states and non-state actors in the transnational level, without necessarily tapping into the domestic making of state preferences. This analytical inadequacy of IR liberalism necessitates the IR constructive mode of analysis accordingly.

IR Constructivism and China's Soft Power Campaigns

IR constructivism is crucial to explain the domestic identity politics underlying China's soft power campaigns. IR constructivists generally see international politics as reflective of an inter-subjective or social fact, rather than as an objective and material reality.[145] In so doing, IR constructivism accords primacy to the collective identity formation made on the basis of constitutive norms and shared knowledge between individuals and states.[146]

The formation of national identity is particularly important since nation states remain the dominant players in the international politics. According to IR constructivism, national identity determines the conceptualization of national interests and their operationalization through policy-making, particularly in the high politics of national

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[144] Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics," 544.

[145] Nicholas Onuf, *World of Our Making* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989).

[146] John Gerard Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-Utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 855-85; *Constructing the World Polity* (London: Routledge, 1998).

security.[147] According to Rozman, national identity refers to "a statement of the *uniqueness* of a particular nation-state, investing it with authority and separating it from other states that may seek to influence it" [Italic mine].[148] Both domestic and international sources are closely linked to the construction of national identity.[149] National identities, in this sense, are constituted not only through the narratives of national conditions appealing to an imaged history and tradition, but via current interactions with other countries.[150]

From the perspective of IR constructivism, China's conceptualization of soft power and its political application vividly represent its "identity dilemma" rather than "security dilemma".[151] The identity dilemma revolves around the unsettled questions of "what is China?" and "Who are we (Chinese)?" in the course of China's evolving interactions with the international society. As China's conceptualization of soft power and its political application take place in this particular context of identity dilemma, therefore, according to Cao, "soft power discourse has become a significant part of China's identity politics".[152] This identity politics functions at both domestic and international levels.

Domestically, the Chinese government wields soft power in an attempt to strengthen national cohesion-building that has long been plagued by contested definitions of "Chinese nation" (*zhonghua minzu*) along with different strands of nationalism. However, the state-led soft power campaigns seem to stoke rather than soothe its identity dilemma. Internationally, the Chinese government attempts to utilize soft power to ensure its strategic choice of peaceful rise made in relation to its purported

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[147] Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 391-425; Peter J. Katzenstein, ed. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Jutta Weldes, "Constructing National Interests," *European Journal of International Relations* 2, no. 3 (1996): 275-318.

[148] Gilbert Rozman, "China's Quest for Great Power Identity," *Orbis* 43, no. 3 (1999): 384.

[149] Alexander Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation and the International State," *The American Political Science Review* 88, no. 2 (1994): 384-96.

[150] David C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 9.

[151] Qin, "The Possibility and Inevitability of a Chinese School of International Relations Theory," 48-9.

[152] Qing Cao, "The Language of Soft Power: Mediating Socio-Political Meanings in the Chinese Media," *Critical Arts* 25, no. 1 (2011): 20.

"Confucian-Mencian" strategic culture. However, the influential argument pertaining to the dominant role of China's "hard realpolitik" strategic culture in shaping China's strategic preferences has challenged China's proclaimed peaceful rise. These binary views will be detailed in the following section. The unsettled contradiction between the Confucian-Mencian and the hard realpolitik strategic culture—which lies at the heart of Chinese identity dilemma in the international society—has complicated China's soft power campaigns.

Identity dilemma and China's cultural soft power

The Chinese nation-building is central to the Chinese political and intellectual elites since the early 20th century, when China was forced to transform from a loosely connected empire into a modern nation state. Chinese political and intellectual elites have invested tremendous efforts and resources to construct a unified Chinese national identity, yet it is far from being settled. [153] There are different types of representatives—anti-traditionalists, traditional conservatives, liberal nationalists, ethnic nationalists, pragmatic nationalists—contending with each other through different narratives of Chinese nationalism in order to shape a Chinese national identity.[154]

The construction of Chinese national identity in the 21st century has been increasingly influenced by the party-state through its pragmatic nationalism, characterized by its cautious synthesis of cultural nationalism and the official ideology of socialism. This state-led pragmatic nationalism was crystalized in the Patriotic Education Movement (PEM) that was launched immediately after the 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident. This state-led PEM continues to shape the Chinese people's basic understanding of Chinese national identity. The narratives of "the century of humiliation" and "national conditions" (*guoqing*) are particularly influential state-centric nationalist discourses in this regard.[155]

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[153] John Fitzgerald, "The Nationless State: The Search for a Nation in Modern Chinese Nationalism," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 33 (1995): 75-104; Lucian W. Pye, "How China's Nationalism Was Shanghaied," ibid., no. 29 (1993): 107-33.

[154] Suisheng Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

[155] Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy*, chapter 3; Jinghan Zeng, *The Chinese Communist*

As a result, the state-centric Chinese nationalism is synonymous with Chinese patriotism—"*aiguo zhuyi*" in the Chinese term—that is closer to the connotation of "love the state-ism". However, China's prolonged identity dilemma was partially solved by the pragmatic nationalism as the party-state's top-down efforts to inflate the state and the nation cannot delegitimize efforts from the bottom-up or popular nationalism. After all, nationalism is a "double-edged sword": not only can nationalism be used by the state to legitimize its rule, but also raised by the national subjects to judge the performance of the state.[156] The conceptualization and operationalization of Chinese cultural soft power was undertaken in this historical and political context of identity dilemma.

This debate of Chinese soft power in terms of core cultural resources clearly demonstrates China's unsettled nature of national identity. The dominant role of "cultural school" in shaping the discourse of Chinese soft power brought the central issue of national identity into sharp relief. Simply put, the cultural school holds up a strong belief that the core of Chinese soft power is Chinese culture as it is integral to national cohesion and creativity.[157] However, the domestic struggle for the identification of core cultural resources has become a quintessential feature of China's domestic soft power campaigns.

The party-state remains a dominant player in determining the core cultural resources of Chinese soft power. However, the waning socialist ideology has motivated the party-state to accommodate the appeal of cultural nationalism since the start of 21st century. Cultural security and sovereignty are the common concerns of the party-state and the cultural nationalists.[158] On one hand, the cultural nationalists need the political

Party's Capacity to Rule: Ideology, Legitimacy and Party Cohesion (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), chapter 5.

[156] Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, 264-5; Yingjie Guo, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity under Reform* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 70-1; Chunhua Chen, "Nationalism and Its Political Implications in Contemporary China," in *Asian Nationalism Reconsidered*, ed. Jeff Kingston (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 148.

[157] Barthélémy Courmont, "What Implication for Chinese Soft Power: Charm Offensive or New Hegemony?" *Pacific Focus* 28, no. 3 (2013): 347-9; Glaser and Murph, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics," 13-8.

[158] Neil Renwick and Qing Cao, "China's Cultural Soft Power: An Emerging National Cultural Security Discourse," *American Journal of Chinese Studies* 15, no. 2 (2008): 69-86.

power of the state to protect Chinese cultural security and sovereignty from the supposed encroachment of Western culture and values, and to promote Chinese cultural influence abroad. On the other, the party-state needs the cultural nationalists to justify its legitimacy as the guardian of Chinese nation. Cultural security and sovereignty is also important for the Chinese public as they tend to "see their way of life protected from the foreign influence," according to the Pew Research Center (PEW) survey.[159] The issue of cultural security and sovereignty will be further explored in chapter 5. Interestingly, the Chinese characteristic—the state-led combination of socialism and fine traditions of Chinese culture (*zhongguo youxiu chuantong wenhua*)—is considered as an "Ace" in the deck of China's soft power "card".[160]

The state-led combination of socialism and fine traditions of Chinese culture (neo-Confucianism in particular),[161] however, is problematic. This problem is worsened by the inherent conflicts between the party-state and the radical cultural nationalists who have unwavering opposition to the socialism.[162] This problem is also complicated by the implacable animosity between the party-state and the ethnic minority nationalists who has long called for cultural or religious autonomy, and even self-determination.[163]

Liberal nationalists further challenge the predominant role of the party-state and the cultural nationalists in defining the core cultural resources of Chinese soft power. They argue that Chinese soft power should found on the liberal values of freedom and

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[159] Pew Research Center, "Growing Concerns in China about Inequality, Corruption," accessed 10 March, 2013. http://www.pewglobal.org/files/2012/10/Pew-Global-Attitudes-China-Report-FINAL-October-10-2012.pdf.

[160] Yiwei Wang, "Weishenme Yao Qiangdiao 'Zhongguo Tese' [Why Emphasizing 'Chinese Characteristics']," *Huanqiu Shibao [Global Times]*, 17 February, 2015.

[161] Confucianism can fall into three branches since its reintroduction in the 1980s: Confucianism by Confucians, liberal Confucianism and socialist Confucianism. Confucians see Confucianism as a moral way of life and cultural quintessence for uniting a nation, also as an ideology for the justification of a political system. Liberal and socialist Confucianists are attentive to the Confucianism not because they seek to revive it as an alternative way of being, but for the sake of using some aspects of Confucianism to achieve a specific political purpose. Liberal Confucianists attempt to break the nexus between Marxism and the Confucianism, while socialist Confucianists seek to combine some parts of Confucianism with socialism under the CCP's leadership. As a result, the party-state keeps alert to the potential challenges from Confucian conservative and liberal Confucianists against its political legitimacy that remains officially anchored in Marxism. See Jiawen Ai, "The Refunctioning of Confucianism: The Mainland Chinese Intellectual Response to Confucianism since the 1980s," *Issues & Studies* 44, no. 2 (2008): 29-78.

[162] Guo, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity under Reform*, 90.

[163] Thomas Heberer, *China and Its National Minorities: Autonomy or Assimilation?* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1989); Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, chapter 5.

democracy.[164] Therefore, further economic marketization and political liberalization is the right way for China to promote its soft power internationally, and China's soft power campaigns should be decentralized rather than being dominated by the state as a result. In this sense, the role of Chinese cultural security and sovereignty is downplayed by the liberal nationalists.[165]

Offering something of a middle way, a third group seeks to transcend the dichotomization between the *Chineseness* and the Westernization, between the left (socialism) and the right (liberalism), and between the essence (*ti*) and application (*yong*).[166] The "doctrine of the mean" (*zhongyong*), therefore, becomes the core cultural resources of Chinese soft power. Not only did this group disagree with the cultural nationalists to overemphasize the so-called security of Chinese traditional culture, but they also refused to indiscriminately adopt any Western modern culture and values. They attempt to "deconstruct Western knowledge of China" and explore diverse ways to "reconstruct China's own culture identity and national subjectivity".[167] According to Wang, the "fourth rise" of China and its cultural implications depend on how the Chinese people can retrieve and rejuvenate key parts of Chinese traditional values, and blend them with mainstream modern (Western) culture.[168] However, it remains a big challenge for the third group to strike a balance between two extremes—Chinese exceptionalism vis-à-vis Westernization.

The conceptualization and operationalization of Chinese soft power in reference to the contested definitions of core cultural resources, clearly illustrates China's unsolved identity dilemma. Although the party-state and the cultural nationalists play a central role in the construction of Chinese national identity through China's soft power

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[164] Interview with a scholar, Beijing, April 8, 2015.
[165] Ding, *The Dragon's Hidden Wings: How China Rises with Its Soft Power*, 163-4; Weishi Yuan, "Nationalism in a Transforming China," *Global Asia* 2, no. 1 (2007): 26-7.
[166] Breslin, "Understanding China's Regional Rise: Interpretations, Identities and Implications," 825; Yang Gan, *Tong Santong [The Integration of Triple Traditions in China]* (Beijing: Sanlian Publisher, 2007); Cao, "The Language of Soft Power: Mediating Socio-Political Meanings in the Chinese Media," 21.
[167] Jian Guo, "Politics of Othering and Postmodernisation of the Cultural Revolution," *Postcolonial Studies* 2, no. 2 (1999): 214.
[168] Gungwu Wang, "The Fourth Rise of China: Cultural Implication," *China: An International Journal* 2, no. 2 (2004): 322.

campaigns, their efforts may be heavily undone by the inherent tension within this informal alliance, and offset by the ethnic and liberal nationalists. The third group also finds it difficult to address this identity dilemma according to a culturally eclectic mode of thinking. Therefore, China's soft power campaigns are *not* simply a "top-down", "unidirectional", "authoritarian" and "cultural instrumentalism". [169] Since the fragmentation of cultural values among the party-state, intellectual elites and grass-root populations remains, China's identity dilemma may continue to haunt the Chinese people. [170] Accordingly, the party-state's attempt to wield soft power to ameliorate this prolonged identity dilemma may become counterproductive.

Strategic cultures, identity dilemma and China's soft power campaigns

The dichotomization of Chinese strategic cultures between Confucian-Mencian and the hard realpolitik paradigm, also adds relevance to the Chinese identity dilemma along with its interactions with the international system. This binary view of Chinese strategic culture provides a further insight to the contradictory perceptions of China's soft power campaigns: peaceful rise versus peaceful ruse.

Strategic culture, according to Johnston, refers to "an integrated system of symbols that acts to establish pervasive and long-lasting grand strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs."[171] According to Johnston, there are two different ideal types of Chinese strategic cultures. The standard image of Chinese strategic culture is Confucian-Mencian paradigm, characterized by the "minimal-violence" preference, non-zero-sum view of conflict, and presumably the least efficacy of highly coercive strategies.[172] The "*parabellum*" or the

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[169] SÉBastien Billioud, "Confucianism, 'Cultural Tradition', and Official Discourse in China at the Start of the New Century," *China Perspectives*, no. 3 (2007): 64.

[170] Kang Liu, "Searching for a New Cultural Identity: China's Soft Power and Media Culture Today," *Journal of Contemporary China* 21, no. 78 (2012): 915-31.

[171] Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, 36.

[172] Huiyun Feng, *Chinese Strategic Culture and Foreign Policy Decision-Making: Confucianism, Leadership and War* (London: Routledge, 2007); Frank A. Kierman and John K. Fairbank, eds., *Chinese Ways in Warfare* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974); Chunqiu Wu, *Lun Dazhanlve He Shijie Zhanzhengshi [On Grand Strategy and History of World Wars]* (Beijing: Jiefangjun Chubanshe [PLA Press], 2002).

hard realpolitik paradigm, to the contrary, assumes that the war is inevitable, the conflict of interests is inherently a zero-sum game, and the threat can be best addressed through the application of superior force.[173]

The contradiction between China's professed Confucian-Mencian strategic culture and its *parabellum* paradigm as seen by outsiders, clearly shows China's identity dilemma on the international stage. That is, the Chinese people's self-image and outsiders' perceptions of what China is are "out of alignment", and this is the "greatest strategic threat" to China, as Ramo writes.[174] Chinese policy-makers and scholars believe that China's strategic choice of peaceful rise is predicated on its long-lasting Confucian-Mencian strategic culture, and assert that its national security strategy is "active defense".[175] In this sense, China's soft power campaigns are reflective of its grand strategy of peaceful rise.[176] It is thus not surprising that the Chinese government has sought to promote its normative soft power through active propagation of harmonious world, the community of common destiny, and "a new type of great power relations" (*xinxing daguo guanxi*).[177] However, the existence of China's *parabellum* paradigm may set a cultural foundation for China's strategic preference of seeking regional and even global hegemony. In this sense, China's soft power campaigns are more relevant to an "iron fist in a velvet glove", of which China's professed normative soft power is a "smokescreen" for its regional and even global hegemony ambition. Above all, China's global soft power campaigns have failed to settle this identity dilemma so far, characterized by the unsolved strategic cultural antinomy between its Confucian-Mencian and *parabellum* paradigm.

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[173] Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, chapter 3; "Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, 216-68; Victoria Tin-bor Hui, "How China Was Ruled," *The American Interest* 3, no. 4 (2008): 53-65.

[174] Joshua Cooper Ramo, "Brand China "(London: The Foreign Policy Center, 2007).

[175] Tiejun Zhang, "Chinese Strategic Culture: Traditional and Present Features," *Comparative Strategy* 21, no. 2 (2002): 73-90; *White Paper on China's Peaceful Development*; The Chinese Ministry of National Defense, *China's Military Strategy White Paper* (Beijing: State Council Information Office, 2015).

[176] Yinhong Shi, "China's Soft Power and Its Peaceful Rise as an Aspiring World Power: A Critical Assessment," in *Going Soft? The US and China Go Global*, ed. Priscilla Roberts (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 2-10.

[177] A detailed analysis of "new type of great power relations" see Jinghan Zeng and Shaun Breslin, "China's 'New Type of Great Power Relations': A G2 with Chinese Characteristics?," *International Affairs* 92, no. 4 (2016): 773-94.

Analysts seemed to downplay this identity dilemma in shaping China's contradictory strategic preferences. Rather, they seemed to highlight another kind of identity dilemma closely linked to various identity formations such as "great power", "quasi-superpower", "developing country" and "regional power".[178] This identity dilemma matters in that the Chinese government has not yet clarified which ideal identity formation can best define its overall national interests. The official guideline for the Chinese all-round diplomacy is illustrative in this point and worthy of a quote: "Major Powers are the key, surrounding areas are the first priority, developing countries are the foundation, and multilateral forums are the important stage."[179]

This kind of identity dilemma in relation to China's desire for a specific power status, however, is in fact subject to another identity dilemma defined by the strategic cultural antinomy. After all, the fundamental concern of China's identity dilemma lies in the nature rather than the level of its power. That is, whether a rising China will turn into a peaceful or aggressive power is arguably much more significant than, which level of power China wants to pursue. As He and Feng summarize, "a rising China may not be a threat, an angry China indeed will be".[180]

Strengths and weaknesses of constructivist explanation

The exploration of China's domestic identity politics underlying its soft power campaigns, demonstrates analytical advantages of constructivist paradigm. The constructivist account helps deepen the understanding of soft power with Chinese characteristics, and supplements the *ahistorical* and *asocial* analyses that are reliant on either the realist or the liberal paradigm in explaining China's soft power campaigns.

The shortcomings of constructivist explanation, however, also merit attention. That is,

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[178] Shaun Breslin, "China and the Global Order: Signalling Threat or Friendship?" 616-7; Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*, 14, 43.
[179] Wei He, "Challenges Await China This Decade," *China Daily*, January 6, 2011.
[180] Kai He and Huiyun Feng, "Xi Jinping's Operational Code Beliefs and China's Foreign Policy," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 6, no. 3 (2013): 231.

IR constructivists fail to systematically analyze how the national identity dilemma may influence policy-makers' definition of national interests and their policy-making, although they can logically extrapolate that a *fixed* national identity may have a direct impact on the conceptualization of national interests and its political application via policy-making. This analytical weakness is worsened by the constructivists' reluctance to pay sufficient attention to the role of political power in explaining the building of national identity at both domestic and international levels. Arguably, the construction of national identity does not take place within a power vacuum domestically and internationally. Therefore, political power is a key factor to account for a country's foreign policy dynamism under the circumstances of national identity dilemma.

Political power matters at both domestic and international levels in this case study related to China's soft power campaigns. Domestically, the unrivalled political power of the party-state significantly explained the state-centric conceptualization of soft power and its application as a political project for the sake of national identity-building. Internationally, the rising political power of China enabled it to use its growing discursive power to define a preferred national identity. However, the limits to China's global power allow other status-quo powers to challenge its preferred definition of Chinese national identity and its strategic choice as a result. In short, this analytical insufficiency of constructivist paradigm calls for reconsideration of political power that is partially in accordance with realist paradigm, and ends up with an application of eclectic analysis in examining China's incentives to drive soft power campaigns under its circumstance of identity dilemma.

Conclusion

The driving forces behind the conceptualization of Chinese soft power and its political application have been explored through different IR schools of thought, including realism, liberalism and constructivism. Each paradigm has both explanatory strengths and weaknesses. As a result, an eclectic analysis of China's soft power campaigns is in

order.

The defensive and offensive forms of realism are opposed to each other in respect to the conceptualization of Chinese soft power and its political application. While defensive realism highlights the active defense of China's soft power campaigns, offensive realism focuses on its potential aggressiveness. Defensive realism is likely to justify China's professed peaceful rise through its soft power campaigns, but offensive realism may describe it as a peaceful ruse for seeking hard power and even hegemony.

IR liberalism also sees the conceptualization of Chinese soft power and its political application in either a positive or a negative light. Five branches of IR liberalism—ideational liberalism, republican/democratic liberalism, commercial and sociological liberalism, and regulatory/institutional liberalism—merit particular attention. The ideational and republican liberalism tend to develop a negative account on China's soft power campaigns, while the commercial, sociological and institutional liberalism are inclined to view these campaigns positively. The negative account emphasizes that the Chinese government is exploiting soft power as a sophisticated ruse to undermine the US-led liberal international order in the long term. However, the positive account highlights that the Chinese government is utilizing soft power to benefit from the liberal international order and pursue a peaceful rise from within. Put another way, China is seeking to reform rather than revolutionize the US-led liberal international order. In conclusion, China's soft power campaigns from the perspective of IR liberalism are indicative of either a peaceful rise or a peaceful ruse.

IR constructivism discusses that the conceptualization of Chinese soft power and its political application vividly represents its identity dilemma at both domestic and international levels. Domestically, the Chinese government wields soft power in an attempt to strengthen national cohesion-building that has long been plagued by contested definitions of "Chinese nation" underlying different strands of nationalism. However, China's identity dilemma remains unsettled. Internationally, the Chinese

government seeks to use soft power to ensure its grand strategic choice of peaceful rise derived from its alleged Confucian-Mencian strategic culture. However, the influential argument pertaining to the dominant role of China's *parabellum* or hard realpolitik strategic culture in shaping China's strategic preferences, has challenged China's proclaimed peaceful rise. As a result, China's soft power campaigns under the circumstances of identity dilemma have made both claims of peaceful rise and peaceful ruse relevant.

Each paradigm shows its strengths and weaknesses in explaining the conceptualization of Chinese soft power and its operation. The triple paradigms of realism, liberalism and constructivism are not mutually exclusive, but complement each other in this case study. Nye clearly argues that soft power, in essence, "fits with realist, liberal or constructivist perspective".[181] The literature review described above demonstrates that, analytical eclecticism is the most appropriate approach in providing a comprehensive and balanced picture of China's soft power campaigns. In the next chapter, I will further seek to justify the methodological utility of analytical eclecticism in examining China's soft power campaigns, by further elaborating on the theoretical connection between power, soft power and the national interest.

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[181] Joseph S. Nye, "Responding to My Critics and Conclusion," 219.

Chapter 2: Power, Soft Power and the National Interest

The term "soft power" coined by Nye as an academic term has spread to policy circles.[1] Since soft power became a topic of frequent discussion and debate around the world, Nye believes its original definition has become "stretched" and "twisted".[2] Therefore, Nye's original account of soft power should become a starting point to examine the conceptualization of soft power and its political application, but it should also take into account theoretical reflections, criticisms and insights as well as empirical robustness from the community of scholars working on this topic. The conceptualization of soft power in this thesis seeks to develop general hypotheses and test them in a specific case study involving *why and how Chinese policy-makers have utilized soft power in the 21st century*.

Four general hypotheses are put forward as a result. Hypothesis 1 (H1): soft power mainly serves national interests. Hypothesis 2 (H2): soft power is primarily operational in the international arena. Hypothesis 3 (H3): non-state actors are tactically the principal drivers of national soft power campaigns. Hypothesis 4 (H4): the application of soft power, like power in general, is contingent on a specific scope and domain. The scope of power describes who is involved in the power relationship, and the domain of power clarifies what topics or issue-agendas are involved.[3] The examination of China's motives of soft power campaigns aims to test the former two hypotheses, while the exploration of its utilization of soft power seeks to test the last two.

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[1] Joseph S. Nye, *Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 5.
[2] "Think Again: Soft Power," accessed November 1, 2016.
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2006/02/22/think_again_soft_power.
[3] *The Future of Power*, 6.

Soft Power and the "National Interest"

H1 addresses the key issue of why states are keen to discuss and practice soft power when the terrain of international politics is changing. If states around the world adopt soft power to serve perceived national interests, even though the extent of this realization may vary, few disputes will occur. However, this hypothesis becomes perilously close to redundant if the conceptualization of "national interest" and its logical connection with soft power is not specified. Epistemologically, the statist mode of thought assuming the nation state as a *rational* actor on the international stage underpins the discussion of national interests generally, and the practice of soft power specifically. This implies that the state, in a broad sense, is instrumentally rational in foreign-policy making, and reduces the influence of the unbounded passion and emotion in definition of "national interest",[4] so does the evaluation of material utility and ideational values of soft power. Another implication is that the nation state remains the primary unit of analysis even though the role played by the non-state actors is recognized. In so doing, "subnational interests" and "human interests" come second to the "national interest" during the exploration of soft power. Methodologically, the analytically *eclectic* mode of thinking about both soft power and the national interest brings forth an effective synthesis between them: Nye points out that the idea of soft power matches the realist, liberal, and constructivist perspectives,[5] while the national interest is also conceptualized in a similar way.[6]

Rethinking the national interest

The concept of national interest has long become an almost obligatory part of political

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[4] Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interest* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Friedrich Kratochwil, "On the Notion of 'Interest' in International Relations," *International Organization* 36, no. 1 (1982): 13,26; W. David Clinton, *The Two Faces of National Interest* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994), 112; Joseph Frankel, "National Interest: A Vindication," *International Journal* 24, no. 4 (1969): 725; Richard Flathman, *The Public Interest: An Essay Concerning the Normative Discourse of Politics* (New York and London: John Wiley and Sons, 1966).

[5] Joseph S. Nye, "Responding to My Critics and Conclusion," 219; *The Future of Power*, 82.

[6] For example, see Scott Burchill, *The National Interest in International Relations Theory* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

analysis. Yet, the concept of national interest is "essentially contested",[7] as debate and polemics revolving around its definition are far from resolved. A full recapitulation of this debate is beyond the scope of this chapter,[8] yet it is useful to briefly revisit this commentary.

Despite the criticism of national interest being vague and vacuous,[9] this term remains part of political reality and is still commonly used in political debate.[10] Abandoning the term may result in a linguistic vacuum that may ultimately be filled with another similarly controversial political term. Historically, the discourse of "national interest" came into being because the old terminology of international relations (such as the "will of the prince", "dynastic interests", "reason of state" and "national honor") failed to meet the ever-changing physical conditions of the world and the modern demand for a foreign policy capable of being handled logically and analytically.[11] Rising capitalist power and popular sovereignty resulted in the popularity of national interests as opposed to dynastic interests.[12] While the concept of national interest may also pass into history because the days of nation state as a dominant political unit are numbered as some claim,[13] this process may take many decades, if not even centuries, to occur. As Rosenau concludes, the use of "national interest" will long continue, despite its possible future as a moribund analytic concept.[14]

National interest is also a contested term because these interests vary in forms and levels.[15] Scholars, experts and politicians generally agree that, in an anarchic world,

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[7] W. B. Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56 (1955): 167-98.

[8] A full coverage of debates see Clinton, *The Two Faces of National Interest*, 21-98; Charles A. Beard, *The Open Door at Home: A Trial Philosophy of National Interest* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1935), 159-78.

[9] Stanley Hoffmann, *Primacy or World Order: American Foreign Policy since the Cold War* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980), 133; Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1977), 66-67; Thomas L. Hughes, "On the Causes of Our Discontents," *Foreign Affairs* 47, no. 4 (1969): 666.

[10] Kratochwil, "On the Notion of 'Interest' in International Relations," 2.

[11] Charles A. Beard, *The Idea of National Interest: An Analytical Study in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1934), 21-23; Joseph Frankel, *National Interest* (London: Pall Mall, 1970), 20-23.

[12] Xuetong Yan, *Zhongguo Guojia Liyi Fenxi [Analysis of Chinese National Interests]* (Tianjin: Tianjin People's Press, 1996), 19-20.

[13] Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 10.

[14] James N. Rosenau, "National Interest," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* ed. David E. Sills (New York: Macmillian and Free Press, 1968), 39-40.

[15] The discussion of "interests" generally revolves around "sequences" (some leading to others in the same sequence) and "hierarchies" (some superseding others). It sheds light on the forms and levels of national interests.

each state needs to safeguard the integrity of national territory and political institutions, strengthen the military, promote economic prosperity, and protect cultural identity from encroachment by others.[16] The uniqueness of national interests is a function of different political power of states, and great powers often develop and promote a broader vision of national interests than small powers do. Distinctive national conditions also play a key role in determining uniqueness, and states often develop different ways of seeing and understanding national interests in accordance with their unique world view regarding the nature of international politics and their role therein.

There are also many different levels of national interests, including "survival", "vital", "major", and "peripheral" interest.[17] Survival interests are relatively easy to observe in the face of overt military attack, clear threat of attack, or the catastrophic economic tsunamis. Survival interests under these circumstances immediately require responses. Vital interests are conditions that, if compromised, would severely infringe on, but not strictly imperil, the capability of the state to safeguard and promote its physical security and economic well-beings. Vital interests generally require rapid reactions including military action in the short term to prevent worsening of the situation. Major interests refer to the key concerns of political, economic and ideological wellbeing that may be negatively, but not severely, impacted if no further action is undertaken to counter unfavorable external trends. Last, peripheral or secondary interests are not unimportant, yet have little direct impact on the capacity of the state to protect and enhance the wellbeing of its people, and commonly result in adoption of a "wait and see" policy.[18] Vital and major interests are the key concerns for the state during the peaceful time, when survival interests are not threatened.

Further elaboration on the serial and hierarchical relationship of values and interests see Dyke Vernon Van, "Values and Interests," *The American Political Science Review* 56, no. 3 (1962): 567-76.

[16] For example, see Robert E. Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 6; George F. Kennan, "Morality and Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 64, no. 2 (1985): 206; Hans J. Morgenthau, "Another 'Great Debate': The National Interest of the United States," *The American Political Science Review* 46, no. 4 (1952): 972.

[17] Donald E. Nuechterlein, *American Overcommitted: United States National Interests in the 1980s*, 8.

[18] Ibid; similar views see Graham T. Allison et al., "America's National Interests," (Washington DC: The Commission on America's National Interests, 2000).

The boundary between different levels of national interests is not always sharp, partly because the concept of "national interest" has a complex mixture of objective and subjective content.[19] The judgment of different levels of threat against national interests requires both the objective evaluation of material conditions and functional needs of the state (the "science" of statecraft), and it also considers inter-subjective interactions between central decision-makers and the public (the art of statecraft). National leaders have been known to tell lies to make domestic audiences believe that national interests are seriously threatened.[20]

The objective and subjective dimension of national interests contest may come into conflict. Realists and most neo-liberalists have more to say about the objective dimension of national interests as they attach great significance to exogenous and constant factors such as power and wealth valued by the state.[21] In contrast, as mentioned in the last chapter, IR constructivists prioritize the (inter-)subjective construction of national interests at both domestic and international level, where there exist constitutive norms and common knowledge. National identity, according to the social constructivism, determines the definition of national interests and the corresponding state behaviors. Both domestic and international formations of national identity matter. Domestically, the construction of national interest in the care of each state depends heavily on the society's unique constitutive norms or shared ideas of "Self" and "Others" in separation from the influence of outside world.[22] Additionally, the international construction of national interests is grounded on commonly shared norms and knowledge regarding the nature of international order and the place of state. International social structure, in this sense, enables to change what state wants, and may even produce interests and values for the state.[23]

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[19] Rosenau, "National Interest," 34-40; Clinton, *The Two Faces of National Interest*, 69; Beard, *The Open Door at Home: A Trial Philosophy of National Interest*, 157-58.

[20] John Mearsheimer, *Why Leaders Lie: The Truth About Lying in International Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[21] Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996)*,* 7.

[22] W. David Clinton, "The National Interest: Normative Foundations," *The Review of Politics* 48, no. 4 (1986): 501.

[23] Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*.

The concept of national interest is therefore analytically eclectic as it considers both material and ideational factors.[24] It should be noted that, however, the rich descriptive meaning of national interest in theory does not suggest "everything goes". If this were true, this concept may lose its utility. Theoretically speaking, security, power, wealth and national identity are primary concerns as mentioned earlier. In practice, it is crucial to discriminate and rank national interests lest the resources will be easily spread too thin and in areas of little importance.[25] Huntington argues the national interest, in this sense, is actually "national restraint".[26] It should also be noted that, the identification of national interest is not fixed. This identification evolves in response to changing material and ideational structures, and changing perceptions of central decision-makers. However, this evolution does not deny its relatively predictable and consistent feature of *core* national interests (power and wealth) as defined by the state in line with prudence and bounded rationality.[27]

The aforementioned discussion of national interest is based on a claim that the nation state remains the dominant unit of analysis. According to the statist model strongly proposed by Krasner, the state is neither one interest group among many, nor the servant of particular societal needs and class interests, but an institution with powers, rights and purposes of its own.[28] The "national interest", along this line of thought, is *a set of objectives designed to promote the material utility and ideational values of the state primarily through the statements and behaviors of central decision-makers*.[29] However, the "national interest" is not whatever the politicians say it is as Huntington asserts.[30] According to Krasner, preferences of central decision-makers equate with national

[24] J. Samuel Barkin, "Realist Constructivism," *International Studies Review* 5, no. 3 (2003): 325-42; Georg Sørensen, "The Case for Combining Material Forces and Ideas in the Study of IR," *European Journal of International Relations* 14, no. 1 (2008): 5-32; Andrew Phillips, *War, Religion and Empire: The Transformation of International Orders* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[25] Michael G. Roskin, "National Interest: From Abstraction to Strategy," *Parameters* 24, no. 4 (1994): 14.

[26] Samuel Huntington, "The Erosion of American National Interests," *Foreign affairs* 76, no. 5 (1997): 49.

[27] Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 7.

[28] Stephen D. Krasner, *Power, the State, and Sovereignty: Essays on International Relations* (New York and London: Routledge, 2009), 35.

[29] Ibid., 5-6; Edgar S. Furniss and Richard C. Snyder, *An Introduction to American Foreign Policy* (New York: Rinehart, 1955), 17; M. S. Rajan, "The Concept of National Interest and the Functioning of the United Nations: An Analysis of Some Theoretical Problems," *International Studies* 16, no. 3 (1977): 323; Donald E. Nuechterlein, *American Overcommitted: United States National Interests in the 1980s*, 7.

[30] Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1957), 84-5.

interests only if two criteria are met: "the actions of leaders must be related to general objectives, not to the preferences or needs of any particular group or class", and "ordering of preferences must persist over time".[31] Therefore, the national interest is starkly contrasted to the "human interest" and "subnational interest".

The "human interest" and "subnational interest"

The "human interest", conceived as a transcendent common good prevailing over the "national interest", has recently become increasingly pronounced in world politics. Human interests generally refer to "peace without national military arsenals", "economic well-being for all inhabitants on the earth", "universal human rights and social justice", and "ecological balance".[32] This revolutionary vision even posits that human interest should replace the current dominant statist thought on the national interest, at least if "global humanism" and "humane world community" come of age in the future.[33]

That being said, states benefiting from the dominant Westphalian sovereignty system arguably have no motivation for a revolutionary transformation at any cost of their perceived national interests in a foreseeable future. Even if states are aware of the long-term normative significance of human interests, the "first-mover problem"—in which the state becomes the first to behave according to the dictates of human interests—remains as they may face a world where reckless states are still a very real possibility.[34] Therefore, the human interest in reality has not been completely prioritized by statesmen due to the frailty and thinness of the world community at the moment. It is apparent that nation states are not balancing and bouncing off each other like billiard balls any more when global interdependence has gained momentum, but they have not retreated, and remain facts of life. The public discourse of the national

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[31] Stephen D. Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investment and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 35.

[32] Robert C. Johansen, *The National Interest and the Human Interest: An Analysis of US Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 20.

[33] Ibid., 3-28.

[34] John Mearsheimer, "Realists as Idealists," *Security Studies* 20, no. 3 (2011): 427-30.

interest, therefore, survives and is far away from being replaced by that of human interest. Any utopian effort attempting to assume states away for the sake of promoting human interests is doomed to fail.[35]

Although a concern with the human interest is far from being addressed now, it promotes the conceptual refinement of national interests. It pushes the state to move policy-making beyond the national self-interest of Machiavelli to an *enlightened* national interest characterized with moral responsibility imposed by membership in an emergent world community.[36] The English school in particular, has expended considerable ink on the significance of enlightened national interests in international society. That is, the state needs to develop a clear understanding of what it wants internationally, and to realize that the best fulfillment of its national interests depends on its acute awareness of, and respect for, other states' key concerns, and then to make the best resultant accommodation in order to avoid stirring up conflicts in this regard. Simply put, the enlightened national interest entails cognizance of needs, desires and interests of others, and refutes the inevitability of conflicts between self-interests and collective interests.[37] Consequently, the moral principle of self-restraint and prudence enlightens the definition and practice of national interests by the central decision-makers.[38]

Regarding the "subnational interest", it is an encompassing concept that mainly refers to one or a mix of sectional interests, class interests, bureaucratic interests, and any individually idiosyncratic interests of central decision-makers.[39] The conceptualization of subnational interest is largely derived from liberal and Marxist paradigms (including

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[35] W. David Clinton, "The National Interest: Normative Foundations," 497.

[36] Ibid., 516; Thomas I. Cook and Malcolm Moos, "The American Idea of International Interest," *The American Political Science Review* 47, no. 1 (1953): 44; Mel Gurtov, *Global Politics in the Human Interest*, 5th ed. (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2007); Jean-Marc Coicaud and Nicholas J. Wheeler, *National Interest and International Solidarity: Particular and Universal Ethics in International Life* (New York: United Nations University Press, 2008); John H. Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 2, no. 2 (1950): 157-80.

[37] Burchill Scott, *The National Interest in International Relations Theory*, 152-84.

[38] Interestingly, classical realists like Morgenthau also highlight this key principle. See Hans J. Morgenthau, *In Defense of the National Interest: A Critical Examination of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Knopf, 1951).

[39] For example, see Peter Trubowitz, *Defining the National Interest: Conflict and Change in American Foreign Policy* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, eds., *International Relations*, 150-60.

instrumental Marxism and structural Marxism). Both paradigms noted above relegate the state to an epiphenomenon: considering the state either simply as a political space contested by pluralistic interest groups or individuals, or purely as an instrument serving ruling capitalist class interests. Policy is produced from bottom-up accordingly.[40] The national interest, along this line of reasoning, is either an aggregation of private interests, or a manifestation of ruling class interests.[41] In so doing, the term of national interest risks becoming a hypocritical rhetoric without any "national" substance.

The hypothetical existence of subnational interests and its impact on policy-making has been validated empirically. Proponents and representatives of various kinds of subnational interests have been shown to influence central decision-makers through a set of formal and informal channels.[42] Bureaucratic politics—determined by the bureaucratic majority or minority that has power over "resources and the formal position in the bureaucracy"—has also been demonstrated to play an important role in shaping policy outcomes.[43] However, despite the common acknowledgement of the existence and influence of subnational interests in the policy-making, a reduction of the national interest into a set of subnational interests is not necessarily warranted.[44] After all, national interests are logically more than the sum of subnational interests and the state is more than the sum of groups and individuals. More importantly, subnational interests should not detract from the leading role that central decision-makers play in determining the formulation and implementation of *national* interests. Therefore, subnational interests exist but under the shadow of national interests.

The aforementioned review demonstrates that the conceptualization of national interest

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[40] A full comparative study among liberalism, Marxism and Statist model on this matter see, Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investment and US Foreign Policy*, 20-30; Beard, *The Open Door at Home: A Trial Philosophy of National Interest*, 159-78.

[41] Isaac D. Balbus, "The Concept of Interest in Pluralist and Marxian Analysis," *Politics & Society* 1, no. 2 (1971): 151-77.

[42] For example, see John Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007); Thomas R. Dye, *Who Is Running America?* 8th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2014); Tony Smith, *Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

[43] Juliet Kaarbo, "Power Politics in Foreign Policy: The Influence of Bureaucratic Minorities," *European Journal of International Relations* 4, no. 1 (1998): 67-97.

[44] Hans J. Morgenthau, "The Problem of the National Interest," in *The Decline of Democratic Politics*, ed. Hans J. Morgenthau (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 94-7.

is partly contextual. As a result, the effort to develop an all-encompassing and all-embracing definition of national interest is fruitless. The definition of national interest in this sense does not require a consensus, but should be agreed to by many. Moreover, the definition should not be completely subjective. In so doing, it is important to stress a clear separation of national from subnational and human interests by utilizing the statist model,[45] and specify key forms and levels of national interest in accordance with an analytically eclectic approach. This understanding of national interest is closely followed through this thesis in the discussion of soft power.

Soft power: "The logic of consequence" versus "the logic of appropriateness"

Given that soft power has been hypothesized as a means or instrument to realize national interests associated with the promotion of material utility and ideational values, it gives greater weight to the logic of consequence than to the logic of appropriateness. According to the logic of consequence, decisions are made in anticipation of returns from alternatives. This form of logic involves means-end rational patterns of action. In contrast, the logic of appropriateness involves obligational actions made on the basis of rule-based procedures and rule-bounded relations. This logic is characterized by normatively appropriate behavior.[46]

The logic of consequence significantly matters in that the effectiveness of exerting soft power is contextually dependent. The utility of soft power as a means or instrument in comparison to the alternative of hard power used to achieve national interests varies according to different scopes and domains.[47] In some cases, such as promoting democracy, human rights or open markets, soft power has proved more cost-effective than the "carrots and sticks" approach of hard power.[48] Yet, when serious external

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[45] Xueliang Ding, *Zhongguo De Ruanshili Yu Zhoubian Guojia [China's Soft Power in Asia: Projection and Profile]* (Beijing: Oriental Press, 2014), 39-40.

[46] A detailed analysis of two logics see James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 943-69; *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York and London: The Free Press, 1989), 21-38; "Institutional Perspectives on Political Institutions," *Governance* 9, no. 3 (1996): 247-64.

[47] Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 15-8.

[48] Lampton, *The Three Faces of Chinese Power*, 119.

threats are faced by the state, the exercise of soft power may not be effective. As a result, one of the biggest challenges for central-decision makers is how to apply contextual intelligence to make good choice when combining soft and hard power. That is, how to develop the diagnostic skills of leaders to help them create smart strategies that meet the demands of different conditions.

The logic of consequence can also be seen to be more relevant than the logic of appropriateness in reference to soft power by the fact that soft power is neither good nor appropriate *per se* under all circumstances.[49] Nye emphasizes that soft power is a descriptive rather than normative concept. Akin to other forms of power, soft power can be exerted for good or nefarious purposes, and for positive-sum or zero-sum interactions.[50] Nye also highlights that soft power is neither always better than hard power, nor is it necessarily better to "twist minds than to twist arms".[51] Simply put, soft power can "kiss or kill", and therefore, the appropriateness of soft power is conditional.

While the logic of consequence is important in wielding soft power to achieve national interests, this logic does not mean that the logic of appropriateness is insignificant under some circumstances. As soft power can emerge passively from outsider's attraction to a country's culture, values, political and social systems,[52] the logic of appropriateness plays a key role in determining which soft power resources are admired and emulated. The more "universal" culture, values and systems are, the more appropriate they are for others and the more attractive they are likely to be. The legitimate and moral premium placed upon the form and substance of foreign policy adds further appropriateness to soft power in comparison to hard power. As one US scholar states, "hard power threatens; soft power seduces. Hard power dissuades; soft power persuades".[53] Despite

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[49] One interviewee, Wang Yiwei, argues that the concept of "soft power" is inextricably linked to the belief in "god" in the Western context. It implies that the production of soft power is only at the hands of morally good men. This argument, as elaborated above, is problematic. Interview with Wang Yiwei, Professor in Renmin University, Beijing, April 12, 2015.

[50] Nye, *The Future of Power*, 81, 90.

[51] *The Powers to Lead*, 43.

[52] Breslin, "The Soft Notion of China's 'Soft Power'," 8-9.

[53] Matthew Fraser, *Weapons of Mass Distraction: American Empire and Soft Power* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003), 10.

legitimacy and morality being contested in some contexts, the logic of appropriateness in the making of foreign policy has increased as a result of rising concerns with legitimacy and morality. In turn, this has popularized soft power and increased its practice globally.[54]

The logic of appropriateness is also more or less consistent with soft power's pursuit of "milieu goals" rather than "possession goals".[55] Milieu goals aim to shape favorable environments beyond national borders without the exclusion of other countries, and include efforts such as promoting peace, enacting international law or establishing international institutions. In contrast, possession goals are by and large exclusive national goals and include things such as seeking a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, taking a stretch of territory, or securing a tariff preference. Constrained by the limited supply of values in the international arena, successful achievement of these possession goals rests heavily on the capability of a country to contend with other countries.[56] When the exercise of soft power seeks to achieve human interests in the form of milieu goals, the logic of appropriateness looms large.

The brief analysis above regarding the logic of consequence and the logic of appropriateness shows that both logics are closely connected to the conceptualization and operationalization of soft power, although they play different roles in different conditions. For example, the logic of consequence has more to say on the use of soft power for the sake of possession goals, while the logic of appropriateness may play a more important role in wielding soft power to achieve milieu goals. However, the dominant concern of national interests lends more credibility to the logic of consequence than the logic of appropriateness in the conceptualization of soft power and its political application. The logic of consequence looms large also because the appropriateness of soft power as an embodiment of human interests is contextually

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[54] For example, see Hall and Smith, "The Struggle for Soft Power in Asia: Public Diplomacy and Regional Competition," 10-12.

[55] Nye, *The Future of Power*, 16.

[56] Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1962), 73-4.

dependent.

Human interests, subnational interests and soft power

The major concern of national interests in the conceptualization and operationalization of soft power by no means dismisses the potential role played by human interests, and the involvement of subnational interests. Given soft power is manifestly linked to the changing architecture of international politics, which is located somewhere between an unadulterated state-centric system and a full-blown world community, [57] the involvement of human interests and subnational interests in the conceptualization of soft power and its political operationalization merits attention.

The potential usefulness and effectiveness of utilizing soft power resources to maintain the so-called long peace in a (liberal) world order adds relevance to the concern of human interests.[58] Long-term maintenance of peace is a key component of human interests. The involvement of human interests in the exercise of soft power is particularly relevant in terms of both "positive" and "negative" peace. Whereas positive peace is intimately connected with "democratic peace" on a common ground of social justice, negative peace involves the control and reduction of the overt use of violence.[59] The global expansion of prevailing liberal culture and values—a primary resource of soft power—may contribute to the building of "democratic peace" and further strengthen the (liberal) world order. Further, the legitimacy and morality of foreign policies in the eye of beholders – another crucial resource of soft power—is likely to reduce or even avoid interstate clashes and violence if commonly practiced. Put another way, the legitimate and moral concern of foreign policy may significantly boost negative peace around the world in the first place by "beating the swords into ploughshares". The milieu goals achieved through the exercise of soft power may underlie both positive and negative peace.

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[57] J. Martin Rochester, "The 'National Interest' and Contemporary World Politics," *The Review of Politics* 40, no. 1 (1978): 94.

[58] For example, see Timo Kivimäki, *The Long Peace of East Asia* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

[59] Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 183.

Human interests should be further considered because the US government has played a significant role in promoting human interests around the world. As a superpower with tremendous soft power resources, America has promoted for a long time the universally progressive and forward-looking values such as liberty, equality and justice in accordance with the economic and political dimension of human interests.[60] In so doing, the American national interest is supposed to be compatible with even equivalent to the human interest. What is good for America is good for the world.[61] Some argued that "the best tradition of Americans" is seen as the "sensitivity and concern" with which they address the needs of people all around the world, for which they are "prepared to bear many burdens and make many sacrifices".[62] Some even assert that it is this selflessness that makes America exceptional, and the American national interest is not synonymous with American *national* interests.[63] Despite the evaluation of America's role and impact on the promotion of human interests being potentially inflated, American policymakers' continuous concern with human interests to some extent reinforces American hegemonism or leadership. This hegemonism or leadership is critically analyzed in this thesis.

Although human interests indeed involve in the conceptualization and operationalization of soft power as noted above, the nexus between soft power and human interests is neither consistent nor permanent. The state-centric concern of soft power and its lack of normative dictates have complicated its relationship with human interests. Simply put, states generally embark on soft power campaigns to not only proclaim universal moral values, but also to advance material utility, promote preferred national values, and shape favorable national images, now and in the future. Universal

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[60] Condoleezza Rice, "Rethinking the National Interest: American Realism for a New World," *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 4 (2008): 2-14, 16-26; William Kristol and Robert Kagan, eds., *Present Dangers: Crisis and Opportunity in American Foreign and Defense Policy* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2000); Franz Schurmann, *The Logic of World Power* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974); Frank Tannenbaum, "The American Tradition in Foreign Relations," *Foreign Affairs* 30, no. 1 (1951): 31-50; Samuel P. Huntington, "The Longly Superpower," *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 2 (1999): 38.

[61] Edward Rhodes et al., "American Grand Strategy: The Imperial Logic of Bush's Liberal Agenda," *Policy* 19, no. 4 (2003): 34.

[62] Karl von Vorys, *American National Interest: Virtue and Power in Foreign Policy* (New York and London: Praeger, 1990), 19-20.

[63] Hughes, "On the Causes of Our Discontents," 666.

liberal values are counted as primary sources of *national* soft power, rather than as universal soft power that extends beyond borders. Individual and societal sources of soft power are also summed up as national soft power sources, like eggs assembled in a basket. The state-centric mode of thought on soft power is further supported by studies, showing that academic and political elites tend to ask similar questions: what soft power resources a country possesses, what exactly are the state's relative advantages and disadvantages compared with its competitors, and how can states outsource soft power rather than bring in external soft power resources. Above all, despite the important overlap between human interest and soft power, the influence of human interest for the conceptualization and operationalization of soft power remain constrained by the dominant role of the nation state and the guiding force of national interests.

The involvement of subnational interests is also limited by the state-centric mode of thought on the national interest, despite recognition of the role these subnational interests play in the policy-making of soft power and its implementation.

On one hand, the involvement of subnational interests matter in soft power policy-making and implementation.[64] This operation of subnational interests is partly reflective of bureaucratic politics. For example, the Chinese government's policy to promote "cultural" soft power was significantly influenced by the Ministry of Culture (MOC), who successfully proposed the inclusion of soft power into the 17th CCP Congress Report.[65] Furthermore, several central parts of bureaucratic apparatus (such as CPD, MOC, MOE, and SCIO) have played an increasingly important role in the global implementation of Chinese soft power initiative. Their role and influence in the soft power policy-making and operation will be further examined in Chapter 4 and 6.

On the other hand, the consideration of subnational interests is subject to, rather than prevails over, the national interests defined by central decision-makers. After all, soft power competition mainly takes place between states. Despite subnational actors

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[64] For example, see Utpal Vyas, *Soft Power in Japan-China Relations: State, Sub-State and Non-State Relations*.
[65] Glaser and Murph, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics," 25.

capable of cultivating soft power on their own, and even able to contend with states for the credibility and reputation of soft power as is hypothesized in this thesis, they play a marginal part in the global soft power campaigns dominated by states. If non-state actors fail to clarify the link between their soft power and national interests, their soft power campaigns are unlikely to become national agendas raised and supported by central decision-makers. It is this state-centric concern of soft power that motivated American scholars, officials and policy pundits (including Nye) to call for the American government to further its engagement in the global soft power campaigns by increasing funding for public diplomacy, [66] even though American non-state actors had been exercising soft power globally for a long time. Ironically, the involvement of subnational interests matter only when soft power becomes a national agenda on the part of central decision-makers.

Examination of the potential connection between soft power and national, human and subnational interests clearly demonstrates that soft power and national interests are intertwined epistemologically and methodologically. More importantly, this examination sets a theoretically strong foundation for proposing the first hypothesis that soft power mainly serves the national interest in comparison to human and subnational interests. As nation states continue to play a dominant role in the changing contours of international politics, the national soft power agenda has become a key concern of central decision-makers, who are supposed to wield soft power to achieve perceived national interests. The statist concern of national interests therefore outweighs that of human and subnational interests in the conceptualization and operationalization of soft power, and greater attention is afforded to the logic of consequence than to the logic of appropriateness accordingly. Furthermore, the clarification of national interests in forms and levels according to analytical eclecticism throws the role of soft power in the policy-making into sharp relief. How soft power serves the forms and levels of national interest thus logically dominates soft power study in general and the Chinese case study

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[66] Joseph S. Nye, "Squandering the U.S. 'Soft Power' Edge," *International Educator* 16, no. 1 (2007): 4-6; Cynthia P. Schneider, "Cultural Diplomacy: Hard to Define, but You'd Know It If You Saw It," *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 13, no. 1 (2006): 201; Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy, "Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy" (Washington DC: US Department of State, 2005).

in particular.

The International Operation of Soft Power

As soft power is closely bound up with national interests, decision-makers presuppose to project soft power internationally rather than domestically. The international operation of soft power is supposed to apply to the great and middle powers in general and the US in particular. As the concept of soft power was first introduced and further developed in the US, its political implications in the US context should be the analytical starting point to delve into the international operation of soft power. The following examination of Nye's account of soft power since the 1980s justifies the international orientation of American soft power in line with his focus on the maintenance of American global leadership. This is clearly displayed in his works including *Bound to Lead*, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, and "Recovering American leadership".

Nye proposed the idea of soft power in the second half of 1980s as a response to supposed "American declinism". During this decade, soaring fiscal and trade deficit caused by the Reagan administration and the seeming competitive and financial threat from Japan had resulted in a sense of American declinism.[67] This triggered widespread anxiety and concern that the nation was "overstretch" and "overcommitted" globally, causing prominent observers to question America's ability to continue to provide leadership. More than any other text, Paul Kennedy's book *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* captured this mood of introspective anxiety and fear at this time.[68]

Nye's arguments had a significant impact because they were at odds with what was rapidly becoming conventional wisdom at the time. In direct contrast to the so-called American decline thesis, Nye argued that this decline was overstated and a "normal"

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[67] Samuel P. Huntington, "The U.S.: Decline or Renewal?" *Foreign Affairs* 67, no. 2 (1988): 76-96.
[68] Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988).

part of international change. That is, the period after WWII was a historical aberration and American hard power, its economic and military preeminence in particular, was in an inevitable relative decline as other countries (such as Western European countries and Japan) recovered from the war.[69] Nye criticized "declinists" overlooking the "second face" of American power, which he initially called "co-optive power",[70] before settling on the more popular term—soft power. In this regard, American had major advantages and strengths compared to other states—and potential rivals—such as the Soviet Union, China, Japan and even the countries of Western Europe.[71]

Despite the United States being unable to maintain the position it enjoyed in 1950s, the exercise of both hard and soft power has continued to secure its global preponderance right up until the end of Cold War.[72] Nye suggested Americans should not undervalue the strength of the US, and cautioned against the recipe of entrenchment that was advocated to avert the ill-founded American decline.[73] America will inevitably lead if Americans respond appropriately to the transformation of power and international politics, and do not develop self-defeating polices. Nye's implication was clear: as globalization increases and information revolution advances, power becomes less tangible, less coercive and less fungible. As a result, soft power is the right policy for the US.[74]

The end of the Cold War, however, dramatically changed the tenor of the debate. The assertions of an American decline were replaced by talk of an American "unipolar moment"[75] and a "unipolar age".[76] The events of 9/11 attacks reinforced this trend and

[69] Nye, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, 69-112.
[70] Ibid., 31.
[71] Ibid., 115-70.
[72] *Is the American Century Over?* (Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 2015); Susan Strange, "The Persistent Myth of Lost Hegemony," *International Organization* 41, no. 4 (1987): 551-74; Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wolhlforth, "The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers in the Twenty-First Century: China's Rise and the Fate of America's Global Position," *International Security* 40, no. 3 (2015/16): 7-53.
[73] Joseph S. Nye, "Understanding U. S. Strength," *Foreign Policy*, no. 72 (1988): 105-6.
[74] "The Changing Nature of World Power," *Political Science Quarterly* 105, no. 2 (1990): 177-92.
[75] Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (1990): 23-33.
[76] G. John Ikenberry, "Illusions of Empire: Defining the New American Order," ibid.83, no. 2 (2004): 144-54; "Liberalism and Empire: Logics of Order in the American Unipolar Age," *Review of International Studies* 30, no. 4 (2004): 609-30; William C. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World," in *America's Strategic Choices* ed. Michael Brown, et al. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), 305, 309.

the recourse to hard rather than soft power with a "Bush doctrine" characterized by "preventive war", "coercive democratization", and "unilateralist style".[77] The political desire to seek revenge and remold the world after the 9/11 attacks was in direct opposition to the policy portfolios described as "soft". Therefore, military coercion and economic payment—hard power—were prioritized by the Bush administration to serve its key foreign policy agendas, including the global campaign of "War on Terror" (WOT), non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and coercive democratization.[78] Not until President Obama took power, were soft power instruments re-injected back into American foreign policy and re-instated as a serious concern in policy circles.[79]

Promoting democracy and liberty globally is a key component of American soft power, and these are part and parcel of American foreign policy tradition.[80] Although Nye called for the Americans to redefine American national interests under the shadow of Bush doctrine, he continued to reaffirm the promotion of liberal democratic values abroad as a key part of American national interests.[81] Therefore, the major differences between Nye's liberal democratic doctrine and Bush's neoconservative doctrine do not lie in whether or not America should promote democracy globally, but the ways of its realization.[82] Arguably, soft power has a crucial role to play in this regard, as it pays more attention to the legitimacy and morality of foreign policy than hard power usually does. One of the most attractive soft power policy tools, seen often as legitimate and moral, is multilateral diplomacy supportive of collaboration and coordination along with transnational institutions. This is a stark contrast to the heavy-handed unilateral policies

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[77] Joseph S. Nye, "Obama's Foreign Policy Must Combine Hard and Soft Power," *The Huffington Post*, December 3, 2008.

[78] "Why 'Soft Power' Matters in Fighting Terrorism," *Washington Post*, March 30, 2004; "Smart Power and the "War on Terror"," *Asia-Pacific Review* 15, no. 1 (2008): 1-8; Giulio M. Gallarotti, "Smart Power: Definitions, Importance, and Effectiveness," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 38, no. 3 (2015): 256-73.

[79] Shaomin Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, 30-36.

[80] Jonathan Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine: Power, Nationalism, and Democracy Promotion in U.S. Strategy," *International Security* 29, no. 4 (2005): 113; Paul D. Miller, "American Grand Strategy and the Democratic Peace," *Survival* 54, no. 2 (2012): 49-76; Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (New York: Knopf, 2001).

[81] Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone*, 131-71.

[82] *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 141.

often achieved with hard power tools.[83] Multilateralism calls for US to accentuate "power with" rather than "power over" other players. This is particularly true today in the age of complex interdependence, when the nature, sources and fungibility of power has been transformed in favor of soft power. In short, American leadership does not only depend on "strong defense" and hard power but also on "strong sharing" with others and soft power.[84]

In America, the operation of soft power is internationally oriented as it aims to maintain its global leadership. Even when the Bush administration downplayed the role of soft power, its international orientation has always been highly valued by other states and non-state actors. State leaders of great and middle powers in particular, tend to exercise soft power internationally rather than domestically in an attempt to achieve respective national interests in a cost-efficient way. This is why the idea of soft power gained such currency in the post-Cold War era.

For great powers (such as the US, China and Russia), soft power is commonly figured into their foreign policy portfolios as a pillar of their smart power strategies. Soft power in this sense does not necessarily contradict hard power. Provided great powers possess relatively abundant soft power resources at their disposal, turning relevant resources into soft power and achieving national interests without resort to hard power should be possible. Soft power assuredly counts if great powers have both soft power resources and the desire to use them. Even though soft power is not favored by a great power in a given scope or domain (such as national security), it does not necessarily deny its significant role in other fields. Even if soft power fails to become a policy alternative to the hard power for a great power as American foreign policies under the Bush administration showed, it may be significantly valued in the making of foreign policies by other great powers at the same time. The rising cost of wielding hard power and the implacable logic of hard balance of power further warrant the application of soft power

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[83] Ibid., 60-68; Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008).
[84] Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 134.

from the perspective of great powers in a period of enduring peace.[85]

It has been increasingly costly to wield hard power given the diffusion and transition of power has been gaining momentum as globalization and the information revolution advances. As America's failure to rebuild Afghanistan and Iraq after its seeming military victory has shown, even the world's only superpower cannot afford to employ hard power alone, let alone for other great powers. As the world is transforming from a period of old-fashioned brute power into an age of complex interdependence, the added emphasis on soft power is natural in the 21st century.

As a result, it is not surprising that soft power has become increasingly pronounced since the hard balance of power will continue to restrain the strategic behavior of great powers in a period of enduring peace. Relentless use of hard power to gain strategic interests may arguably trigger security dilemma, and be balanced by other great powers sooner or later.[86] Misperceptions and the lack of shared identity may even worsen security dilemma among great powers in this regard.[87] China's recent "assertive" foreign and security policies in the Asia-Pacific region and the corresponding American "pivot" or "rebalance" to Asia illustrates this conventional wisdom centering on the hard balance of power.[88] However, observers also made us believe that the great power tragedy of war was prevented largely because of the workings of nuclear deterrent: strong evidence showed that nuclear weapons tend to transfer the intensity of disputes toward the lower end of the conflict scale.[89] Apart from the nuclear deterrence, there are other structural, institutional and psychological factors (such as the relatively stable power structure, the peacekeeping efforts by UN, and the revival of moralism and

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[85] John Lewis Gaddis, "The Long Peace: Elements of Stability in the Postwar International System," *International Security* 10, no. 4 (1986): 99-142.

[86] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.

[87] Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976); David L. Rousseau and Rocio Garcia-Retamero, "Identity, Power, and Threat Perception: A Cross-National Experimental Study," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51, no. 5 (2007): 744-71.

[88] Tomohiko Satake and Yusuke Ishihara, "America's Rebalance to Asia and Its Implications for Japan-US-Australia Security Cooperation," *Asia-Pacific Review* 19, no. 2 (2012): 8-9; Dong Wang and Chengzhi Yin, "Mainland China Debates U.S. Pivot/Rebalancing to Asia," *Issues & Studies* 50, no. 3 (2014): 57-101; David Shambaugh, "Assessing the US 'Pivot' to Asia," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 7, no. 2 (2013): 18.

[89] Robert Rauchhaus, "Evaluating the Nuclear Peace Hypothesis: A Quantitative Approach," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 2 (2009): 271.

legalism) that have significantly decreased violence and increased the chance of peace around the world after the WWII.[90] Above all, when the logic of the hard balance of power remains deeply entrenched in an era of the long peace, great powers are likely to draw on soft power to promote material gains and ideational values, though the possibility of soft balance is not bracketed.[91]

Not only does soft power capture the attention of great powers, but it also gains currency among the middle powers. Middle powers, lack of conceptual clarity notwithstanding,[92] differ from small and great powers primarily through their "strong penchant for multilateralism" to gain influence regionally or internationally.[93] Considering the contemporary international policy-making process as a "game of skill" rather than simply as a "game of power", middle powers try to wield soft power to achieve a variety of regional and/or global issue-agendas.[94] For example, soft power is often exerted by middle powers to trigger initiatives, facilitate collaborative and coalitional activity for specific economic, political or security agendas, even to support or underwrite the construction of multilateral institutions.[95] There are also good examples of middle powers' demonstration of soft power in regards to their willingness to compromise in international disputes and their campaign for "good international citizenship".[96] Above all, soft power is compatible with the political and diplomatic

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[90] Gaddis, "The Long Peace: Elements of Stability in the Postwar International System," 99-142; Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined* (New York: Viking, 2012); John E. Muller, *Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War* (New York: Basic Books, 1989); Bruno Tertrais, "The Demise of Ares: The End of War as We Know It?" *The Washington Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (2012): 7-22; Robert O. Keohane, "Twenty Years of Institutional Liberalism," 125-38.

[91] For example, see John McCormick, *The European Superpower* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Nathalie Tocci, ed. *Who Is a Normative Foreign Policy Actor? The European Union and Its Global Partners* (Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2008); William A. Callahan and Elena Barabantseva, eds., *China Orders the World: Normative Soft Power and Foreign Policy*; Watanabe Yasushi and David L. Macdonald, eds., *Soft Power Superpower: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2008); Greg Simons, "Russian Public Diplomacy in the 21st Century: Structure, Means and Message," *Public Relations Review* 40, no. 3 (2014): 440-9; Chaka Ferguson, "Soft Power as the New Norm: How the Chinese-Russian Strategic Partnership (Soft) Balances American Hegemony in an Era of Unipolarity" (PhD diss., Florida International University, 2011).

[92] Allan Patience, "Imagining Middle Powers," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 68, no. 2 (2013): 210-24.

[93] Mark Beeson, "Can Australia Save the World? The Limits and Possibilities of Middle Power Diplomacy," ibid.65, no. 5 (2011): 564.

[94] Mark Beeson and Richard Higgott, "The Changing Architecture of Politics in the Asia-Pacific: Australia's Middle Power Moment?," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 14, no. 2 (2014): 215-37.

[95] Andrew Fenton Cooper, Richard Higgott, and Kim Richard Nossal, *Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1993).

[96] Evan H. Potter, *Branding Canada: Projecting Canada's Soft Power through Public Diplomacy* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010); Daya Kishan Thussu, *Communicating India's Soft Power: Buddha to Bollywood* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2013); Sook Jong Lee, "South Korea as New Middle Power: Seeking

behaviors of middle powers. It is particularly true when the role of leadership—defined in technical and entrepreneurial terms along with the intensification of globalization following the end of Cold War—has loomed large in the process of multilateral policy-making and "institutional bargaining".[97]

As both great and middle powers attached great significance to the international operation of soft power, soft power competition between them has become increasingly pronounced. As former Chinese Foreign Minister Li described, "soft power competition was gaining momentum".[98] Great powers, like China and the US, are competing for soft power within a series of scopes and domains. And this has been the focus of many studies from both Chinese and American analysts and pundits. Many other studies have also examined the balance of soft power between great powers and groups of middle powers. China, Japan, South Korea and India are major competitors riding the wave of current soft power campaigns in Asia.[99]

In their attempts to achieve international influence in the long period of peace, a series of states, especially the great and middle powers, have stressed the growing importance of soft power. Great powers started to utilize soft power to achieve national interests in the international arena because they possessed relatively abundant soft power resources and being constrained by the implacable logic of hard balance of power. For America, the revival of soft power was closely linked to its strategic concern in maintaining American hegemony or leadership. In China, soft power was framed to serve the country's professed peaceful rise without triggering US-led containment. Middle powers also started to use soft power in the process of multilateral policy-making and

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Complex Diplomacy" (Seoul: EAI, 2012), 3-4; Benjamin Reilly, "Australia as a Southern Hemisphere 'Soft Power'," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 69, no. 3 (2015): 253-65.

[97] Oran R. Young, "The Politics of International Regime Formation: Managing Natural Resources and the Environment," *International Organization* 43, no. 03 (1989): 349-75.

[98] Zhaoxing Li, "2006 Nian Guoji Xingshi He Zhongguo Waijiao Gongzuo [The International Situation and China's Diplomatic Work in 2006]," *Qiushi [Seeking Truth]*, no. 1 (2007): 9.

[99] Jing Sun, *Japan and China as Charm Rivals: Soft Power in Regional Diplomacy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012); Hall and Smith, "The Struggle for Soft Power in Asia: Public Diplomacy and Regional Competition," 1-18; Ian Hall, "India's New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power and the Limits of Government Action," *Asian Survey* 52, no. 6 (2012): 1089-110; Jehangir Pocha, "The Rising 'Soft Power' of India and China," *New Perspectives Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (2003): 5-13; Hyunseok Kang, "Contemporary Cultural Diplomacy in South Korea: Explicit and Implicit Approaches," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 21, no. 4 (2015): 433-47.

institutional bargaining, because it was inherently compatible with their *modus operandi* which seeks to "punch above their weight" in the expectation of making the world better.

The strategic application of soft power on the part of the great and middles powers, therefore, raises a technical question: who should lead the soft power campaign? Although nation states remain dominant players in the international arena, and soft power becomes a national concern according to the dictate of national interests defined by central decision-makers, it does not necessarily follow that the state should be the driving force behind a county's soft power campaigns, and nor that soft power campaigns led by the state are necessarily effective. To the contrary, analysts believe that effective soft power campaigns are best driven tactically by non-state actors while the state plays a supporting role in this regard.

Non-State Actors: The Principal Drivers of National Soft Power Campaigns

There are two major reasons why non-state actors rather than the state should tactically act as the principal drivers of national soft power campaigns. The first reason is that the state can "own" hard resources, but the ownership of soft resources is generally diffused. Another one is that soft power is "in the eye of beholder" as it rests more than hard power on the existence of willing "interpreters" and "receivers".[100] The diffuse ownership of soft resources and the heavy reliance of soft power on the "context"—who relates to whom and under what circumstances—justify the dominant role of non-state actors in driving soft power campaigns.

The diffuse nature of soft resources and its role played in the production of soft power, contrasts to that of hard resources. Although non-state actors generally "pale in comparison" with states in terms of hard power, their soft powers have successfully captured considerable attention so far. The emphasis placed on the soft power of

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[100] Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 16.

non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is particularly relevant in this chapter.[101] The rising soft power of non-state actors is mainly derived from the wide recognition from their target audiences of their independence, creativity and dedication for promoting "global consciousness".[102] The more dynamic civil societies are, the more likely they are to cultivate and wield non-state actors' soft power. Nye states that American soft power is mostly a by-product of American civil society rather than of deliberate government action.[103] Put another way, American soft power has been produced by Hollywood, Harvard, Microsoft, and Michael Jordan. Nye even concludes that "the absence of policies of control can itself be a source of attraction".[104] Nye's line of reasoning suggests it is critical for the full talents of civil society to be unleashed to benefit a country's soft power.[105]

Context is also important in determining the effectiveness of soft power. Unlike hard power, soft power is highly dependent on a liberal context: the presence of a "marketplace of ideas" where different actors notionally compete with each other for credibility and reputation. The emergence of global "network communication" marked with connectivity, interactivity and cultural diversity, has further motivated non-state actors to actively wield soft power and even create their own.[106] The liberal context of global network communication enables non-state actors to capitalize on soft power to reinforce or obstruct governmental efforts to achieve their desired outcomes.[107] Influential NGOs can even wield soft power to mobilize their supporters to press governments and business leaders to change policy directly or indirectly through

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[101] Katsuji Imata and Kaori Kuroda, "Soft Power of NGOs: Growing Influence beyond National Boundaries," in *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*, 262-78; Joseph S. Nye, "The Rising Power of NGOs," accesssed November 1, 2016.
https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/the-rising-power-of-ngo-s?barrier=true.
[102] *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 90; Manuel Castells, "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616(2008): 84-5; John Boli and George M. Thomas, "World Culture in the World Polity: A Century of International Non-Governmental Organization," *American Sociological Review* 62, no. 2 (1997): 171-90.
[103] Nye, *Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization*, 92.
[104] *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 17.
[105] "What China and Russia Don't Get About Soft Power."
[106] R. S. Zaharna, "The Soft Power Differential: Network Communication and Mass Communication in Public Diplomacy," *The Hague journal of diplomacy* 2, no. 3 (2007): 213-28.
[107] Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone*, 72-6.

"naming and shaming" campaigns, albeit with inconsistent results globally. [108] Greenpeace, Amnesty International, Oxfam, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the Human Rights Watch are influential soft power players and have successfully caught the global attention. The 1997 Ottawa Treaty (The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention) was largely attributed to a globally massive campaigns by many like-mined NGOs. [109] In short, non-state actors can take the advantage of the liberal context of global communication networks to create and utilize their soft power based on credibility and reputation.

For the state to wield soft power, and adapt to the emerging liberal context of global communication networks, public diplomacy is required. As a result, public diplomacy today accords much attention to "the public" in stark contrast to the traditional state-centric diplomacy. [110] Public diplomacy, therefore, is not only governmental diplomacy but also the diplomacy of the public who aim to project their preferred values and ideas to the international target populations. [111] Public diplomacy is also not so much a traditional "information-centered" operation as a dynamic "relations-centered" operation including message exchange, willing acceptance of ideas, relationship-building, and network creation advocated by non-state actors. [112] Vyas believes this is the most defining aspect of soft power from the perspective of liberalism. [113]

The combination of diffusion of soft resources and the emerging liberal context of global communication networks has motivated states to allow non-states actors (NGOs in particular) to take the tactical lead in driving national soft power campaigns through the utilization of public diplomacy. [114] Meanwhile, states continue to control soft power

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[108] *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 90-97.

[109] Zaharna, "The Soft Power Differential: Network Communication and Mass Communication in Public Diplomacy," 224-5.

[110] Melissen, "The New Public Diplomacy: Between Theory and Practice," in *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, 5.

[111] Castells, "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance," 91.

[112] Zaharna, "The Soft Power Differential: Network Communication and Mass Communication in Public Diplomacy," 221-2.

[113] Vyas, *Soft Power in Japan-China Relations: State, Sub-State and Non-State Relations*.

[114] Hayden, *The Rhetoric of Soft Power: Public Diplomacy in Global Contexts*, 59, 114; Cynthia Schneider, "Culture

planning and strategizing at the highest level in accordance with the guiding force of national interests.[115] However, the boundary between tactical operation and strategic design is not always sharp in regard to soft power campaigns enacted through public diplomacy.

State-led soft power campaigns involving public diplomacy are not unusual in practice in many political regimes. Old policy doctrines of mass communication continue to dominate the mindsets of various policy-makers in many countries. These doctrines give privilege to the state to mobilize available national resources to attract target audiences, communicate with these audiences, shape a good international image, and expand political influence.[116] Public diplomacy such as international broadcasting, high-culture exchanges and national branding is highly susceptible to state intervention in this regard. American public diplomacy during the Cold War through the US Information Agency (USIA) remains a classic example.[117] Other examples are the Japanese and Korean government's active engagement in the public diplomacy through "Cool Japan" and "Korean Wave" (*Hallyu*) campaigns respectively.[118] Recent heavy investment in public diplomacy by the Indian government to improve its reputation in the "near abroad" region by using new media is also an exemplary case.[119] Even small countries like Singapore are adept in utilizing public diplomacy through the propagation of "good governance" to virtually enlarge Singapore's international presence.[120]

Despite the finesse and skills of state-led soft power campaigns involving public

Communicates: US Diplomacy That Works," in *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, 147-68; Kazuo Ogoura, "The Limits of Soft Power," *Japan Echo* 33, no. 5 (2006): 60-5.

[115] Carl Botan, "Grand Strategy, Strategy, and Tactics in Public Relations," in *Public Relations II*, 223-48; Vyas, *Soft Power in Japan-China Relations: State, Sub-State and Non-State Relations*.

[116] Joseph S. Nye, "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, no. 1 (2008): 95; R. S. Zaharna, *Battles to Bridges: U.S. Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy after 9/11* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

[117] Nicholas J. Cull, *Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[118] Kukhee Choo, "Nationalizing 'Cool': Japan's Global Promotion of the Content Industry," in *Popular Culture and the State in East and Southeast Asia*, ed. Nissim Otmazgin and Eyal Ben-Ari (New York and Oxon: Routledge, 2011), 85-105; Gunjoo Jang and Won K. Paik, "Korean Wave as Tool for Korea's New Cultural Diplomacy," *Advances in Applied Sociology* 2, no. 3 (2012): 192-206; Geun Lee, "A Soft Power Approach to the 'Korean Wave'," *The Review of Korean Studies* 12, no. 2 (2009): 123-37.

[119] Hall, "India's New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power and the Limits of Government Action."

[120] Alan Chong, "Small State Soft Power Strategies: Virtual Enlargement in the Cases of the Vatican City State and Singapore," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 23, no. 3 (2010): 395-403.

diplomacy, the emergence of global communication networks has complicated the state-centric campaigns in this regard.[121] It is not surprised to see that state-led public diplomacy is subject to dissent from international society in many respects. In general, there are three major limitations to government action in relation to soft power campaigns in the 21st century.

The first major limitation to government action is that the resources and efforts devoted to soft power campaigns though public diplomacy led by the state are not rewarded if the diplomacy is perceived to be inconsistent with the country's actual foreign policy, such as their military actions in particular.[122] For example, the inconsistency between the Indian government's decision to donate a large amount to the US-led UN Democracy Fund for the promotion of democracy globally and this country's unwillingness to become an exporter of democracy is illustrative.[123] The negative impact of inconsistent policies on a country's soft power buildup is also illustrated by China's charm offensive undone by its recent assertive foreign and security policy in the South China Sea. In America, the American military actions guided by the Bush Doctrine undoubtedly undercut this government's global efforts at public diplomacy, as the "free fall" of American popularity in the Bush Administration period clearly showed.[124]

As Nye writes, inconsistence in a country's foreign policies will jeopardize its hard-won soft power, as soft power is essentially "hard to use, easy to lose, and costly to reestablish".[125] Therefore, it seems a reasonable suggestion that non-state actors from civil society should tactically facilitate the implementation of soft power through public

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[121] *Foreign Policy in Global Information Space: Actualizing Soft Power* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), chapter 1 & 2.

[122] Melissen, "The New Public Diplomacy: Between Theory and Practice," 7.

[123] Rohan Mukherjee, "The False Promise of India's Soft Power," *Geopolitics, History, and International Relations* 6, no. 1 (2014): 55; David M. Malone, "Soft Power in Indian Foreign Policy," *Economic & Political Weekly* 66, no. 36 (2011): 35-9.

[124] Joseph S. Nye, "The Decline of America's Soft Power: Why Washington Should Worry," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 3 (2004): 16-20; Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Decline of American Power: The U.S. In a Chaotic World* (New York and London: The New Press, 2004), 26; Andrew Kohut and Bruce Stokes, *America against the World: How We Are Different and Why We Are Disliked* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2007).

[125] Nye, *The Future of Power*, 83.

diplomacy, while the state plays a supporting role. After all, opposition to "what the state does" may extend, but not inevitably equate with, antipathy towards "what the state represents".[126] That is, inconsistent foreign policies carried out by the states may not necessarily damage free dialogue and communication, trust-building, and the construction of global civil society networks if public diplomacy is driven by the non-state players.[127]

The second major limitation to government action is that, the state-led soft power campaigns enacted through public diplomacy are easily subject to the strong criticism of propaganda. While the term "propaganda" often carries negative or pejorative connotations,[128] the conceptualization of public diplomacy as an outgrowth of propaganda still exists.[129] As two lexicographers write, public diplomacy is in essence "a late-twentieth century form of propaganda conducted by diplomats".[130] However, it is generally agreed that public diplomacy in the 21st century differs from propaganda in the pattern of communication: modern public diplomacy is a "two-way street" while propaganda is typical of "one-way" messaging.[131] That is, public diplomacy is seen to be based on the *liberal* mode of persuasion through meaningful dialogue and communication undertaken in the marketplace of ideas,[132] whereas propaganda is generally characterized by half-truths, lying, omission, spin, innuendo, misinformation and loaded messages aimed at arousing an emotional response from a target audience.[133] As a result, Nye concludes that simple propaganda often lacks credibility and is often counterproductive.[134]

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[126] *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 35; Peter J. Katzenstein and Robert O. Keohane, "Anti-Americanisms," *Policy Review*, no. 139 (2006): 26.

[127] Castells, "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance," 78-93.

[128] Jay Black, "Semantics and Ethics of Propaganda," *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 16, no. 2/3 (2001): 121-37.

[129] As public diplomacy is a key instrument to wield soft power, the conceptualization of soft power and its political application seen as an embodiment of propaganda is also applied to that of public diplomacy. See Chong, *Foreign Policy in Global Information Space: Actualizing Soft Power*, 53-8; Suruchi Mazumdar, "Soft Power? China's Media Investments May Not Grow Its Influence," *Media Asia* 40, no. 2 (2013): 99; Eytan Gilboa, "Searching for a Theory of Public Diplomacy," 56.

[130] Berridge G. R. and Alan James, eds., *A Dictionary of Diplomacy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 197.

[131] Melissen, "The New Public Diplomacy: Between Theory and Practice," 18.

[132] Pfau and Wan, "Persuasion: An Intrinsic Function of Public Relations," 101-36.

[133] Eytan Gilboa, "Media Diplomacy: Conceptual Divergence and Applications," *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 3, no. 3 (1998): 58.

[134] Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 107.

Although it is possible to conclude that public diplomacy (including public relations and persuasion campaigns launched by the state) is not unduly propagandistic,[135] the overt politicization of public diplomacy along with the involvement of political power may result in skepticism and criticism from the target audience. Audience skepticism of state-led soft power campaigns enacted through public diplomacy is particularly high in democratic countries, where the political tradition of "liberalism of fear" involving the general distrust of political power is firmly established.[136] In Western countries, public diplomacy facilitated by authoritarian regimes will receive intensive scrutiny and may be dismissed as a threat by the target constituency. Along this line of reasoning, presumably the best way is to advantage non-state actors in civil society to promote public diplomacy overseas as it is, by and large, less centralized and propagandistic, and more trusted and effective.[137]

The third major limitation to government action is that, the state-led soft power campaign may risk being seen by the target audiences as a disguise of cultural imperialism. For example, it is widely believed within the Chinese political and academic circles that American soft power is nothing more than what Mao called "sugar-coated bullets" when warning against the bourgeois and imperialists. Others argue that American soft power is actually a euphemism for cultural imperialism, notwithstanding the heated debate about what this concept might mean.[138] The Japanese government in post WWII cautioned against active promotion of Japanese culture in the neighboring countries because the government was worried that proactive cultural promotion may reignite resentment against its previous cultural imperialist behavior dating back to the era of imperial Japan.[139] In order to resist cultural imperialism and hegemonism, some states (such as China, South Korea, Singapore and

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[135] Black, "Semantics and Ethics of Propaganda," 135.
[136] Judith N. Shklar, *Ordinary Vices* (Cambridge, MA: The Balknap Press of Harvard University, 1984).
[137] Nye, *The Future of Power*, 108-09.
[138] Tanner Mirrlees, "American Soft Power, or, American Cultural Imperialism?," in *The New Imperialists: Ideologies of Empire*, ed. Colin Mooers (Oxford: Oneworld Publication), 199-228.
[139] Nissim Kadosh Otmazgin, "Geopolitics and Soft Power: Japan's Cultural Policy and Cultural Diplomacy in Asia," *Asia-Pacific Review* 19, no. 1 (2012): 37-61.

Malaysia) have been limiting importation of cultural products perceived to pose a potential threat to their own cherished indigenous values and cultures, and restraining the domestic influence of imported cultural products.[140]

Public diplomacy led by non-state actors could also be criticized as diplomacy masquerading as cultural imperialism. There is a strong argument that cultural imperialist projects orchestrated by the state may be served by the NGOs, legally incorporated companies, as well as celebrities such as artists and pop-stars, by default or by design. Fraser observes that Hollywood has been working with the Pentagon since the birth of motion pictures in the early 20th century, and has become a powerful vehicle of US foreign policy, and their alliance with the US government is stronger than ever.[141] There is also considerable evidence revealing the links between Hollywood and the US government agencies such as the State Department and the Department of Commerce.[142] Despite the practice for public diplomacy to be used for cultural imperialistic purposes, analysts agree that non-state actors, by definition, can at least develop arm's-length relations to the state or sub-state body in terms of management and decision-making.[143] Even non-state actors closely connected to the state, their hard-won structural independence from the state, especially in democratic countries, may finally own them a good reputation. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is a global good example in this case as it remains a credible and professional supplier of key global news and views, and continues to play a key role in promoting British soft power as the epitome of public service media, despite its heavy reliance on financing by the British government.[144] Therefore, non-state actors in the democratic countries logically can and should play an independent role in facilitating national soft power among transnational civil societies, rather than simply subordinating themselves to the state and

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[140] Beng Huat Chua, *Structure, Audience and Soft Power in East Asian Pop Culture* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2012).
[141] Fraser, *Weapons of Mass Distraction: American Empire and Soft Power*, chapter 1.
[142] Toby Miller, et al. *Global Hollywood 2*, 2nd ed. (London: British Film Institute, 2004).
[143] Vyas, *Soft Power in Japan-China Relations: State, Sub-State and Non-State Relations*, 6.
[144] David Cameron, *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015* (London: Cabinet Office, 2015), 49; Jeanette Steemers, "Blurred Lines: Public Service Media and the State," in *Global Media and National Policies: The Return of the State*, ed Terry Flew, Petros Losifidis and Jeanette Steemers (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 139-155.

carrying out cultural imperialism explicitly or implicitly.

Above all, this section argues that, tactically, non-state actors may be more effective drivers of national soft power campaigns than the state, which might be better advised to play a supporting role in this vein. That is mainly because the ownership of soft power resources are highly diffused rather than controlled by the state, and the state-led soft power campaigns in the liberal context of global communication networks may suffer intensive scrutiny and criticism. In driving these soft power campaigns, the principal role of non-state actors is not at odds with the state-centric concern of soft power. Put another way, although the strategic planning and policy-making of soft power campaigns according to the national interest guidelines remains the prerogative of central decision-makers, the technical or tactical operation of soft power campaigns is supposed to be driven primarily by non-state actors from civil society.

Scope, Domain and Three Dimensions of Power

Having outlined the causal relationship between national interests and soft power, and having highlighted the international orientation of soft power campaigns and the fact that non-state actors are primary movers of soft power campaigns tactically, this section will examine the last hypothesis. That is, soft power, like power in general, is applied in a specific domain and scope. Therefore, it will explore the scope and domain of power and the potential link between soft power and three-dimensional view of power proposed by Steven Lukes.

Despite heated debate revolving around the concept of power, some consensus has been reached. One area of broad agreement is that power should be contextualized in a specific scope and a domain,[145] the description and analysis of power will verge on

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[145] For example, see David A. Baldwin, *Paradoxes of Power* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989); Harold D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan, *Power and Society: A Framework for Political Inquiry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950); Robert A. Dahl, "The Concept of Power," *Behavior Science* 12, no. 3 (1957): 201-15; *Modern Political Analysis*, 5th ed. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1991); Karl W. Deutsch, *The Analysis of International Relations*, 3rd ed. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1988).

being meaningless otherwise.[146] That is because unlike the use of money as a standardized measurement across economic exchanges, a similar common standard of value for measuring power across political exchanges does not exist.[147] As soft power is a form of power, a specification of its scope (who is involved) and domain (what issue-agenda is involved) is in order. This section will focus on the domain of soft power given its scope has been fully explored.

A major concern of Nye is the domain of soft power in the era of rising global interdependence characterized by a series of non-traditional security challenges and pervasive uncertainty. Traditional methods of military coercion and economic inducement may prove ineffective to grapple with these challenges including global terrorism, climate change, international crime and the spread of infectious disease.[148] The conceptualization and operationalization of soft power (such as agenda-setting, attraction, and preference-shaping through co-option) has been widely promoted and emulated as a result. However, Nye does not see the boundary between hard and soft power as sharp because they are not binary. Both hard and soft power can reinforce or undercut each other, and they are arranged in a continuous spectrum of behaviors according to the resources applied (see Table 2–1).

Table 2–1: Soft and Hard Power

	Hard		Soft	
Spectrum of Behaviors	coercion inducement Command		agenda setting attraction Co-opt	
Most Likely Resources	force sanctions	payments bribes	institutions	values culture policies

Source: Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, p. 8.

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[146] Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, 33.
[147] Stewart R. Clegg, *Frameworks of Power* (London: Sage, 1989), 130-35; Baldwin, *Paradoxes of Power*, 10-44.
[148] Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, chapter 1.

Nye's analytical efforts have advanced understanding of the role of soft and hard power in a variety of issue-agendas. However, it should be noted that issue-agendas are taken for granted in Nye's analytical framework of soft and hard power. That is, soft and hard power tends to be assumed in issue-agendas that are empirically observed and identified. This raises the questions of why some issue-agendas are advantaged and formulated and why others are prevented from surfacing. Also, how are we to account for potential issue-agendas, of which the target audiences are unlikely aware of but are crucial for their so-called "real interests"? These concerns prompted Nye to problematize *a priori* identification of issue-agendas by linking his analytical framework of soft and hard power to Lukes' three-dimensional view of power.[149] Lukes also acknowledged a theoretical lineage in this respect.[150] Nye's soft and hard power thesis, therefore, is based on and enriched by Lukes' influential insights on power. The following section further seeks to explore Lukes' three-dimensional perspectives of power and how they are linked to Nye's analytical framework of soft and hard power.

Lukes' three-dimensional view of power

One-dimensional view of power centers on the decision-making of one alterative choice over another, along with an empirically verified conflict of interests.[151] These conflicting interests are expressed as competing policy references by political participants. The underlying assumption of an observable conflict of interests therefore adds relevance to Lasswell and Kaplan's definition of "decision" as "a policy involving severe sanctions (deprivations)".[152] Power in this sense is involved in the behavior of decision-making, and defined as a successful exercise attempting by one entity to get another entity to do something that they would not otherwise do.[153] Despite intellectual efforts seeking to distinguish the nature of power from other kinds such as force,

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[149] *The Future of Power*, 10-18, 90-94.
[150] Steven Lukes, "Power and the Battle for Hearts and Minds," *Millennium–Journal of International Studies* 33(2005): 485-86.
[151] *Power: A Radical View*(London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1974), chapter 2.
[152] Lasswell and Kaplan, *Power and Society: A Framework for Political Inquiry*, 74.
[153] Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, 12.

authority, influence and manipulation,[154] the approach seeing the latter category as different from power in degree rather than in kind, is also warranted.[155] The pluralist "school" focusing on the one-dimensional view of power tended to conceptualize "power" in a similar way as the latter approach did, and argued that power in whatever forms is central to decision-making.

This one-dimensional view of power was challenged by Bachrach and Baratz, who argue that power actually has two faces. One face is the key issue of decision-making examined by pluralists and is undoubtedly crucial for understanding power. Equally significant is "the second face of power" which is "nondecision-making" over key and potential issues.[156] According to Bachrach and Baratz, a key issue is defined as "a genuine challenge to the resources of power or authority of those who currently dominate the process by which policy outputs in the system are determined".[157] Both status-quo defenders and change-seekers are fully aware of this manifest challenge. A potential issue is defined as "potential" because status-quo defenders may not realize that those who are consistently disadvantaged by the established political system often wish to challenge their preeminence. The challenge in this sense is latent but real, and of course, important. In short, both kinds of issues involve a power struggle underlying observable conflict of interests, and this conflict is embodied in expression of policy preferences and in overt or covert grievances.[158] Therefore, a "nondecision" is "a decision that results in suppressing or thwarting of a latent or manifest challenge to the values or interests of the decision-maker".[159]

There are four major forms of nondecision-making. The most direct and extreme form involves the use of force to prevent demands for change in the established order from accessing the political process. The second direct but less extreme form is to threaten

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[154] Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, *Power and Poverty: Theory and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), chapter 2.
[155] For example, see Dennis H. Wrong, *Power: Its Forms, Bases and Uses* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, 1979).
[156] Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, chapter 3.
[157] Bachrach and Baratz, *Power and Poverty: Theory and Practice*, 47-8.
[158] Ibid., 47-51.
[159] Ibid., 44.

sanction against change-seekers whose policy initiatives involving change may undermine the prevailing allocation of values. The third and indirect form of nondecision-making relies on the "mobilization of bias"[160] as manifested in a set of predominant values, beliefs, rituals and procedures in the political system, in order to quash a threatening demand against vested interests of decision-makers. The last and most indirect form of nondecision-making requires reshaping or strengthening the mobilization of bias in order to block challenges to the prevailing distribution of benefits and privileges.[161]

The strengths and weaknesses of two-dimensional view of power need to be given attention. Bacharach and Baratz are right to launch an anti-behavioral campaign against pluralists who overemphasizes the behavior of initiating, deciding and vetoing as a central thrust of power in line with the one-dimensional view. However, Lukes had made much of the point that Bacharach and Baratz only partially achieved their anti-behavioral purpose. That is because Bacharach and Baratz assumed nondecision-making to be a form of decision-making, where the conflict of interests—either in overt or covert form—can be empirically observable. If grievances calling for actual or potential changes are not discovered and consent for the status-quo exists, then a power struggle in the process of nondecision-making arguably will not be empirically verified. Does the presence of consensus therefore imply for the absence of power? This is the circle that Lukes attempted to square, and resulted in three-dimensional view of power.[162]

Two dimensional perspectives of power still matter in Lukes' analytical framework of power, but his emphasis was on the third supreme dimension of power.[163] This supreme dimension of power, as Lukes writes, is exercised by a power holder to influence, shape or determine target audiences' "very wants". Put another way, the supreme exercise of

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[160] E. E Schattschneider, *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1960), 71.

[161] Bachrach and Baratz, *Power and Poverty: Theory and Practice*, 44-6.

[162] Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, 19-20.

[163] Ibid., chapter 4.

power aims to get target audiences to "have the desires you want them to have", and then to "secure the compliance by controlling their thoughts and desires".[164]

In an attempt to justify this supreme, insidious, and perhaps slightly sinister dimension of power, Lukes assumed a theoretical prioritization of "real" interest on one hand, and "false" or "manipulated" consensus on the other.[165] According to Lukes' reasoning, the third dimension of power in exercise may have a bearing upon the making of consensus that is generally overlooked by the one- and two-dimensional views of power. Absence of grievance and observable conflict may not necessarily lead to the harmony of interests. Rather, there may emerge a "latent conflict" concerning an invisible contention of interests between those wielding power and those who are unaware that their real interests are endangered in this power relationship.[166] This latent conflict, in definition, may never be actualized, but is real. As a result, conflict of interests plays an intrinsic role in Lukes' three-dimensional view of power (see Table 2–2).[167]

Table 2–2: The Three-dimensional View of Power

View of Power	Focus on
One Dimension	(a) behavior (b) decision-making (c) (key) issues (d) observable (overt) conflict (e) (subjective) interests, seen as policy preferences revealed by political participation
Two Dimension (Qualified critique of behavioral focus)	(a) decision-making and nondecision-making (b) issues and potential issues (c) observable (overt or covert) conflict (d) (subjective) interests, seen as policy preferences or grievances

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[164] Ibid., 23-4.
[165] Ibid., 24.
[166] Ibid., 24-25.
[167] Ibid., chapter 6.

Three Dimension (Critique of behavior focus)	(a) decision-making and control over political agenda (not necessarily through decisions) (b) issues and potential issues (c) observable (overt and covert) and latent conflict (d) subjective and real interest

Source: Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, p. 25

Soft power, hard power and three-dimensional view of power

Nye argues that his analytical framework of soft and hard power is closely linked to the three dimensional view of power, but the strength of these links may vary in different dimensions. Specifically speaking, hard power is more related to the first dimension of power than soft power. The close link between hard power and the first dimension of power does not rest on a focus on the process of decision-making, but on a similar focus—the exercise of power in relation to an overt conflict of interests. This link between the hard power and the first dimension of power also involves a similar counterfactual assumption that those who are subject to power may behave differently if this power relationship did not exist. Further, Nye's soft power, in comparison to hard power, generally plays a central role in exercising the "second face of power".[168] This is evident in Nye's key concern with agenda-settings and initiative-making in international institutions, where how players behave in subtle and sophisticated way to mobilize the bias of existing established institutions to outmaneuver challengers. Last, soft power is also intertwined with Lukes' third supreme dimension of power, notwithstanding that hard power is also involved. This is why some analysts argue that Nye's soft power account resonates with Gramsci's conceptualization of hegemonic power: to utilize ideological hegemony to shape the preference and identity of those who are subject to this power, and even make them unconscious of their real interests.[169] The so-called supreme dimension in relation to the soft power may be crucial in helping

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[168] For example, see Nye, *The Future of Power*, 91; *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 5; *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, 31.
[169] Zahran and Ramos, "From Hegemony to Soft Power," 12-32.

to explain American hegemony.

Although Nye's soft- and hard-power framework is closely bound up with Lukes' three-dimensional view of power, it is important to point out a key difference between them. For Lukes, power is a primitive concept intimately linked to another contested concept of "interest". Power, in this sense, involves that an entity affects another entity in a manner contrary to the latter's interest.[170] Therefore, a conflict of interests becomes an intimate part of the definition of power. Although Lukes' framework of three-dimensional view of power has been clearly applied to Nye's, Nye's ambivalence towards this fundamental assumption unfortunately generates some confusion.

From Nye's perspective, the presupposed conflict of interests seems neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition of soft power. In particular, a high premium is placed on *attraction* as a core feature of soft power. Nye explicitly treated attraction as a natural objective experience as he claims that universal liberal values rather than parochial values are inherently attractive. Therefore, Nye's theorization of soft power tends to presuppose that America has soft power resources that are inherently and universally attractive.[171] That is why some analysts have criticized Nye's account of soft power as indicative of American centralism: American soft power is not an *idea* but the *ideal*.[172] Meanwhile, Nye also attached significances to the construction of attraction through persuasive argument in public relations in order to convert foreigners to become attracted to the persuader's values and wants.[173] After all, persuasion is an integral function of public relations.[174] Soft power in this sense does not necessitate a conflict of interests as a precondition like hard power.[175] Rather, the assumption of harmony of

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[170] Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, 34.

[171] Hayden, *The Rhetoric of Soft Power: Public Diplomacy in Global Contexts*, 47; Mark Beeson, "American Ascendancy: Conceptualizing Contemporary Hegemony," in *Bush and Asia: America's Evolving Relations with East Asia*, ed. Mark Beeson (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 10-11; Yasushi and McConnell, eds., *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*, xxiii.

[172] Fan Ying, "Soft Power: Power of Attraction or Confusion?" 153; Lee, "The Clash of Soft Powers between China and Japan: Synergy and Dilemmas at the Six-Party Talks," 117; Bronson Percival, *The Dragon Looks South: China and Southeast Asia in the New Century* (London: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc. , 2007), 111.

[173] Janice Bially Mattern, "Why `Soft Power' Isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics," *Millennium–Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (2005): 591.

[174] Pfau and Wan, "Persuasion: An Intrinsic Function of Public Relations," 101-36.

[175] Gallarotti, "Smart Power: Definitions, Importance, and Effectiveness," 251.

interests became a strong foundation for Nye's soft power thesis. That is because this assumption is underscored by the conceptualization of power as a legitimate right to rule derived from the consent related to the agent's provision of public goods in return for the subject's compliance.[176] In short, Nye's views on attraction as a natural objective experience and/or a social construct based on persuasion reveals his liberal preference that universal liberal values and norms are taken for granted, as they are attractive and persuasive, and inherently good for people around the world.[177] The US-led International order is therefore, in this view, regarded as inherently harmonious.

In contrast to the emphasis placed on the unstated assumption of harmony of interests, Nye seemed to recall Luke's basic assumption in regard to conflict of interests for the exercise of soft power. Nye increasingly realized that soft power is highly contingency-dependent compared with hard power. Soft power is heavily reliant on the existence of willing interpreters and receivers as noted before. For example, European countries are more susceptible to American soft power, yet radical Islamists found it an anathema, and even a serious threat.[178] The different reactions to the same exercise of soft power again add relevance to the specification of domains and scopes in this regard. Soft power, therefore, is not always indebted to a morally superior premise related to harmony of interests, or lack of overt conflict. If this were true, soft power would be universally valid and invariably effective in every scope and domain. In this sense, a potential conflict of interests remains a key concern in reality for those exerting soft power and those subjected to it. According to Janice Bially Mattern, soft power is social-linguistically constructed through "representational force": a non-physical but similarly coercive form of power exerted through language at the level of subjectivity. Soft power is therefore not so soft given it might arguably be seen as a continuation of hard power through different means rather than understood in juxtaposition to hard

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[176] Barry Hindess, *Discourses of Power* (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell Publisher, 1996); Lake, *Hierarchy in International* Relations, chapter 1; "Legitimating Power: The Domestic Politics of U.S. International Hierarchy," *International Security* 38, no. 2 (2013): 74-111.

[177] Richard Ned Lebow, "The Power of Persuasion," in *Power in World Politics*, ed. Felix Berenskoetter and M. J. Williams (New York: Routledge, 2007), 120.

[178] Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 120.

power.[179] Along this line of reasoning, Nye's account of soft power is inextricably, though implicitly, linked to a pre-established conflict of interests.

Consequently, a paradox of soft power occurs since Nye developed an ambivalent attitude towards either presumed conflict or harmony of interests as a *sine qua non* for the exercise of soft power. As normally understood, soft power might be too soft to be qualified as power if it is heavily predicted on harmony of interests. However, to claim soft power is soft is hypocritical if this power is too closely linked to conflict of interests and not substantially different from hard power.[180] It is therefore unsurprising to see the conceptual rise of "smart power" as developed by Nye as a strategic combination of soft and hard power to realize national interests within various domains and scopes. Overall, despite the soft power paradox, soft power and national interests are bounded inextricably. The soft power paradox that give rise to the popularity of smart power demonstrates the potential usefulness of analytical eclecticism, as power optimization is best delivered through the integration of three leading IR paradigms, including realism, liberalism and constructivism.[181]

Conclusion

This chapter proposes four theoretical hypotheses involving the close relationship between power, soft power and the national interest. It attempted to develop an operable conceptualization of "national interest" according to the statist model and the analytically eclectic mode of thought in the first place. Subsequently, it sought to outline

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[179] Mattern, "Why `Soft Power' Isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics," 583-612.

[180] Cooper, "Hard Power, Soft Power and the Global Goals of Diplomacy," 180. An interviewee similarly argues that the concept of "soft power" is academically meaningful but analytically problematic. Simply put, if too soft then it is no need to have power as assumed. If insisting on the necessity of power, then it is not soft at all. In this sense, the concept of soft power sounds like an oxymoron. Interview with a scholar, Beijing, April 8, 2015.

[181] Lukes' elaboration on the three dimensional view of power is interestingly akin to the popular theoretical triads of realism, liberalism and constructivism in IR. Given that Nye's analytical framework of soft and hard power is closely linked to Lukes' three dimensional view of power, it is therefore adding relevance to Nye's claim that soft (smart) power is fit with realism, liberalism and constructivism. The analytically eclectic quality of soft (smart) power thus entails further attention. Similar argument see Stefano Guzzini, "The Concept of Power: A Constructivist Analysis," *Millennium–Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (2005): 509-10; Giulio M. Gallarotti, *Cosmopolitan Power in International Politics: A Synthesis of Realism, Neoliberalism and Constructivism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

key hypotheses in relation to (1) the logical connection between soft power and the national interest; (2) the international orientation of soft power; (3) non-state actors as primary drivers of national soft power campaigns in a tactical aspect, and (4) the need to specify the domains and scopes underlying the conceptualization and operationalization of soft power based on Lukes' three-dimensional view of power.

All four general hypotheses will be tested through the Chinese case study in an attempt to examine *why and how Chinese decision-makers have utilized soft power in the 21st century*. Therefore, it is important and illuminating to explore how soft power is associated with Chinese national interests, whether Chinese soft power is mainly international operable, which agents tactically drive China's soft power campaigns, and which domain and scope of soft power is China targeting. Before testing the aforementioned hypotheses in following chapters, however, it is important to explore the historical evolution of Chinese perspectives on power and its modern bearing on the conceptualization and operationalization of soft power in the contemporary China. It is also crucial to compare Chinese modern soft power with American soft power, given that the latter is widely considered as a benchmark for the conceptualization and operationalization of soft power. In so doing, next chapter will focus on the ancient Chinese thought and its modern soft power.

Chapter 3: Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Soft Power

Having outlined the theoretical framework of power, soft power and the national interest to further examine China's soft power campaigns in theory and practice, this chapter seeks to analyze how Chinese politicians, policy pundits and scholars understand (soft) power in a uniquely historical and cultural context, and in particular, how they contrast current Chinese soft power with American soft power. In so doing, this chapter is divided into four sections.

The first section details the predominant thinking about power in ancient China. The second section explores the evolution of power tradition in modern and contemporary China. Both sections are of prime significance as they set a historical and cultural backdrop for the third section, which attempts to survey how Chinese political and academic circles explore Chinese soft power and contrast it with American soft power. The last section concludes that Chinese soft power on one hand shares common features with that of the US, such as their focus on the close link between soft power, national interests, and (comprehensive) national power in general and political power in particular. However, as argued by Chinese politicians and scholars, Chinese soft power also demonstrates its Chinese characteristics in terms of the nature, assumptions and resources made on the basis of its unique history, culture and national conditions compared to that of US. Overall, the unsettled identity dilemma between cultural Chineseness and Western modernization has significantly shaped the construction of soft power with Chinese characteristics in contrast to American soft power.

Ancient Chinese Thought of Power

It is generally believed that nation-states are bounded by historical memories.[1] The

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The title of this chapter, with a minor revision, is borrowed from Daniel A. Bell and Zhe Sun eds., *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Powe*r (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

[1] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983); Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the*

Chinese people's obsession with history even risks resulting in a tyrannical impact of history that "held, and still holds, the present in its pincers".[2] Although the impact of past may vary, the weight of Chinese history matters.[3] The current conceptualization of soft power in China is no exception. That is, the predominant thought of power historically to some extent sheds light on the current conceptualization of Chinese soft power in relation to its nature, assumptions and resources, and its comparison with American soft power.

Power within the Middle Kingdom

Regarding the Chinese traditional way of thinking on power, monism is the core. In ancient Chinese politics, power was centralized by the "sage king" and the unitary state he led for the sake of greater unity (*da yitong*) and harmonious order. This monist mode of thinking on power is fundamentally founded on another crucial thought of "tao" (道), the concept of which is literally translated as "the way". The concept of tao was accorded considerable attention by the ancient Chinese thinkers and kings. The character of "tao" appears quite often in various ancient classics including *Shang Shu (Classic of History)*, *Book of Change*, *Confucian Analects*, and *Tao Te Ching (The Way of Life)*. As a result, the tao as a philosophical construct *per se* has long become "the very epitome, the heart, soul, and symbol of Sinism".[4] It is therefore not surprising that tao becomes part and parcel of ancient Chinese way of thinking.

The etymology of the Chinese character of tao helps explain hypothetical link between tao and the monist mode of thinking on power. The Chinese character of tao (道) consists of a component ("辶") and another ("首"). The former part looks like a boat,

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Nation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[2] W. J. F. Jenner, *The Tyranny of History: The Roots of China's Crisis* (London: Allen Lane, 1992), 11.

[3] For example, see Samuel S. Kim, "China and the World in Theory and Practice," in *China and the World: Chinese Foreign Relations in the Post-Cold War*, ed. Samuel S. Kim (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1994), 3-12; Zheng Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation: Historical Memory in Chinese Politics and Foreign Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

[4] Herrlee Glessner Creel, *Sinism: A Study of the Evolution of the Chinese World-View* (Westport, CT: Hyperion, 1975), 44.

which means "to go" in Chinese. Another part refers to a "head", carrying with it a connotation of "leader", "chief", "top priority", "number one", and so on. Put together, the concept of tao simply amounts to assigning priorities, which are by and large carried out by the leader. Taoism at large, in this vein, generally revolves around the identification of a top priority and its successful fulfillment. In short, the conceptualization of tao embodies the monistic way of thinking in ancient China.

If this is indeed the case, then what is the top priority among the Chinese world-views? According to various strands of Chinese intellectual thought, the top priority comes down to the establishment and maintenance of greater unity and harmonious order.[5] Despite the divergent viewpoints about human nature and the right way to achieve greater unity and harmonious order,[6] this top priority resides deeply in the minds of ancient and even contemporary Chinese thinkers. Moreover, the greater unity and harmonious order can only be achieved through hierarchical power structure in which only the top leader possesses political authority. Put differently, the formal government subjected to the king's will becomes the sole legitimate basis of power.[7] Therefore, those who stand beyond the officialdom and ruling class are not entitled to have any legitimate claim to power. That is why personal wealth (merchants) and prestige (gentries) cannot be easily translated into political power.[8] As a result, the Chinese monistic ideal of statecraft supports the notion that China is naturally destined to exist under the sway of a single ruler.[9] A single ruler, who leads the state, is the guarantor of greater unity and harmonious order. By contrast, power struggle and rivalry generally lead to disorder, turbulence, and even worse, division.[10]

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[5] Liwen Zhang, *Hehe Yu Dongya Yishi [The Spirit of "Harmony" and the East Asia Consciousness]* (Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2001).

[6] Xuetong Yan, "Xunzi's Interstate Political Philosophy and Its Message for Today," in *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power*, 21-69.

[7] Lucian W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Authority* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 87.

[8] Ibid., 88.

[9] Christopher A. Ford, *The Mind of Empire: China's History and Modern Foreign Relations* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 21.

[10] Longji Sun, *Zhongguo Wenhua De Shenceng Jiegou [The Deep Structure of Chinese Culture]* (Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2004).

The monist thought about power does not take the absolute power of the king for granted, but seeks to explain the legitimization of absolute power instead. Ancient Chinese thinkers vary on these explanations.[11] However, the mainstream perspective pertaining to the legitimization of absolute power is founded on the Confucian perspective of morality or ethics. As a result, Pye writes that "it was inadmissible to speak of power except in moralistic terms".[12] Ethics in this sense is integrated into politics in the Chinese scheme of things. Political power was supposed to flow inexorably downward from the morally superior to the masses. Higher the stature of the public officer has, generates higher expectations of his code of conduct. Therefore, the king had been raised as a moral model bestowed with the "Mandate of Heaven" (*tian ming*) behaving in accordance with the established rules of public propriety, displaying benevolence (*ren*) and compassion, and enhancing the material well-being of its subordinates and the society in order.[13] This legitimization of absolute power in ancient China through the monopoly of a special knowledge of transcendent truth, benevolent rule for the common people, and the conscious glorification of Chinese culture on its periphery and beyond, according to Shue, plays a dominant role for the state in claiming power and political legitimacy in modern and contemporary China.[14] Above all, the political discourse related to the legitimization of political power in China has always been largely limited to supporting the values of moral order,[15] and the major purpose of state is to consolidate the harmonious order in the moral, social and cultural terms.[16]

The legitimization of absolute power on the basis of ethics or morality, however, is problematic. That is because this kind of absolute power cannot logically exclude the possibility that the king may exert absolute power according to his idiosyncratic preferences and whims rather than the commonly accepted moral standards of conduct.

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[11] Yan, "A Comparative Study of Pre-Qin Interstate Political Philosophy," 21-69.

[12] Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Authority*, 41.

[13] Dingxin Zhao, "The Mandate of Heaven and Performance Legitimation in Historical and Contemporary China," *American Behavioral Scientist* 53, no. 3 (2009): 416-22.

[14] Vivienne Shue, "Legitimacy Crisis in China?" in *State and Society in 21st Century China*, ed. Peter Hays Gries and Stanley Rosen (New York and London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 30-4.

[15] Lucian W. Pye, "China: Erratic State, Frustrated Society," *Foreign Affairs* 69, no. 4 (1990): 66.

[16] Benjamin I. Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yan Fu and the West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), 10.

Whatever the strength of "virtuocracy"[17] may be, the risk of "rule by man"[18] should not be overlooked. The risk of abuse of power unbounded by the moral principles has not yet been addressed in contemporary China. That is because the fragile institutionalization of political power magnifies the charisma of the supreme leader.[19] In turn, the unchallenging status of supreme leader retards and even stifles the institutionalization of power.

To say that the Chinese people in history failed to institutionalize the exercise of power according to the rule of law in face of morally corrupted rulers is uncontroversial. However, the Chinese people historically justified the "right to rebel" through the use of physical force as a last resort to overthrow the morally corrupted ruler who failed to deliver the Mandate of Heaven, and sought to reestablish a virtuous new one accordingly.[20] The Chinese idiom "winners are kings and losers bandit" says it all. The official Chinese historical record invariably demonstrates that the moral degeneration led to the decline of the previous regime, and it was finally superseded by the new dynasty marked with a sage king embraced by the capable and worthy Mandarins.[21] As a result, rebellions and wars did not end up in anarchy, but surprisingly strengthened the hierarchical architecture of power dominated by the sage king based on the *ultrastable* structure of Chinese society (*chaowending jiegou*).[22] So much so that, regardless of the internal (ethnic, local or factional) differences and conflicts, the strong sense of a unitary state has dominated the formation of Chinese national identity for many centuries.[23]

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[17] Susan L. Shirk, "The Decline of Virtuocracy in China," in *Class and Social Stratification in Post-Revolution China* ed. James L. Watson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 56-83; Pye, "China: Erratic State, Frustrated Society," 66.

[18] *The Mandarin and the Cadre: China's Political Culture* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies of the University of Michigan, 1988), 35.

[19] Ibid., 153.

[20] Yuri Pines, *The Everlasting Empire: The Political Culture of Ancient China and Its Imperial Legacy* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2012).

[21] John W. Garver, *Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1993), 2-3.

[22] Guangtao Jin and Qingfeng Liu, *Xingsheng Yu Weiji: Zhonguo Shehui Chaowending Jiegou [Boom and Bust Cycle: On the Ultrastable Structure of Chinese Society]* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1992).

[23] Michael Ng-Quinn, "Chinese National Identity in Premodern China: Formation and Role Enactment," in *China's Quest for National Identity*, ed. Lowell Dittmer and Samuel S. Kim (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 32-61.

Power also plays a crucial role in shaping and maintaining the Chinese world order historically. That is, power was generally exerted to reign over *tianxia* through hierarchy in which China assumed a superior authority morally and politically.[24] Before moving forward to the Chinese world order since the Qin Empire (221–206BC), the interstate relationship during the Spring and Autumn period (ca. 770–476BC) and the Warring States period (ca. 475–221BC) deserves further attention. During this long period of conflicts and wars, some influential thoughts of power were put forward, and even have carried over into the consideration of Chinese world order afterwards. The first line of thought about power involves the interstate leadership, and the second one revolves around the bases of power.

According to the pre-Qin thinkers, there are two predominant types of interstate leadership: "humane authority" and "hegemonic authority".[25] Regarding the relationship between humane and the hegemonic authority, pre-Qin thinkers came to two diametrically opposing conclusions. A group of thinkers argues that both of them are exchangeable, but another group sees it differently.

According to Hanfeizi (280–232BC), a leading proponent of legalism, there is *no* difference between humane and hegemonic authority. Hanfeizi acknowledges the impact of morality in antiquity, yet asserts that humane authority during his time was no longer anchored in ethics. Humane authority, akin to the hegemonic power, relied on the strong military force used to attack and conquer outsiders, and a rigid legal system of reward and punishment established to rule the domestic subordinates.[26] Other prestigious thinkers (including Guanzi (719–645BC), Mencius (372–289BC) and Xunzi

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[24] John K. Fairbank, ed. *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964); Mark Mancall, *China at the Center: 300 Years of Foreign Policy* (New York: Free Press, 1984); Joseph Chan, "Territorial Boundaries and Confucianism," in *Confucian Political Ethics*, ed. Daniel A. Bell (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 61-84.

[25] According to Xunzi, there is another type of notorious leadership called "tyranny". Yet, I would focus on humane authority and hegemonic authority given that both were frequently discussed by ancient thinkers.

[26] Yan, "A Comparative Study of Pre-Qin Interstate Political Philosophy," 47.

(313–238BC)), however, argue that the boundary between hegemonic and humane authority is sharp and clear. To use the modern terminology of soft and hard power, soft power in moral terms is the cornerstone of humane authority, while hegemonic authority heavily rests on hard power.[27] While Confucius (551–479BC) and Laozi did not clearly make a distinction between humane and hegemonic authorities, the morally informed leadership is a common concern for them.[28]

Regarding the power foundation of political leadership in the Chinese world order, interestingly, pre-Qin thinkers agree that this kind of leadership is primarily derived from a similarly modern thought of comprehensive national power (CNP).[29] According to Yan, pre-Qin thinkers generally believe that "political, economic, and military factors are all important", but they also generally suggest that "political capability is the foundation that integrates comprehensive national power".[30] Put another way, political power rather than economic power determines the integration of CNP.

According to Yan, the pre-Qin thinkers unfortunately failed to converge on the core element of political power. For example, Hanfeizi unambiguously dismisses the role of morally informed rulers and exemplary ministers in his justification of political power. In contrast, other leading thinkers (including Laozi, Confucius, Mencius, and Xunzi) generally consider the moral quality as an integral part of political power. Along Yan's line of reasoning, political power in the latter form mainly revolves around "virtue", "benevolence", "the Way", "justice", "worthies" and "sages".[31] In this sense, it seems that Yan conflated the thought and history, and adopted an idealistic or a utopian vision of political power for the interstate leadership. He failed to address the realistic process of how an intelligent king and worthy prime minister can translate these material and ideational resources into political influence in reality.[32]

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[27] Shaohua Hu, "Confucianism and Contemporary Chinese Politics," *Politics & Policy* 35, no. 1 (2007): 149.
[28] Yan, "A Comparative Study of Pre-Qin Interstate Political Philosophy," 47-52.
[29] Xuetong Yan and Yuxing Huang, "Hegemony in the Stratagems of the Warring States," in *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Powe*r, 112-14.
[30] Yan, "A Comparative Study of Pre-Qin Interstate Political Philosophy," 53.
[31] Yan and Huang, "Hegemony in the Stratagems of the Warring States," 115.
[32] Victoria Tin-bor Hui, "History and Thought in China's Traditions," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 17, no. 2 (2012): 128-30.

The predominant idea of power in terms of interstate leadership and its basis is empirically tested by imperial Qin's unification of China in 221BC. Qin's unification of China and its fast disempowerment brings two observations into sharp relief. On one hand, the ideal humane authority was not prioritized to struggle for the interstate leadership as the state of Qin had long been guided by the legalist ideology. It is characterized by the despotic rule according to the draconian law and severe punishment for wrongdoings. The imperial Qin, according to Xunzi's categorization of power, is little more than a tyranny preoccupied with territorial invasions through military battles and ruthless stratagem.[33] However, on the other hand, the evanescence of Qin Empire also justifies Xunzi's argument that tyranny is doomed to perish.[34]

The quick rise and fall of Qin Empire has two profound lessens for the understanding of power and its political application as a result. The first lesson is that political power of a realist type plays a crucial role in determining how material and ideational resources can be effectively converted into political influence. Rapid political mobilization, a strong state, efficient bureaucratic administration, self-strengthening reforms, well-organized military preparations, and sophisticated diplomatic maneuvers even smart stratagems, establish a solid foundation for interstate leadership.[35] The second lesson is that human authority should be prioritized as long as the rule of *tianxia* is stable. In short, the integration between Confucian humane authority and the realistic political power in particular, is critically important for the maintenance of Chinese world order. Both of them are equally important.[36] The succeeding dynasties of Han (206BC–220AD), Tang (618–907), Song (960–1279), Ming (1368–1644), and Qing (1644–1912) with a long-lived leadership in East Asia, are illustrative in this regard.

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[33] Yan, "Xunzi's Interstate Political Philosophy and Its Message for Today," 89-90.

[34] Ibid., 90.

[35] Victoria Tin-bor Hui, *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Lampton, *The Three Face of Chinese Power: Might, Money and Minds*, 15-19; Edgar Kiser and Yong Cai, "War and Bureaucratization in Qin China: Exploring an Anomalous Case," *American Sociological Review* 68, no. 4 (2003): 511-39.

[36] Dingxin Zhao, *Dongzhou Zhanzheng Yu Rufa Guojia De Dangsheng [Eastern Zhou Warfare and the Rise of the Confucian-Legalist State]* (Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2011); Tongdong Bai, *China: The Political Philosophy of the Middle Kingdom*, Chapter 6.

Chinese leadership with Chinese characteristics?

It has long been widely entertained that China's enduring superiority and leadership in East Asia rest on its sustaining cultural appeal of Confucian rituals and ethics rather than its hard power. For example, Huang asserts that the existence of a "Pax Sinica" in East Asia was mainly achieved through Confucian rituals, procedures, and codes of conduct.[37] Shambaugh spoke of the possibility of a "hegemonic" tributary system in Asia, but it was "not based on coercion or territorial expansionism".[38] Similarly, Feng claims "China did not expand in history when it was strong",[39] except only two unusual cases of massive military expansions launched by the nomadic minorities of the Mongolian and Manchurian people.[40] This Confucian-Mencian paradigm of pacifism is also commonly applied to those who consider the tributary system either as the "medium", a fundamental "institution", or as a "bureaucratic management" of Chinese foreign relations in [East] Asia.[41] Interestingly, the paradigm of considering the tributary system as a linchpin of China's moral leadership in East Asia continues to circulate,[42] notwithstanding recent claims of the non-existence of an overall tributary system.[43] Above all, the Chinese cultural superiority is a common unstated assumption for considering China's historical leadership in East Asia.

The Confucian-Mencius mode of thinking on the Chinese world order seemed to drive ancient China's geopolitical reign of *tianxia* towards what is termed by Ford a "moral

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[37] Zhilian Huang, *Yazhou De Huaxia Zhixu: Zhongguo Yu Yazhou Guojia Guanxi Xingtai Lun [On Pax Sinica: Relationship between China and Others in Asia]* (Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 1995).
[38] David Shambaugh, "China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order," *International Security* 29, no. 3 (2004): 95.
[39] Feng, *Chinese Strategic Culture and Foreign Policy Decision-Making*, 4.
[40] Ibid., 26; Also see Gungwu Wang, "China's New Paths for National Reemergence," in *China's Political Economy*, ed. Gungwu Wang and John Wong (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1998), 127-8.
[41] For a detailed survey of this issue, see Feng Zhang, "Rethinking the 'Tribute System': Broadening the Conceptual Horizon of Historical East Asian Politics," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 2, no. 4 (2009): 549-54.
[42] For example, see Xuetong Yan, "Zhongguo Anquan Zhanlve De Fazhan Qushi [On the Developing Trend of China's Security Strategy]," *Liaowang [Outlook]*, no. 8-9 (1996): 51; Zheng, *Discovering Chinese Nationalism in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 106-7; Henry Kissinger, *World Order* (New York: Penguin Press, 2014), 214-5.
[43] For example, see Odd Arne Westad, *Restless Empire: China and the World since 1750* (New York: Basic Books, 2012), 10; Peter C. Perdue, "The Tenacious Tributary System," *Journal of Contemporary China* 24, no. 96 (2015): 1002-14.

geography of imperium".[44] Theoretically, China's cultural greatness was entitled to be esteemed by other states in East Asia.[45] Historically, the Chinese ruling elites tended to convert aliens/barbarians through the Chinese soft power of cultural attractiveness, even assimilate the conquerors from its periphery into Chinese culture subsequent to the military defeats of Han ethnics.[46] In reality, without other rival civilizations interfering for many centuries, China continued its solitary grandeur as the center of East Asia. Accordingly, Fairbank suggests that a spirit of "culturalism" in the Chinese context, which is analogous to "nationalism" in the West, came into being.[47]

It is important to note that the cultural attractiveness of ancient Chinese civilization and the idea of humane authority (which together constitute a form of soft power) in particular, lend support to the Chinese leadership in East Asia. However, it does not mean that hard power (including economic, political and military power) played *no* role in this regard. To the contrary, hard power also significantly propped up the Chinese leadership in East Asia historically.[48] Two points related to ancient Chinese hard power are noteworthy. On one hand, China's massive population, enormous size, abundant resources, mature agrarian economy, strong military buildup and well-functioning political power, taken together, set a daunting bulwark against external massive conquests. On the other, China's projection of hard power, especially the use of its military force beyond its heartland, was constrained by its surrounding geographical environment.

China's rich hard resources and its potential translation into hard power significantly deterred external large-scale invasions. If the country is stable, China is too strong to be harassed. External invasions against the heartland of China seemed possible only if

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[44] Ford, *The Mind of Empire: China's History and Modern Foreign Relations*, 5.

[45] Akira Iriye, "Culture and Power: International Relations as Intercultural Relations," *Diplomatic History* 3, no. 2 (1979): 118-9.

[46] Bai, *China: The Political Philosophy of the Middle Kingdom*, 44-5.

[47] John K. Fairbank, "Tributary Trade and China's Relations with the West," *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 1, no. 2 (1942): 130; John K. Fairbank, E. O. Reischauer, and A. M. Craig, eds., *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965), 84.

[48] Zhang, "Rethinking the 'Tribute System': Broadening the Conceptual Horizon of Historical East Asian Politics," 563.

China was plagued by an assortment of domestic ills and troubles. The Chinese history shows that when China suffered internal turbulence, the Chinese state and its heartland were encroached many times—even completely conquered twice—mainly by bellicose pastoral nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes from northern and northeast steppes. So much so that, the anxiety of "*neiyou waihuan*"—internal confusion invites calamity from without—was deeply established among the Chinese ruling elites.[49]

Interestingly, Chinese history also demonstrates that once China reunited again and returned to a normal and peaceful state, China became a great power again in East Asia. If that is the case, we might expect that China would seek to regain control of its immediate strategic periphery to secure a buffer against more distant adversaries who might pose a real or imagined threat to China's internal order.[50] Furthermore, similar to the correct use of violence to establish political authority within China,[51] Chinese ruling elites even showed their political determination to sanction the use of force in order to regain its self-imaged prestige, defeat potential adversaries and reestablish order in East Asia.[52] A new cycle might restart if China is unstable again.[53] Consequently, the fluctuation in periphery and regime boundary control has become a long-standing motif of Chinese leadership in East Asia.[54] Overall, from a grand historical perspective, China's remarkable potential hard power enables it to become a stabilizing force in East Asia, punctuated with setbacks notwithstanding.[55]

Despite China's rich hard resources, its surrounding geographical environment hindered their translation to hard power (military power in particular) beyond the heartland of

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[49] John K. Fairbank, *China Perceived: Images and Policies in Chinese-American Relations* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 83; Zheng, *Discovering Chinese Nationalism in China*, 15.

[50] Jacques deLisle, "China's Approach to International Law: A Historical Perspective," *American Society of International Law* 94(2000): 270.

[51] Mark Edward Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 176.

[52] Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*; Mark Burles and Abram N. Shulsky, *Patterns in China's Use of Force: Evidence from History and Doctrinal Writings* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2000); Krzysztof Gawlikowska, "Three Approaches to War and Struggle in Chinese Classical Thought," in *Confucianism and the Modernization of China*, ed. Silke Krieger and Rolf Trauzettel (Mainz: V. Hase & Koehler Verlag, 1991), 367-73.

[53] Jianxiong Ge, *Tongyi Yu Fenlie [Unification and Division]*(Beijing: Sanlian Publisher, 1994).

[54] Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy: Past, Present, and Future* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2000), 33-45.

[55] David C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia*.

China. Major geographical formations (such as oceans, mountains, steppes, deserts, jungles and high plateaus) largely limited China's further geographical expansion. Any use of military force for expansion into far-flung regions arguably requires a prohibitively expensive investment on military logistics. Immigration and settlement to facilitate continuous direct control after the successful conquests was highly expensive and risky.[56] Therefore, a hard-nosed cost-benefit calculation dampens any reckless territorial expansion since the Chinese empire cannot escape the iron law of "the loss of power gradient": "the further, the weaker".[57] This rational calculation does not negate territorial expansions given various Chinese imperial dynasties broaden their corresponding heartlands to some extent through military expansion.[58] That being said, any attempt to advance China's expansion further against external entities around its frontier (such as Korean Peninsula, Japan, the Southeast Asia and Central Asia) often failed. That is because China cannot always overcome the steadfast resistance from the conquered, nor the geographical, economic and administrative impediments noted above. Therefore, Chinese ruling elites generally had to passively accept the geographical demarcation between the Chinese heartland and the broad periphery beyond it. Accordingly, the unique Chinese strategic culture—"the cult of defense"—gained ascendancy.[59]

Both the strengths and weaknesses of ancient Chinese hard and soft power explain why China took on a *unique* leadership role in East Asia as a result. On one hand, a formal Sinocentric leadership in East Asia was undergirded by China's strong hard and soft power. It is a hierarchical structure of power that starkly contrasts to the balance-of-power structure dominant in Europe during the 18th to 19th centuries.[60] On

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[56] Owen Lattimore, *Studies in Frontier History: Collected Papers (1928-1958)* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), 88-89; Charles O. Hucker, *China to 1850: A Short History* (California: Stanford University Press, 1975), 61-2; Victoria Tin-bor Hui, "The China Dream: Revival of What Historical Greatness?" in *China Dreams: China's New Leadership and Future Impact*, ed. Chin-Shian Liou and Arthur S. Ding (New Jersey and London: World Scientific, 2015), 13-15.
[57] Kenneth E. Boulding, *Three Faces of Power* (Newbury Park, California: Sage, 1989), 46.
[58] Jianxiong Ge, *Zhongguo Lidai Jiangyu De Bianqian [Changes of Frontiers in the Chinese Dynasties]* (Beijing Commercial Press, 1997).
[59] Andrew Scobell, *China's Use of Military Force: beyond the Great Wall and the Long March*.
[60] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster Inc., 1996), 235.

the other, the serious environmental constraints on China's deployment of hard power, military force in particular, resulted in *de facto* autonomy and independence of its neighboring tribes, kingdoms or confederations notionally subjected to China. That is because it is highly difficult if not impossible for China to continuously intervene in its neighbors' internal politics and external affairs. Overall, the Sinocentric order in East Asia was maintained through the tributary trade and Confucian rituals, and backed by its strong hard power. This Sino-centric order exhibits its Chinese characteristics: the coexistence of formal hierarchy in theory and informal equality in practice.[61] It is substantially different from the Westphalian state system that is characterized by the separate and coequal sovereigns superficially, but informal hierarchy in reality.[62]

Over all, monistic thought on power has been an integral part of Chinese traditional political culture. Along the Confucians' line of reasoning, power in this sense cannot be bifurcated: "there are not two suns in the sky, nor two sovereigns in the state".[63] The ancient Chinese historical records mentioned above give added credibility to this crucial power tradition. Power is further interwoven with ethics: it is morally "right" that validates the "might". The monistic thought of power in ancient China is also applicable to the Chinese world order given that the latter was generally rendered as a corollary of the Chinese internal order.[64] As a result, the traditional Sinocentric world order was supposed to be hierarchical rather than egalitarian. Neither other hierarchies nor other sources of power in East Asia were presumed to exist. Ancient Chinese ruling elites also saw interactions taking place among deterritorialized "cultures" rather than territorially-demarcated "states" in modern sense.[65] In short, China's centrality in East

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[61] Mark Beeson, "Can China Lead?," *Third World Quarterly* 34, no. 2 (2013): 237; David C. Kang, *East Asia before the West: Five Centuries of Trade and Tribute* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 54.

[62] Erik Ringmar, "Performing International Systems: Two East-Asian Alternatives to the Westphalian Order," *International Organization* 66, no. 01 (2012): 6; John M. Hobson and J. C. Sharman, "The Enduring Place of Hierarchy in World Politics: Tracing the Social Logics of Hierarchy and Political Change," *European Journal of International Relations* 11, no. 1 (2005): 63-96; Andrew Phillips, *War, Religion and Empire: The Transformation of International Orders*, 180.

[63] Daniel Wang, *The Confucian Mind: A Historical and in-Depth Look at Asian Culture and Psyche* (Philadelphia, Pa: Xlibris, 2006), 98.

[64] Samuel S. Kim and Lowell Dittmer, "Whither China's Quest for National Identity," in *China's Quest for National Identity*, 249.

[65] Roland Bleiker, "Neorealist Claims in Light of Ancient Chinese Philosophy: The Cultural Dimension of International Theory," *Millennium–Journal of International Studies* 22, no. 3 (1993): 417-8; Mu Qian, *Zhongguo Wenhuashi Daolun [An Introduction of China's Cultural History]* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 1988), 19.

Asia historically rested on the combination of its far-reaching and long-standing cultural radiation and strong hard power, and the Chinese characteristic of its leadership in East Asia historically was closely linked to the virtue of China's ruler in particular.[66]

The Evolution of Power Tradition

The continuities and changes of monistic thought of power in modern and contemporary China merit further attention. The evolution of this thought of power is a topic of frequent discussion and debate in that it is closely associated with the unsettled dilemma between Chinese traditions and their modernization. That is, the long-standing view of absolute power in moral terms continues to influence the mind-sets of Chinese people, but foreign concepts and modern thoughts related to the "nation-state", "sovereignty", "nationalism", "democracy" and "science" has also increasingly influenced China's nation-building and state-making, notwithstanding the variation of their influences under different circumstances.[67] Modern China throughout the whole 20th century had been struggling to balance the traditional legacy and foreign influences that shaped the building of its modern nation-state.[68] This quandary remains in China today.[69]

Observers are keen to expound what Townsend summarized as the "culturalism to nationalism thesis" in the period of modern China.[70] This thesis is by and large consistent with what Zhao called the transformation of China from a "universal empire" to a "particularistic nation-state" in the same period.[71] Since the Qing dynasty lost in the first Opium War (1839–1842), and then was forced to sign the first of "unequal treaties" with Great Britain, China had faced an unprecedented challenge never existed before in its 3000-year history. The top priority of Chinese political and intellectual

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[66] Mark Mancall, "The Persistence of Tradition in Chinese Foreign Policy," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 349, no. 1 (1963): 17-19.

[67] Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of "Civilization" in International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).

[68] Lucian W. Pye, "After the Collapse of Communism: The Challenge of Chinese Nationalism and Pragmatism," in *The Study of Modern China*, ed. Eberhard Sandschneider (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999), 34.

[69] Robert A. Scalapino, "China—between Tradition and Modernity," ibid.(St Martin's Press), 1-15; Guo, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity under Reform*, chapter 6.

[70] James Townsend, "Chinese Nationalism," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 27 (1992): 97-103.

[71] Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, chapter 2.

elites in its 20th century, therefore, is to guard against Western and Japanese challenges and save China from national extinction (*jiuwang tucun*).[72]

The Chinese elites carried out a two-front campaign in response to the Western and Japanese challenges. One is domestic and another is international. Domestically, Chinese political elites launched a "self-strengthening movement" (*yangwu yundong*). In the beginning, they esteemed the principle that "Chinese culture as base (*ti*) and Western learning for application (*yong*)". In so doing, they first purchased and manufactured Western advanced weaponry, then increasingly reformed the military, education and political system from within according to the Western frame of reference. Yet, repeated military failures and the shattering of the Hundred Days' Reform in late Qing dynasty finally caused them to radically reappraise Chinese culture and values.[73] They soon realized that the fossilized Chinese culture of Confucianism stood in the way of China's overall modernization. Radical iconoclasts and revolutionaries then had done their upmost to relieve China of that cultural burden. "The crisis of Chinese consciousness"[74] characterized by the "cultural iconoclasm and political nationalism"[75] therefore ensued. The impact of this anti-traditionalism is far-reaching and deep-going as it can be clearly seen during the Cultural Revolution.[76]

Regarding the international resistance against the external threats, Chinese elites were forced to play by the rules of the game set by the Western powers. China was gradually integrated into the Westphalian nation state system and valued territorial integrity, sovereign equality and international law in an attempt to safeguard its national interests.[77] This *realpolitik* thought has significantly influenced China's foreign

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[72] Fairbank, Reischauer, and Craig, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation*.

[73] Ray Huang, *Zhongguo Dalishi [China: A Macro-History]* (Beijing: Sanlian Publisher, 1997), 241-80; Yaqing Qin, "Why Is There No Chinese International Relations Theory?", 324-5.

[74] Yu-sheng Lin, *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical Antitraditionalism in the May Fourth Era* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979).

[75] Wei-ming Tu, "Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center," in *The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today*, ed. Wei-ming Tu (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 1-34.

[76] Ibid., 5-6; Myron L. Cohen, "Being Chinese: The Peripheralization of Traditional Identity," ibid., 102-3.

[77] Suzanne Ogden, "Sovereignty and International Law: The Perspective of the People's Republic of China," *The Journal of international law & politics* 7, no. 1 (1974): 1-32.

policy-making in the modern and even contemporary era.[78] However, the collapse of traditional Chinese world order does not dictate the "death" of Middle Kingdom syndrome. The propagation of Chinese "rejuvenation" (*fuxing/zhenxing*) continuously emphasized by many generations of Chinese political and intellectual elites, is illustrative.[79] Levine writes that this kind of informal ideology of seeking rejuvenation may have more to say in determining Chinese foreign policy now and in the future.[80]

In conclusion, the prevailing thought on power in modern and contemporary China is threefold. First, the monistic idea of power remains influential in the process of modern nation-building and state-making, notwithstanding short-lived challenges from the liberal thought.[81] The absolute power of the king was relegated to the state led by a strong leader. Therefore, absolute state power was supposed to protect China's national unity and redress domestic disorder.[82] In so doing, individualism and pluralism embedded in the process of democratization was finally replaced by patriotism, national salvation and revolution led by the party-state.[83] Second, power remains integrated into ethics. The moralistic thinking of power remains common, though the state leaders may have uncertainty about what might be the basis of such a moral order. Internationally, China's century of humiliation at the hands of imperialist powers has morally driven it to restore its "rightful" place in the world.[84] Domestically, moral claims continue to assume an important role in the legitimization of political power. Finally yet importantly, power matters in China's internal and external politics whenever China is strong or weak. However, the domestic politics of power is more likely to shape its external power politics than the other way around. Overall, the triple prevailing thought of power in modern and even contemporary China has significantly influenced the

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[78] Thomas J. Christensen, "Chinese Realpolitik," 37-52; Jisi Wang, "International Relations Theory and the Study of Chinese Foreign Policy: A Chinese Perspective," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, 497-8; Yong Deng, "The Chinese Conception of National Interests in International Relations," *The China Quarterly* 154(1998): 320.

[79] Xuetong Yan, "The Rise of China in Chinese Eyes," *Journal of Contemporary China* 10, no. 26 (2001): 33-39.

[80] Steven I. Levine, "Perception and Ideology in Chinese Foreign Policy," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, ed. Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 43-45.

[81] John Fitzgerald, "The Nationless State: The Search for a Nation in Modern Chinese Nationalism," 75-104.

[82] Pines, *The Everlasting Empire: The Political Culture of Ancient China and Its Imperial Legacy*, chapter 6.

[83] Ming Yuan, "Chinese Intellectuals and the United States: The Dilemma of Individualism V.S. Patriotism," *Asian Survey* 29, no. 7 (1989): 651-53; Sujian Guo, *Chinese Politics and Government: Power, Ideology and Organization* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 64.

[84] Peter Hays Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy*.

conceptualization of soft power and its political application in China.

The popularization of soft power concept in the Chinese political and academic circles and its political application does not take place in vacuum. Rather, the predominant conception of power in the Chinese political tradition adds relevance to the Chinese operationalization of soft power. Chinese politicians and scholars believe that soft power is part and parcel of Chinese political culture and statecraft.[85] In this sense, modern soft power looks like a "new bottle" filled with "old wine" of traditional wisdom of power in China.

The unsettled trade-off between cultural Chineseness and Western modernization adds further relevance to the examination of China's conceptualization of soft power and its political application. This fact also helps explain why the American soft power becomes a benchmark in this regard. Chinese politicians and scholars are correct to point out that the US has long been a "key of the keys" for the Chinese foreign policy-making because of its global predominance.[86] Chinese IR study is also heavily influenced by the American concepts and paradigms.[87] Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that China's conceptualization of soft power and its operation, without exception, is cast in the shadow of American soft power. However, the benchmark of American soft power captures extra attention from the Chinese experts and scholars since it becomes a useful tool to ameliorate China's identity dilemma—a point I will elaborate on later. The point to emphasize in this section is that Chinese soft power is defined in contrast to American soft power. As a result, a comparison of Chinese and American soft power is in order.

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[85] For example, see Sheng Ding, *The Dragon's Hidden Wings: How China Rises with Its Soft Power*, 128; Alan Hunter, "Soft Power: China on the Global Stage," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 2, no. 3 (2009): 378-80; Shaomin Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, 128.
[86] Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*, 35.
[87] Yizhou Wang, *Xifang Guoji Zhengzhixue: Lishi Yu Lilun [IR Studies in the West: History and Theory]* (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2006), 432-60.

Chinese Soft Power versus American Soft Power

Chinese politicians and scholars unmistakably understand that there are both similarities and differences between Chinese and American soft power. Yet, they paid more attention to the differences. The following section will firstly deal with similarities and then the differences.

In terms of similarities, Chinese observers and analysts agree with Nye that, first, soft power is an important means to achieve national interests. Second, soft power is a part and parcel of (comprehensive) national power. Third, political power plays a significant role in determining the process and conditions of how soft/hard resources can be effectively translated into soft power in reality.[88] Since the first point of convergence has been detailed in the second chapter, I shall concentrate on the second and third point.

As mentioned before, Nye's continuous efforts to stress the rising importance of soft power in the age of complex interdependence aims to correct the tendency to overvalue the role of American hard power among the American policy pundits and scholars. Nye argues that both soft and hard power is equally important for the building of national power. Since soft power is a crucial component of American national power, the American government, according to Nye, should take advantage of it rather than squander it. Similarly, Chinese political circle and scholarly community also increasingly realize the significance of soft power in the 21st century, and formally incorporated it into China's CNP.

The concept of CNP was put forward in the 1980s and continues to be influential in the Chinese political and academic circles. During the last period of the Cold War when a stalemate of military struggle between American and the Soviet Union was obvious, Deng Xiaoping concluded that "peace" and "development" were the two "major

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[88] Gerald Chan, *Chinese Perspectives on International Relations* (London: Macmillan Press, 1999), 30-33; Glaser and Murph, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics," 17-18.

subjects" for the world. Deng also suggested that one must assess a country's national power "comprehensively", namely, from all sides.[89] The primary purpose of this suggestion is to develop a precise analysis of China's future security environment and its power status, and the most importantly, to rank the *economic development* as a top priority while downgrading the role of military power for the promotion of CNP.[90]

Chinese experts and scholars quickly embarked on CNP research according to Deng's requirement for a new assessment of China's security environment. Two leading research institutes—Academy of Military Science (AMS) and Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS)—were deeply involved in developing new conceptions of national power. Given that CNP is the aggregate of overall qualities and strengths of a country, these organizations argued that the "spirit factors", "soft factors" or "cultural power" should be taken into account for the evaluation of CNP.[91] However, they seemed to place greater emphasis on the economic power that is presumed to be rest on the advanced science and technology. Soft power seems not a major concern for them as Deng unequivocally prioritized economic development for China's modernization.[92]

The notion of cultural soft power gained traction during the Hu-Wen administration (2002–2012), though economic development remained the dominant state agenda.[93] Although Chinese hard power has increased remarkably in the post-Cold War era, the development of Chinese soft power fell far behind and culminated in a "soft power deficit".[94] As a result, there is a consensus among Chinese leadership, pundits and intellectuals that the development of soft power is crucial to rebalance China's rising

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[89] Deng Xiaoping, quoted in Shuofeng Huang, *Zhenghe Guoli Lun [On Comprehensive National Power]* (Beijing: Chinese Academy of Social Science Publishing House, 1992), 7.
[90] P. K. Ghosh, "The Chinese Concept of Comprehensive National Power: An Overview," *Air Power* 4, no. 4 (2009): 23; Aki Mori, "Rich Country, Strong Armed Forces? The Sources of China's Comprehensive National Power," *Asia-Pacific Research Forum*, no. 38 (2007): 22-3.
[91] Michael Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future Security Environment* (Washington DC: National Defense University Press, 2000), 218-23.
[92] Yongnian Zheng, "Comprehensive National Power: An Expression of China's New Nationalism," in *China's Political Economy*, 197, 202, 205.
[93] Weihong Zhang, "China's Cultural Future: From Soft Power to Comprehensive National Power," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 16, no. 4 (2010): 383-402.
[94] Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*, 215; Joseph S. Nye, "China's Soft Power Deficit," *Wall Street Journal*, May 9, 2012.

hard power and to promote Chinese CNP.[95] Former President Hu claimed that one of the major purposes of promoting cultural soft power is to "strengthen China's competitiveness in the contest for CNP in the international arena."[96] Above all, Chinese leadership, pundits and intellectuals agree that soft power matters significantly in building (comprehensive) national power.

Additionally, political power is a common concern in both Chinese and American soft power studies. That is because governments have to employ political power to create conditions conducive to the effective conversion of soft and/or hard resources into soft power.[97] Nye stresses the importance of setting agenda, shaping preferences, building favorable image, advocating multilateral diplomacy, and launching public diplomacy to exert and promote soft power. Chinese experts and scholars also advocated similar suggestions to Nye's.[98]

Among Chinese IR experts and scholars, Yan is a leading proponent of political power school in China. Political power figures significantly in Yan's analysis of ancient Chinese thought and modern Chinese national power. He argues that "political power is the core of soft power",[99] namely, cultural resources require a political application on the basis of a country's domestic and international mobilization capability. Along Yan's line of reasoning, strategic reliability or credibility is crucial for the Chinese international mobilization, and accordingly, the development of Chinese political power.[100] Meanwhile, Yan also drew on an idealistic vision of political power expounded by various ancient Chinese thinkers: the morally informed leadership is the

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[95] Glaser and Murph, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics," 21-22.
[96] Hu, "Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive for New Victories in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects: Report to the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China."
[97] Matthew Kroenig, Melissa McAdam, and Steven Weber, "Taking Soft Power Seriously," 412-31.
[98] Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, 148-68.
[99] Xuetong Yan, "Ruanshili De Hexin Shi Zhengzhi Shili [Political Power is the Core of Soft Power]," *Global Times*, May 22, 2007.
[100] "From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 7, no. 2 (2014): 160-1; "Wenhua Ziyuan Xuyao Zhengzhi Yunyong [Cultural Resources Requires Political Application]," *Global Times*, August 2, 2007.

key to political power.[101] Therefore, Yan argues that China should provide a "higher-quality moral leadership" or humane authority, in order to outcompete with US hegemony. In so doing, the Chinese government should move away from the excessive focus on economic growth and move forward building a just and harmonious society by effectively addressing political corruption and the widening gulf between the rich and poor.[102]

Yan's emphasis on political power calls for a reconsideration, as he did not address how the ancient idealistic view of political power can be applied to the current operation of soft power. However, his argument about political power enriches China's soft power studies beyond the cultural school. Observers tend to contrast the cultural school with the political school.[103] That is, the cultural school argues that the core of soft power is culture as it is integral to the national cohesion and creativity. In contrast, the political school again argues that political power is the bedrock of soft power as it directly determines how soft power can be utilized effectively. Despite the different emphasis placed on both schools, they are mutually compatible, as soft resources arguably demand a political application to be translated into soft power. Attention needs to be given to this unsettled identity dilemma between Chinese unique traditions and the demand for their modernization around the debate of both schools.

Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics?

Researchers and scholars in China and abroad are keen to talk up "soft power with Chinese characteristics", notwithstanding the term "Chinese characteristics" risks becoming a cliché. Simply put, soft power with Chinese characteristics takes on its unique nature, different assumptions and resources compared with that of American soft power. Chinese soft power is defined against American soft power. Chinese pundits and

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[101] Daniel Bell, "Introduction," in *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power*, 12.
[102] Xuetong Yan, "How China Can Defeat America," *The New York Times*, November 20, 2011.
[103] Barthélémy Courmont, "What Implication for Chinese Soft Power: Charm Offensive or New Hegemony?" 347-49; Glaser and Murph, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics," 13-18.

scholars generally consider that American soft power is a clear manifestation of American hegemony, which has a negative connotation in the Chinese context. To put this in the increasingly-invoked context of Chinese traditional thought, American soft power is generally seen as hegemonic authority, which is characterized by compulsion, coercion and force. By contrast, Chinese soft power represents human authority, with its moral superiority and active defense.[104] There are two unstated assumptions behind the contrast between Chinese and American soft power.

The first unstated assumption is that Chinese political and academic circles generally equate Nye's soft power account with the American government's soft power policy. This hidden assumption reflects an ingrained stereotype among Chinese politicians and scholars: American scholars' theoretical views set a strong foundation for the justification of American government's position and policy on the same issue-agenda. Both Huntington's "clash of civilizations" thesis and Mearsheimer's "China's unpeaceful rise" argument were mistaken by Chinese scholars as a well-accepted guideline for the American government's China policy.[105] Yet, nothing could be further from the truth. Cox is correct to point out that "theory is always *for* someone or *for* some purpose" [emphasis in original].[106] Nevertheless, academic theory does not necessarily serve the state. The major problem behind this Chinese scholarship is to assume that there is no gap between theory and policy.[107] Therefore, not enough attention is paid to examining what kind of theory is utilized for whom and for what purposes. To say the least, if Nye's soft power account completely matches American government's position and policy in this regard as Chinese scholars asserted, then they cannot explain why the Bush administration was unreceptive to Nye's prescription of utilizing soft power to address the paradox of American power. Consequently, the first

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[104] Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, chapter 4.

[105] Jisi Wang, ed. *Wenming Yu Guoji Zhengzhi: Zhongguo Xuezhe Ping Hengtingdun De Wenming Chongtu Lun [Civilizations and International Politics: Chinese Scholars Reviewing Huntington's 'Clash of Civilization']* (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publisher, 1996); Shaomin Xu, "Survival, Power and Offensive Realism," in *Guoji Guanxi Mingzhu Xuandu [Classics in International Relations: Guides and Reviews]*, ed. Ruolan Fan (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2015), 86-99.

[106] Robert W. Cox, *Approaches to World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 87.

[107] The difference between scholars and politicians is sharp and clear, for example, see Joseph S. Nye, "Bridging the Gap between Theory and Policy," *Political Psychology* 29, no. 4 (2008): 597-98.

unstated assumption is problematic.

The second unstated assumption is that Chinese experts and scholars generally believe that the American government pursues *realpolitik* cloaked with liberal discourses. It is not a baseless judgment as both realists like Mearsheimer and Carr had strongly criticized this peculiar form of "hypocrisy" among Anglo-Saxon scholars.[108] From the Chinese perspective, Nye's soft power account serves as an attractive disguise for the maintenance of "American hegemony", "American empire" or "power politics" and the various corresponding "isms" on the international stage.[109] This assumption also calls for a further reconsideration.

It is important to note that the popular IR lexicons "hegemony", "hegemonism", "empire" and "imperialism" have *moral* implications in the Chinese context. As China suffered heavily at the hands of Western and Japanese imperialists during the century of humiliation, and even became a victim of Soviet Union's intimidation and bullying from the 1960s to 1980s, the Chinese people have developed an instinctive hostility against hegemonism and imperialism.[110] They believed that these terminologies are evil and morally wrong even though they have never clarified what they exactly refer to. Interestingly, Nye also observes that the term of hegemony is sometimes used for opprobrium by the Chinese politician, and he concludes that this term is used "less often" or "less negatively" in countries where American soft power is "strong".[111]

Chinese experts and scholars seemed to overlook Nye's reluctance to use these terms and his criticism of the policy recipe of American hegemony and empire proposed by some of his American peers. For example, Nye argues that the usage of empire may produce some useful analogies, but it should not be taken too far. Despite the fact that there exists unequal relationships between US and the weaker powers, America's

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[108] John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 26.
[109] Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, 201-8.
[110] Jisi Wang, "Meiguo Baquan De Luoji [The Logic of American Hegemony]," *Meiguo Yanjiu [American Studies Quarterly]*, no. 3 (2003): 8; David Shambaugh, *Beautiful Imperialist: China Perceives America (1972-1990)*, 302.
[111] Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone*, 15.

predominance is not as the same as the European overseas empire in the 19th and 20th century because of the absence of "formal political control". Hence, it is misleading to use this term. Neither the new usage "informal empire" nor "imperialism of free trade" can save this metaphor.[112] Worse still, the conceptual application of empire may have negative consequences for American foreign policy as it fails to reconsider how the world has changed. A similarly negative implication may occur if the term hegemony is accepted as a guideline for American foreign policy. That is because Nye points out that, the jargon American hegemony only makes sense in the political-military dimension, yet the application of this term obviously becomes unwarranted in the economic and transnational nontraditional security dimensions because of the undergoing power transition and diffusion.[113] Due to the analytical insufficiency related to hegemony and empire, Nye argues that "multilateral leadership" is more suitable for the 21st century international politics.[114] The very essence of this idea, ironically, is close to the idea of human authority endorsed by the Chinese politicians and scholars.

Chinese policy pundits and scholars' assertion that Nye's soft power account is employed for sustaining American hegemony or empire is analytically problematic. That is because Nye unequivocally refuted the application of both terms to describe American foreign policy. However, this idea—Nye's conception of soft power is *not* for intended as a blueprint for the operationalization of American hegemony or empire—has not been seriously considered by the Chinese pundits and scholars, and they continued to use these terms negatively. The rising political influence of the hawks after 1989 has increasingly made the defamation of US in relation to the American hegemony or American empire a *modus operandi* among the political and academic circles.[115] Therefore, it is not just politically correct but also morally right for them to criticize American hegemonism or imperialism.[116] American soft power is not on

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[112] *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 136.
[113] Ibid., 135-39.
[114] Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 200-4.
[115] Michael Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* (New York: Henry Holt And Company, 2014).
[116] Phillip C. Saunders, "China's American Watchers: Changing Attitudes towards the United States," *The China Quarterly*, no. 161 (2000): 44-5; Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations: Power and Policy since the Cold War*, 2nd ed. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2008), 66.

exception. It is thus not surprising that Chinese politicians, pundits and scholars warned against American "cultural imperialism", "cultural invasion", "Americanization", "Westernization", and the most importantly, against "peaceful evolution" that is supposed to be orchestrated by the American government.[117] In conclusion, paranoid about American hegemony in general and American soft power in particular, reflects a deep-seated insecurity of Chinese political and intellectual elites that internal confusion invites external calamity. This fear also reveals the unresolved identity dilemma between China's unique traditions and their modernization. American soft power is negatively defined to justify the attractiveness of Chinese soft power in the international and domestic level.

Comparing to the negative definition of American soft power as a manifestation of American hegemony, Chinese experts and scholars write that Chinese soft power is a good example of humane authority. Chinese soft power is defense-oriented as it aims to fend off American cultural imperialism and peaceful evolution at home, refute China threat thesis abroad, shape a favorable international image of China, deepen engagement with the international community, and persuade international audiences to believe the good faith of China's peaceful rise. Therefore, the Chinese government does not seek to beef up its sphere of influence internationally, or to challenge American status in East Asia.[118]

The common inclination to see Chinese soft power as an embodiment of humane authority shows that the traditional moralization of power continues to hold sway. The moralization of Chinese soft power as a form of humane authority is founded on the idealistic harmonization of interests seen from the perspective of Chinese politicians, pundits and scholars. That is because the time-honored Confucian tradition— "harmony is most precious" (*yiheweigui*) and "harmony without sameness" (*heerbutong*)—seems

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[117] Cho and Jeong, "China's Soft Power: Discussions, Resources, and Prospects," 460; David Shambaugh, *China's Communist Party: Atrophy and Adaptation* (Washington DC and Berkeley: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and University of California Press, 2008), 74-5, 88-92.
[118] Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, 168-74.

to be very much at play in the minds of Chinese political and intellectual elites. For example, Tong Shijun, a leading IR scholar in China, asserts, "Chinese soft power is based on the harmony of interests between the Chinese people and the international community".[119] This assertion is also frequently repeated by the Chinese leaders, of which the proactive propagation of "harmonious world" is the most illustrative. As elucidated in chapter 2, Nye's conceptualization of soft power demonstrates his ambivalence towards the idealistic harmonization of interests. As a result, the conflict of interests matters for the conceptualization and operationalization of soft power. Soft power in this sense is more realistic and less idealistic. The positive definition of Chinese soft power in terms of humane authority does not say that it negates the conflict of interests in its real political application, but highlights the significance of traditional legacy in understanding current Chinese soft power.

Apart from the different nature and assumptions of Chinese soft power compared to that of the US, another salient difference comes down to the different emphasis on soft power resources. The general differences are summed up as Wang and Lu write:

> "Nye's discussion of American soft power highlights *contemporary* American pop culture while Chinese discussion of Chinese soft power underscores *traditional* Chinese culture. Nye stresses the attraction of American *political* institutions and values, such as democracy and human rights, while Chinese analysts emphasize the attraction of the Chinese *economic* development model. Furthermore…Chinese analysts attach great importance to the *domestic* foundation of soft power broadly defined…whereas Nye has focused his attention on improving the substance and style of America's *foreign* policy to make the US more attractive abroad".[120] [Emphasis in original]

Wang and Lu correctly point out the uniqueness of Chinese soft resources compared to

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[119] Shijun Tong, *Wenhua Ruanshili [On Cultural Soft Power]* (Chongqing: Chongqing Publishing House, 2008), 12.
[120] Hongying Wang and Yeh-Chung Lu, "The Conception of Soft Power and Its Policy Implication: A Comparative Study of China and Taiwan," 431.

that of US. However, they paid less attention to the identity politics that complicates China's conceptualization of soft resources and its political application. Therefore, it is significant to note that these soft resources (such as traditional Chinese culture and "Beijing Consensus") should not be taken for granted as some sorts of prevailing understandings are continuously disputed. In short, the identity dilemma between cultural Chineseness and Western modernization significantly influences the construction of Chinese soft resources. This identity politics explains why Chinese politicians, pundits and scholars have devoted special attention to the domestic foundation of Chinese soft power as Wang and Lu noted above.

Chinese politicians and scholars strongly assert that traditional Chinese cultures and values (such as Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism) are primary sources of Chinese soft power. As Confucianism has long been rendered as a dominant doctrine and even a synonym with the "Chinese civilization",[121] it is not surprising to see that Confucian core values such as "harmony", "order", "peace", "virtue" (*de*), "propriety" (*li*), "benevolence" (*ren*), "people-as-the-base (*minben*)"and "humanistic spirit" have been frequently elevated by Chinese politicians, pundits and scholars. These values are lumped together as a "treasure box" of Chinese soft power resources. The informal alliance between the party-state and cultural nationalists plays a crucial role in defining the core of Chinese cultural soft power. However, this alliance cannot completely end the hot debate revolving around the predominant strand of Chinese traditional cultures, comparative advantages of each cultural strand, and most importantly, the interplay between cultural Chineseness and Western modernization.

The debate on soft power resources and its buildup again embodies the identity politics centering on the cultural Chineseness and the Western modernization. As a superpower and the epitome of Western modernization, the US is an expedient target for Chinese elites as at least it may help to alleviate this frustrated identity dilemma. For a long time, Chinese leadership and intellectuals are keen to the negative presentation of "what

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[121] Shaohua Hu, "Confucianism and Western Democracy," *Journal of Contemporary China* 6, no. 15 (1997): 348-51.

China is not" or "what China is against", and often fudge another essential issue of "what China really is" or "what China is for".[122] Similarly, Chinese scholarship on soft power is impressed by a strong belief that "China is *not* being the US". Not only is it a convenient way to shape its identity as people normally define their identities through what they are *not* and even *against* others,[123] but a significant way to improve its "negative soft power" internationally and domestically.[124] Internationally, in many respects, the loss of American soft power produces opportunity for the rise of Chinese soft power given they are in some ways in a zero-sum contest.[125] More importantly, soft power is primarily employed by the Chinese policy-makers and established intellectuals in the domestic level to actively construct a positive China in contrast to the negative images of otherness particularly in reference to the US, Japan or the West at large. As a result, the domestic construction of negative soft power, according to Callahan, represents Chinese political and intellectual elites' efforts to ameliorate its identity dilemma and strengthen regime legitimacy.[126] This is a key point I will develop and explore in chapter 6.

The domestic and even international debate surrounding the Beijing Consensus in the last decade also sheds light on the function of Chinese identity politics. After all, the Beijing Consensus is commonly defined in contrast to the Washington Consensus. The debate demonstrates that China remains fraught with contradictions, tensions and pitfalls, regardless of its current economic achievement.[127] Chinese pundits and scholars are still hotly debating the existence of Beijing Consensus, its key ingredients if such a model exists, and its application to other developing countries.[128] The Chinese

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[122] Rumi Aoyama, *China's Public Diplomacy* (Tokyo: Waseda University, 2007), 20; Breslin, *"The Soft Notion of China's 'Soft Power',"* 12-13; "The 'China Model' and the Global Crisis: From Friedrich List to a Chinese Mode of Governance?" *International Affairs* 87, no. 6 (2011): 1338; Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*, 7-8.

[123] Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, 21, 67; *Who Are We? The Challenge of America's National Identity* (New York and London: Simon & Schuster, 2004), chapter 2; Rodney Barker, *Making Enemies* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

[124] Lampton, *The Three Faces of Chinese Power: Might, Money, and Minds*, 117.

[125] Shaun Breslin, "Understanding China's Regional Rise: Interpretations, Identities and Implications," 828.

[126] William A. Callahan, "Identity and Security in China: The Negative Soft Power of the China Dream," 216-29.

[127] Joshua Cooper Ramo, "The Beijing Consensus" (London: The Foreign Policy Center, 2004), 5; Mark Beeson and Fujian Li, "What Consensus? Geopolitics and Policy Paradigms in China and the United States," *International Affairs* 91, no. 1 (2015): 102-5.

[128] Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, 134-6; Breslin, "The 'China Model' and the Global Crisis: From Friedrich List to a Chinese Mode of Governance?"

government's contradictory attitudes towards Beijing Consensus add relevance to its identity dilemma. The Chinese government played an important role in the domestic popularization of Beijing Consensus on one hand, yet the Chinese govenrment officially denied exporting Beijing Consensus to the developing world on the other. China's soft power campaigns, in this sense, seem to be both domestically and internationally oriented.

Conclusion

The popularization of soft power in China takes place in a uniquely historical and cultural context. Chinese soft power is defined in contrast to American soft power. Chinese soft power on one hand shares common features with that of US, such as their common focus on the close link between soft power and the national interest, between soft power and (comprehensive) national power in general and political power in particular. However, a greater emphasis has been placed on the differences between Chinese and American soft power in terms of nature, assumptions and resources. To put it in the increasingly-invoked context of Chinese traditional thought of power, American soft power is generally seen as hegemonic authority, which is characterized by compulsion, coercion and force. By contrast, Chinese soft power represents human authority, with its moral superiority and active defense. The moralization of Chinese soft power as a manifestation of humane authority is founded on the key assumption related to the harmonization of interests seen from the perspective of Chinese politicians, pundits and scholars. The identity dilemma between cultural Chineseness and Western modernization significantly influences the construction of Chinese characteristics of soft resources such as Chinese traditional culture and Beijing Consensus. This identity politics explains why Chinese politicians, pundits and scholars have devoted special attention to the domestic foundation of Chinese soft power. The next chapter will consider the operationalization of Chinese soft power.

1323-43.

Chapter 4: China's Soft Power Campaigns:

Process, Vehicles and Impacts

Having detailed the Chinese political and academic elites' conceptualization of soft power in a uniquely historical and cultural context, this chapter will examine the political application of soft power in promoting China's positive attractiveness, institutional and constitutive power. Four hypotheses will be tested in this chapter. That is, H1: soft power mainly serves national interests. H2: soft power is primarily operational in the international arena. H3: non-state actors are tactically the primary drivers of national soft power campaigns. H4: the application of soft power, like power in general, is contingent on a specific scope and domain. In so doing, this chapter will be organized as follows. The first part will focus on two significant feature of China's policy decision-making generally, and its particular application to the decision-making of China's soft power campaigns as a national project. Subsequently, it will describe various vehicles used in an overt or covert way to promote Chinese soft power. A preliminary analysis of China's soft power impacts will follow.

The central arguments of this chapter include, first, the idea of the national interest plays a crucial role in the Chinese foreign policy-making in post-Mao China and the recent application of soft power as a political project. Second, China's soft power campaigns are a two-level game as they target both domestic and international audiences. Third, the Chinese government is a dominant driver of China's soft power campaigns. Fourth, the Chinese government has employed different vehicles to deal with different scopes and domains in the course of these campaigns. Last, the global impacts of China's soft power campaigns are mixed—generally negative in the developed world while relatively positive in the developing world.

On Chinese Foreign Policy-Making

Given the key goals of China's soft power campaigns are not pursued in a vacuum, it is important to consider its decision-making process. However, tapping into this process remains a challenge in the current Chinese political context, notwithstanding the Chinese government's increasing effort to promote transparency in this regard. Therefore, it is not surprising that relevant scholarship in this field of research sheds little light on the decision-making process of China's soft power campaigns. As an important report examining China's soft power campaigns in developing countries states bluntly in its beginning:

> "Although China's foreign policymaking has become more regularized in recent years, few claim to be certain about how China's foreign policy decisions are made, about who makes them, or about what long-term goals Chinese policies seek to attain".[1]

The Chinese government's long-standing sensitivity towards its decision-making process has made the formulation of key national policies remain a field that is carefully shielded from outside scrutiny.[2] Nevertheless, the statement quoted above seems to be overstated. Despite the problems associated with the Chinese decision-making process in reality, a series of studies marked with a strong feel of *post hoc* scholarly rationalization and empirical validation has already produced some sound and fundamental findings about China's decision-making structures, features, mechanism and its general process in post-Mao China.[3] For the policy-making of China's soft

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[1] Congressional Research Service, *China's Foreign Policy and 'Soft Power' in South America, Asia, and Africa* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 2008), 1.

[2] Ning Lu, *The Dynamics of Foreign-Policy Decisionmaking in China*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2000), 188.

[3] For example, see Kenneth G. Lieberthal and Michel Oksenberg, eds., *Policy Making in China: Leaders, Structures, and Processes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); David M. Lampton, ed. *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Ear of Reform 1978-2000* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); A. Doak Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China: Structure and Process* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985); Hongyi Lai, ed. *The Domestic Sources of China's Foreign Policy: Regimes, Leadership, Priorities and Process* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Carol Lee Harmin and Suisheng Zhao, eds., *Decision-Making in Deng's China: Perspectives from Insiders* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1995); Linda Jakobson and Ryan Manuel, "How Are Foreign Policy Decisions Made in China?," *Asia & The Pacific Policy Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016): 101-110.

power campaigns in particular, two major features of Chinese policy decision-making merit greater attention: the co-existence of vertical and horizontal structure in policy-making and the changing role of national interests in shaping Chinese foreign policy.

The first feature has been widely entertained by different analytical models such as "fragmented authoritarianism", [4] "pluralistic elitism", [5] and "horizontal authoritarianism".[6] On one hand, the central policy decision-making is operated along with the hierarchical structure where the leading nucleus of political leadership (*lingdao hexin*) or leading nuclear circles (*lingdao jiti*) has largely unchallenged authority to make the final decision. Such a centralization of power historically is either carried out by the "paramount" leader such as Mao and Deng, or crystalized in the form of formal/informal political architecture. The Politburo and its Standing Committee, CCP secretariat, Central Military Commission and General Staff Department of the PLA, and some relatively permanent LSGs[7] are particularly relevant for the latter form.[8] To sum up, the central decision-making power remains the prerogative of a small group of power elites.[9] Since central decision-making is made by top leaders who face little institutional constraint from political forces out of the elite circles, informal politics—neither explicitly stated in the CCP's Charter nor in any other official document—still play a crucial role in this respect under some circumstances.[10]

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[4] Kenneth G. Lieberthal and David M. Lampton, eds., *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), 1-32.

[5] Xuanli Liao, *Chinese Foreign Policy Think Tanks and China's Policy Towards Japan* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Chinese University Press, 2006).

[6] Quansheng Zhao, *Interpreting Chinese Foreign Policy: The Micro-Macro Linkage Appraoch* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[7] For more discussions of LSGs and their evolution see: Taeho Kim, "Leading Small Groups: Managing All under Heaven," in *China's Leadership in the 21st Century: The Rise of the Fourth Generation*, ed. David M. Finkelstein and Maryanne Kivlehan (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 2003), 121-39.

[8] Qi Zhou, "Organization, Structure and Image in the Making of Chinese Foreign Policy since the Early 1990s," (PhD Diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2008), chapter 2.

[9] For example, see Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations: Power and Policy since the Cold War*, Chapter 3; Jean-Pierre Cabestan and Cabestan Jean-Pierre, "China's Foreign- and Security-Policy Decision-Making Processes under Hu Jintao," *Journal of current Chinese affairs* 38, no. 3 (2009): 64; Bin Yu, "The Study of Chinese Foreign Policy: Problems and Prospect," *World Politics* 46, no. 2 (1994): 256.

[10] Peter N. S. Lee, "The Informal Politics of Leadership Succession in Post-Mao China," in *Informal Politics in East Asia*, ed. Lowell Dittmer, Haruhiro Fukui, and Peter N. S. Lee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 165. Also see Lowell Dittmer, Haruhiro Fukui, and Peter N.S. Lee, eds., *Informal Politics in East Asi*a, chapter 5, 6 and 7; Tang Tsou, "Chinese Politics at the Top: Factionalism or Informal Politics? Balance-of-Power Politics or a Game to Win All?," *The China Journal*, no. 34 (1995): 95-196.

On the other hand, the hierarchical structure of decision-making does not deny the involvement and interaction of various bureaucracies or apparatuses across the state, party and the PLA. The development of "decentralization", "professionalization" and "institutionalization" in the decision-making mechanism has gained momentum since the reform and opening-up policy was officially announced in 1978.[11] The fundamental reason of its development comes down to the growing complexity and extensiveness of China's integration with the international society. The rising engagement with the international society pushes the Chinese central leadership to enlarge its input by requesting further relevant information and wide consultations with various central bureaucracies for policy recommendations. The central leadership also increasingly depends on the coordination among key bureaucracies and experts to address some technical issues in an efficient and professional way. Consequently, the overall process of Chinese decision-making does not only become more extensive, bureaucratic, and consensus-oriented, also elicits bureaucratic and factional bargaining in terms of policy decision-making and its subsequent implementation.[12]

Another significant feature noted above is the rising role of "national interest" in China's foreign policy decision-making in post-Mao era. The state-led nationalism or patriotism has lent more support to its making of foreign policy than by the official ideology of Marxism.[13] As a result, the influence of official ideology of Marxism in the foreign policy-making has been seriously eroded.[14]

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[11] Li Gong, Honghua Men, and Dongfang Sun, "Zhongguo Waijiao Juece Jizhi Bianqian Yanjiu (1949-2009) [China's Foreign Policy Decision-Making Mechanism: Changes and Evolution since 1949]," *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi [World Economics and Politics]*, no. 11 (2009): 44-54.

[12] Harry Harding, *China's Second Revolution: Reform after Mao* (Washington DC: Brookings Institute Press, 1987); Lu, *The Dynamics of Foreign-Policy Decisionmaking in China*; Lampton, *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Ear of Reform 1978-2000*; David Shambaugh, "Containment or Engagement of China? Calculating Beijing's Responses," *International Security* 21, no. 2 (1996): 196-201.

[13] Yingjie Guo, "Patriotic Villains and Patriotic Heroes: Chinese Literary Nationalism in the 1990s," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 4, no. 1-2 (1998): 163-88; Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation: Historical Memory in Chinese Politics and Foreign Relations*; "National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China," *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 4 (2008): 783-806; Jie Chen, "The Impact of Reform on the Party and Ideology in China," *Journal of Contemporary China* 4, no. 9 (1995): 22-34. Baogang He and Yingjie Guo, *Nationalism, National Identity and Democratization in China* (London: Ashgate, 2000).

[14] Lampton, *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Ear of Reform 1978-2000*, 36; Jing Men, "Changing Ideology in China and Its Impact on Chinese Foreign Policy," in *New Dimension of Chinese Foreign Policy*, ed. Sujian Guo and Shiping Hua (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2007), 7-39.

The Chinese government rarely used the concept of "national interest" during the Mao-in-command period from 1949-1976, and it was carried with different connotations even occasionally applied.[15] According to Zhao, the interest of the ruling classes outweighed any consideration of more inclusive Chinese national interests in this period. Communist internationalism, reflected in Mao's calling for "proletarian internationalism" and "world communist revolution", was said to be the driving force behind the Chinese foreign policy-making.[16]

It is clearly observed that, however, the Chinese government has been unabashedly framing its foreign policy according to the guiding force of (core) national interests (including sovereignty, security and development) more in line with Deng's doctrine than the Marxist ideological dictum since the late 1970s.[17] Deng declared that the development of China's foreign relationships should primarily rest on the consideration of its long-term national strategic interests. It should also respect the interests of other countries, and avoid wrangling over the historical and ideological differences among different social systems.[18] Put another way, China should *not* shape its relations with other countries according to an earlier ideological benchmark, as then Premier Zhao claimed in his work report on the seventh Five-Year Plan in 1986.[19] This guiding principle was further enshrined in the PRC Constitution as one of pillars of Jiang's "Three Represents Thought": "[CCP] represents the development trend of China's advanced productive forces; the orientation of China's advanced culture; and *the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people in China*" [Italics

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[15] Jisi Wang, "China's Search for a Grand Strategy: A Rising Great Power Finds Its Way," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 2 (2011): 69; Qingguo Jia, "From Self-Imposed Isolation to Global Cooperation: The Evolution of Chinese Foreign Policy since the 1980s," *Politik und Gesellschaft, International Politics and Society*, no. 2 (1999): 168-78.

[16] Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese*, 231.

[17] Yan, *Zhongguo Guojia Liyi Fenxi [Analysis of Chinese National Interests]*; Zheng, *Discovering Chinese Nationalism in China*, 138; Jun Niu, *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Duiwai Guanxishi Gailun [Introduction the History of China's Foreign Relations: 1949-2000]* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2010), 254.

[18] Deng Xiaoping, *Deng Xiaoping Wenxuan [Slected Works of Deng Xiaoping]*, vol. 3 (Beijing: People's Publisher, 1993), 330.

[19] Ziyang Zhao, "Guanyu Diqige Wunian Jihua De Baogao [Report on the Seventh Five-Year Plan]," accessed 1 September, 2014.
 http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64184/64186/66679/4493899.html.

mine].[20] The transcendence of national interests over ideological differences to strive for peace, development and cooperation with all countries around the world remains a linchpin of China's professed peaceful rise strategy in the 21st century.[21] Above all, despite the potential role of Marxist ideology in domestic politics,[22] its influence on China's foreign policy-making has been eroded by the increasing role of national interests underpinned by the state-led nationalism or patriotism.[23]

On the Policy-Making of China's Soft Power Campaigns

Both features—the vertical and horizontal structure and the guiding force of national interests in the making of Chinese foreign policy—has helped illuminate the policy-making of China's soft power campaigns. As first-hand data related to the specific process of China's soft power policy-making is not accessible at this moment, attention is accorded to both features noted above.

Chinese central leadership consensus and the wide bureaucratic engagement

The central leadership made a consensus on the development of Chinese soft power. The ruling elites understand that China's soft power deficit should be addressed, and stress the importance to promote Chinese soft power.[24] Without achieving such a consensus among central leadership and the broad ruling elites, the political agenda of soft power will not be achieved. Although Nye's idea of soft power had been introduced into China in the early 1990s, and even some leading political advisors or scholars (such as Wang Huning and Pang Zhongying) highlighted its significance, the central leadership led by Jiang seemed not to pay much attention to this agenda. Economic reform and development was the top priority instead. It is the Hu-Wen administration

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[20] Winberg Chai, "The Ideological Paradigm Shifts of China's Worldview", *Asian Affairs* 30, no. 3 (2003): 163-175.

[21] Bijian Zheng, "China's 'Peaceful Rise' to Great-Power Status," *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 5 (2005): 22.

[22] Robert Ware, "Reflections on Chinese Marxism," *Socialism and Democracy* 27, no. 1 (2013): 131-60.

[23] Deng, "The Chinese Conception of National Interests in International Relations," 312, 314, 326; Suisheng Zhao, "Foreign Policy Implications of Chinese Nationalism Revisited: the Strident Turn", *Journal of Contemporary China* 22, no. 82 (2013): 535-53; Zheng, *Discovering Chinese Nationalism in China*, chapter 5.

[24] Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*, 208.

that elevated the promotion of Chinese soft power "near the top of China's list of priorities".[25]

Among a host of Leading Small Groups (LSGs) and bureaucratic organs, each plays a corresponding role in the top-level design (*dingceng sheji*) of China's soft power buildup and its subsequent implementation. Specifically speaking, LSGs play a crucial role in advising and coordinating the implementation of China's soft power campaigns. They may include Central Leading Group on Propaganda and Ideological Work (CLGPIW), Foreign Propaganda Leading Small Group (FPLSG), The Central Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group (FALSG) and National Security Leading Small Group (NSLSG). The National People's Congress (NPC) is also central to China's top design of developing soft power in terms of legislature. A consultative body called the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)—its Committee of Foreign Affairs (CFA) in particular—has significantly raised the central leadership's awareness to promote Chinese soft power through public diplomacy. The Central Propaganda Department (CPD)—a powerful party bureaucracy—controls and monitors the overall implementation of China's soft power campaigns. Other party organs including the United Front Work Department (UFWD), International Liaison Department (ILD) and Central Party School (CPS) are also supposed to be involved in these campaigns.

In the administrative level, there are various central government organs implementing China's multi-dimensional soft power campaigns in accordance with guiding opinions and policy initiatives. These bureaucratic organs in central government include the SCIO, the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television (SAPPRFT),[26] the Information Department, the Office of Public Diplomacy (OPD), and the Chinese Diplomatic Missions (CDMs) affiliated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), the Ministry of Information Industry (MII), the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Ministry of Culture (MOC), the

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[25] Zhongying Pang, "The Beijing Olympics and China's Soft Power" (Washington DC: Brookings Institute, 2008).
[26] In March 2013, the State Council announced that State Council General Administration of Press and Publications (GAPP) and State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT) emerged into a new body called SAPPRFT.

Ministry of Finance (MOF), the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), China's policy banks including The Export-Import Bank of China (China Exim Bank) and China Development Bank (CDB), and China's central bank called the People's Bank of China (PBOC).

In addition, other political actors also help promote China's soft power campaigns according to their specializations in different functional areas. First, China's traditional media and publication groups—Xinhua News Agency, China News Service (CNS), China Central Television (CCTV), China Radio International (CRI), *People's Daily* and *China Daily* media group, China Publishing Group (CPG) and its counterpart China International Publishing Group (CIPG)—are key facilitators of these campaigns. Second, the Office of the International Language Council (*hanban*) is the CI Headquarters. National Planning Office for Philosophy and Social Sciences (NPOPSS) are providing official research funding in order to set research agendas associated with Chinese soft power and co-opt research institutes and universities to justify and improve this key policy. It plays a key role in China's *domestic* soft power campaigns. Third, officially sponsored Councils, Academies and Associations, such as China Scholarship Council (CSC), Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), China Public Diplomacy Association and Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS), are key drivers of China's public diplomacy in terms of cultural and academic exchanges. Last but not least, grassroots associations (such as CECLA)[27] and non-governmental think tanks (such as Charhar Institute (*Chahaer Xuehui*) in particular)[28] have added a significant contribution to China's public diplomacy and soft

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[27] The CECLA (Comunidad de Estudios Chinosy Latinoamercanos) is a grassroots academic and cultural association established in 2015 by young scholars from China and Latin America. This association is dedicated to promoting Sino-Latin American cultural exchanges and dialogues, and evolving into a key platform for promoting "South-South cooperation" across the board in the long term. Detailed introduction of CECLA see http://www.cecla.org/About/DPI20T420B.html.

[28] As a non-governmental think tank on diplomacy and international relations, Charhar Institute was founded on 2009. Charhar Institute is the most active think tank in China to advocate studies of Chinese public diplomacy and its political application. It is said to play a leading role in successfully incorporating the concept of "public diplomacy" in Hu's 18th CCP National Congress Report. Its publically circulated journal called *Gonggong Waijiao Jikan (Public Diplomacy Quarterly)* has significant influence in both academic and political circles. It has become a highly influential "independent" think tank in Asia and even in the world, according to the *TICSP Global Go to Think Tank Report* published by the University of Pennsylvania. Detailed introduction of Charhar Institute see http://charhar.china.org.cn/2015-09/28/content_36700957.htm.

power buildup.[29]

Some organizations are subject to a higher authority, such as Chinese universities and *hanban* are directly subject to MOE. Some of them may have overlapping functions. For example, CFA, OPD, and the Charhar Institute are all dedicated to the promotion of Chinese public diplomacy. More to the point, most of organizations do not only deal with the international outreach of Chinese soft power, but also target a domestic constituency. The media giants and the governing body of CPD are good example of this. The Information Department and the Office of Public Diplomacy subordinated to the MFA also have foreign and domestic outreach. Not only do they devote attention to the international audiences, they also target ordinary Chinese people through the dialogue campaign such as giving lecture, organizing conferences and internet discussion, and routinizing the Open Day of the MFA.[30]

Before detailing the roles and functions of bureaucratic apparatus and political actors in China's soft power campaigns, two important questions ought to be addressed. The first question is why are there various bureaucratic organs and institutions involved in these campaigns? Given China's soft power campaigns are presumably operated both internationally and domestically and linked to different issue-agendas, their participation and engagement according to the logic of division of labor is in order. These bureaucratic apparatuses are supposed to play complementary roles in the integration of expertise, finance, infrastructure, networks and ideas according to their comparative advantages and specializations in different functional areas. As the promotion of Chinese soft power remains a key concern of central leadership, subordinated bureaucratic organs and institutions need to pay considerable attention to it and continue their active engagement as a result. The logic of division of labor also justifies the financial appropriations by different bureaucratic organs to carry out such

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[29] Detailed analyses see Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*, chapter 3 and 6; Ingrid d' Hooghe, *China's Public Diplomacy* (Leiden: Brill Nighoff and Hotei Publishing, 2014), chapter 4; Hartig, *Chinese Public Diplomacy: The Rise of the Confucius Institute*, chapter 5; Hongyi Lai and Su-Jeong Kang, "Domestic Bureaucratic Politics and Chinese Foreign Policy," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23, no. 86 (2014): 303-5.
[30] d' Hooghe, *China's Public Diplomacy*, 115-8.

an all-important political project.[31]

The deep involvement of bureaucratic organs and institutions in the political application of China's soft power campaigns raises another key question regarding the horizontal coordination, especially in the context of bureaucratic competition and bargains. It is important to note that the politics of coordination is a common challenge for the practitioners of government all around the world.[32] It is not an exclusive quandary for China. Unfortunately, due to the shortage of first-hand data pertaining to the full process of coordination, it remains a sensitive question.

The politics of coordination is important to understand China's soft power campaigns in practice. Some assert that China's soft power campaigns fall short of horizontal coordination among bureaucratic organs. This possibility of poor coordination is worsened by the lack of central LSGs or a top leader who can assume a leading role in overseeing the overall implementation of this political project.[33] Along this line of reasoning, China's ambitious project of global soft power campaigns may be limited by the shortage of effective coordination. However, this argument calls for reconsideration, suffice it to say that China's soft power campaigns have been gaining momentum. This fact may prompt us to suggest that some sorts of close and effective coordination are in place, albeit without full knowledge of their exact operation. A series of close observation and communications with Chinese insiders by foreign analysts lends further support to this hypothesis, as they confirmed that former President Hu made efforts to improve interagency coordination on all kinds of foreign policy-related decision, at both the central and provincial levels of government.[34] I suggest that Hu's efforts may also be instrumental in improving the horizontal coordination in relation to China's soft power campaigns. The policy coordination regarding the implementation of soft power

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[31] Interview with Wang Yiwei, Professor in the Renmin University, Beijing, 12 April, 2015; Interview with Zhuang Iiwei, Professor in the Jinan University, Guangzhou, 8 May, 2015; Interview with Zhou Fangyin, Professor in the Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (GDUFS), Guangzhou, 11 May, 2015.

[32] B. Guy Peters, "Managing Horizontal Government: The Politics of Co-Ordination," *Public Administration* 76, no. 2 (1998): 295-311.

[33] Glaser and Murphy, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics: The Ongoing Debate," 25.

[34] Evan S. Medeiros, *China's International Behavior: Activism, Opportunism and Diversification* (Washington DC: RAND, 2009), 195.

campaigns may also be highlighted during the Xi's era. That is because the "top-level design" in foreign policy-making and the "holistic approach" for the management of foreign affairs, according to Yang, becomes the most significant innovation in China's foreign policy practices undertaken by the Xi-Li administration.[35]

At the top level, I guess CLGPIW and FPLSG are two significant LSGs performing the function of policy coordination and consultation among bureaucratic apparatus in charge of ideological and cultural issues. While CLGPIW takes charges of the *internal* propaganda system, FPLSG dominates the *external* propaganda.[36] CLGPIW functions as the "overall coordinator", or "mouth" (*kou*), of "the entire bureaucratic propaganda system" including "propaganda, theoretical, cultural, media, publishing, and other departments" dealing with issues and agendas in the ideological field.[37] FPLSG plays a leading role in coordination among bureaucratic organs responsible for the *external* propaganda mainly through the administrative office of SCIO. With its mandate supervised by FPLSG, SCIO "oversees and coordinates a plethora of other institutions in China's soft power bureaucracy",[38] including OPD, Xinhua News Agency, CCTV, CRI, *People's Daily*, CIPG, CPAFFC, CNPIEC, CPG.

FALSG and NSLSG may also play a significant role in coordinating various bureaucratic apparatuses for the international campaigns in promoting Chinese soft power.[39] As a strong proponent of soft power project, then Chinese President Hu was the chair of both LSGs.[40] Therefore, both LSGs provide him with a top-level platform to initiate, coordinate and oversee the strategic development of China's global soft power campaigns. For example, in an internal speech to FALSG in January 4, 2006, Hu emphasized that soft power including Chinese cultural influence is also a key pillar of

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[35] Jiechi Yang, "Implementing the Chinese Dream," accessed November 1, 2015. http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/implementing-the-chinese-dream-9026.

[36] Anne-Marie Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2010), 12-3; David Shambaugh, "China's Propaganda System: Institutions, Processes and Efficacy," *China Journal*, no. 57 (2007): 31-3, 47-9.

[37] Shambaugh, "China's Propaganda System: Institutions, Processes and Efficacy," 31.

[38] Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*, 223.

[39] Both of them have same membership but different names. It is a vivid example of what observers called "one organ with two signboards".

[40] Alice Miller, "The CCP Central Committee's Leading Small Groups" (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, 2008).

China's rising global status and international influence.[41] The strategic importance of Chinese soft power requires a-whole-of-government approach. The promotion of Chinese soft power, therefore, should not be hijacked by the bureaucratic politics.

In turning the strategic design of soft power into a specific operation, a key figure (Liu Yandong) and a practical coordinated mechanism—"inter-ministry co-presence conferences" (*buji xietiao gongzuo jizhi*) (IMCPCs)[42]—play a crucial role. Insiders emphasize that Liu effectively manages the overall operation of China's soft power campaigns.[43] An important implication therefore ensues: China's soft power campaigns will continue in full swing as long as Liu remains incumbent in the key policy circles. Liu is a high-ranking politician who became the head of CCP's UFWD (2002-2007) and the State Councilor, and has been the vice Premier in charge of education, technology, health and cultural issues since 2008. Liu also serves consecutive terms on the Politburo, which elevates her as the first woman since Deng Yingchao (Former Premier Zhou Enlai's wife) to win this honor.[44] Arguably, Liu's high political authority and skills enable her to realize the central leaders' key concern of soft power into operational and effective campaigns in the short term.

Several IMCPCs established in 2009 also significantly deepen consultation and coordination among different ministries for the smooth proceeding of China's soft power campaigns in general and the Chinese culture going-global project in particular. For example, the MFA led the establishment of Public Diplomacy IMCPC, the MOC organized the External Cultural Exchange IMCPC, and the MOFCOM ushered in the establishment of Foreign Assistance IMCPC and Service Trade IMCPC.[45] Although the

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[41] Lisi Ma, "Guanyu Woguo Jiaqiang Ruanshili Jianshe De Chubu Sikao [Preliminary Thinking on the Chinese Soft Power Development]," *Dang de Wenxian [Literature of the Chinese Communist Party]*, no. 5 (2007): 35.

[42] A detailed analysis of IMCPCs sees, Chunkui Zhu and Wanlei Mao, "Zhongguo Zhengfu Bumen Hengxiang Xietiao Jizhi Yanjiu [A Study of Managing horizontal Coordination in the Chinese Government]," *Xingzheng Luntan [Administrative Tribute]*, no. 2 (2015): 39-44.

[43] Interview with a Chinese official, February 1, 2016.

[44] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liu_Yandong, accessed October 10, 2016.

[45] Wu Cai, "Zai Duiwai Wenhua Gongzuo Buji Lianxi Huiyi Disanci Quanti Huiyi Shangde Jianghua [Speech on the 3rd Plenary Inter-Ministry Co-Presence Conference]", accessed March 14, 2014, http://www.sdwht.gov.cn/html/2011/whbld_0314/2269.html

overall impact of these IMCPCs may be debatable,[46] they did play a role in enhancing key information sharing and coordination for the specific policy implementation according to those who participate in IMCPCs.[47] For example, the former Minister of Culture— Cai Wu—claims that the recent global cultural promotion of "Happy Chinese New Year Festival" (*huanle chunjie*) endorsed by the Chinese central leadership is an illustrative example to demonstrate the effectiveness of External Cultural Exchange IMCP.[48]

The guiding force of China's national interest

The guiding force of the so-called national interest significantly shapes the policy-making of soft power as a political project. Hu announced that China's soft power campaigns aim to promote Chinese national interests, particularly in terms of China's CNP and its national cohesion. Xi also stressed the importance of China's soft power as a key component of "Chinese Dream" (*zhonguo meng*) for building a prosperous and strong China in the near future.[49] In this sense, the policy-making of China's soft power campaigns mainly represents the logic of consequence rather than the logic of appropriateness. That is, these campaigns serve as both an important instrument to promote China's CNP and a series of communicative values and actions in mobilizing people to build a coherent national identity. The logic of consequence underlying China's soft power campaigns will be further examined in chapter 5 and 6.

The rising influence of the national-interest guiding principle entails the declining role of Marxist ideology in the policy-making of China's soft power campaigns, especially when the CCP's transition from a revolutionary party to a governing party is accelerating.[50] Sound evidence adds credibility to this argument. To start with, the

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[46] Interview with a political adviser, Beijing, April 14, 2015.

[47] Interview with a scholar, Beijing, April 15, 2015.

[48] Wu Cai, "Speech on the 3rd Plenary Inter-Ministry Co-Presence Conference".

[49] Xinhua News Agency, "Xi: China to Promote Cultural Soft Power," accessed November 1, 2016. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-01/01/c_125941955.htm.

[50] Qing Cao, "China's Soft Power: Formulations, Contestations and Communication," in *Discourse, Politics and Media in Contemporary China*, ed. Qing Cao, Hailong Tian, and Paul Chilton (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2014), 171-94; Timothy R. Heath, *China's New Governing Party Paradigm: Political Renewal and the*

ideological doctrine of Marxism matters in a sense that ideological security is central to the CCP's political legitimacy. However, the reemphasis on Marxist ideology (socialist core values in particular) during China's soft power campaigns does not automatically translate it into ideological security and political legitimacy for the party-state. The commonly acknowledged "legitimacy crisis" of the CCP would not have emerged otherwise.[51] Furthermore, the high profile given to the official announcement of loyalty to Marxist ideology does not necessarily require the central leadership to parry or forestall Western values of liberal democracy and human rights within China. As a result, the CCP's special attention to Marxist ideology in the course of soft power campaigns is less to do with this ideology *per se* than CCP's discursive hegemony.[52] After all, China's national security and regime security are officially conflated,[53] or at least intertwined.[54]

There is also evidence showing that the formal ideological discourse of Marxism has been replaced by the informal ideological discourse of *patriotism* during China's soft power campaigns. For example, patriotism is a key word in the high-level official policy guidelines, such as the *Outline of the National Program for Cultural Development during the 11th (2006–2010)* and *the 12th Five Year Period (2011–2015)*. By contrast, the party-state has little or even no mention of Marxism in a variety of official guiding opinions on China's soft power buildup, as listed in Table 4–3. The absence of Marxism in China's soft power campaigns is hardly surprising since patriotism or state-led nationalism has effectively replaced Marxism as "the common spiritual pillar" of the Chinese nation led by the CCP.[55] The party-state since the 1990s has been increasingly holding up fine traditions of Chinese culture as a central part of patriotism to

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Pursuit of National Rejuvenation (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014).

[51] Bruce Gilley and Heike Holbig, "The Debate on Party Legitimacy in China: A Mixed Quantitative/Qualitative Analysis," *Journal of Contemporary China* 18, no. 59 (2009): 339-58.

[52] Daniel A. Bell, "From Marx to Confucius: Changing Discourses on China's Political Future," *Dissent* 54, no. 2 (2007): 20-28.

[53] Bingguo Dai, "Jianchi Zou Heping Fazhan Daolu [Adhere to the Path of Peaceful Development]," accessed 1 November, 2016. http://www.chinanews.com/gn/2010/12-07/2704984.shtml.

[54] Wu made it clear that the top priority of Chinese foreign policy is to ensure the CCP-led regime security. Interview with Wu Baiyi, Director of the Institute of Latin American Studies, CASS, Beijing, April 14, 2015. Also see Xinbo Wu, "China: Security Practice for a Modernizing and Ascending Power," in *Asian Security Practice*, ed. Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 123.

[55] Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, 214.

reformulate its ideology and reclaim its political legitimacy. [56] The Chinese government's recent emphasis on *cultural* soft power seems to embody its long-term efforts to reduce its reliance on the Marxist ideological doctrine. For the party-state, China's recent soft power campaigns primarily seek to protect and promote its national interests, including cultural sovereignty and security, the reduction of cultural trade deficit and the development of cultural/creative industries, and the global competition for its discursive power to legitimize its rising influence. Their successful achievement may strengthen national cohesion and the CCP's political legitimacy. In so doing, it is the guiding force of China's national interests underpinned by patriotism rather than its reliance on Marxism help explain China's global soft power campaigns.

Overall, the policy-making mechanism regarding China's soft power campaigns is a miniature of China's overall policy-making structure. The policy-making structure associated with these campaigns is characterized by the central leadership consensus (vertical dimension) and the extensive and intensive interactions among various bureaucratic apparatus and institutions (horizontal dimension) in particular. Additionally, the guiding force of the so-called national interest underscored by the state-led nationalism or patriotism plays an increasing role in the policy-making of soft power campaigns, and its subsequent political application as a national project.

China's Soft Power Campaigns

Regarding the political application of China's soft power campaigns, its domains and scopes should be specified. [57] That is, efforts are required to specify which issue-agendas the messengers and campaigners focus on. Meanwhile, attention should be given to examining who is involved in China's soft power campaigns and who is targeted.

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[56] Robert A. Scalapino, "China—between Tradition and Modernity," in *The Study of Modern China*, ed. Eberhard Sandschneider (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999), 13; Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, 227-31; Adrian Chan, *Chinese Marxism* (London: Continuum, 2003).

[57] Jean-Marc F. Blanchard and Fujia Lu, "Thinking Hard About Soft Power: A Review and Critique of the Literature on China and Soft Power," *Asian Perspective* 36, no. 4 (2012): 575.

General findings

Before moving to China's specific soft power campaigns, it is important to summarize some general findings. First, China's soft power campaigns revolve around its efforts to promote China's positive attractiveness, its institutional and constitutive power. The positive attractiveness is mainly derived from the outsiders' recognition and even emulation of a country's attractive culture, political and economic system and its policy. However, the inherent attractiveness seen by outsiders does not logically contradict a country's active promotion of its attractiveness through public diplomacy. The promotion of institutional and constitutive power is a key concern of China's soft power campaigns in the same time. The institutional power along with China's soft power campaigns is closely linked to the power of agenda-setting and institution-building, while constitutive power focuses on the power of identity-making and preference-shaping made on the basis of discursive power.

The second general finding is that China's soft power campaigns are conducted in either an overt or a covet way. Therefore, China's soft power campaigns can be discerned through the Chinese government's public verbalization, or via extrapolation and inference based on its actual policy and behavior. For example, the going-global projects of CIs and the Chinese media are officially promulgated by the Chinese government as a key component of its soft power campaigns. In comparison, China's increasing role in the agenda-setting and institution-building as a manifestation of its soft power can only be extrapolated and inferred due to the lack of the Chinese government's public verbalization in this regard. The Chinese government's official denial of exporting the Beijing Consensus and its simultaneous active popularization of this model domestically, and even its sophisticated transplantation of this model through the state-led program of building OSEZs in some countries, demonstrates the nuances and subtleness of China's soft power campaigns. As a result, both Chinese government's public verbalization and logical extrapolation and inference made on the basis of its

policy and behavior are significant when identifying its soft power campaigns.

The third general finding is that the Chinese government's soft power campaigns are both externally and internally-oriented. For example, the Chinese government is launching a cultural charm offensive globally on one hand, yet it continues to warn against, and even tighten the domestic control of the spreading of Western liberal values on the other. The Chinese media's going-global project is an attempt to struggle for discursive power, but it is also paralleled by its increasing domestic suppression of unwanted articulations that may threaten its discursive hegemony in the eyes of propaganda authorities. The debate of Beijing Consensus and its political application are not only internationally but also domestically important. Therefore, China's soft power campaigns at *dual* levels (international and domestic) starkly contrasts to that of American soft power with international orientation.

The last finding informs that China's soft power campaigns in terms of vehicles and mechanisms vary in different domains and scopes. That is, the Chinese government differentiates various agendas and target audiences, and considers country-specific preferences and nuanced situations for its implementation.[58] There are many examples demonstrating China's increasingly subtle and sophisticated approach to exert its soft power in different domains and scopes. For example, the public diplomacy through CIs is globally applied, yet had the highest concentration in the US and Europe in the last decade. CIs may center on the developing world (Africa in particular) in the future,[59] provided the shortage of existing infrastructure and tradition to uphold China-related studies in Africa makes the continent ripe for them.[60] The Chinese media going-global project primarily targets audiences in the West, but has increasingly paid attention to the global South recently. China's foreign aid and non-intervention policy are basically operated in the global South and China's periphery. The sophisticated export of Beijing

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[58] Ingrid d' Hooghe, "Public Diplomacy in the People's Republic of China," in *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, 88-105.

[59] Shannon Tiezzi, "The Future of China's Confucius Institutes," *The Diplomat*, 30 September, 2014.

[60] Falk Hartig, "The Globalization of Chinese Soft Power: Confucius Institutes in South Africa", in *Confucius Institutes and the Globalization of China's Soft Power*, ed. USC Center on Public Diplomacy (Los Angeles: Figueroa Press, 2014), 60.

Consensus in the form of OSEZs pilot program to the global South in particular, has been officially facilitated since 2006. Furthermore, China has accorded considerable attention to the global governance and gradually moved towards a "regime shaper" rather than simply acted as a "regime taker". In conclusion, China's soft power campaigns deal with different domains and scopes at the same time. The following section will present a broadly gauged picture of these campaigns.

The globalization of Confucius Institutes

The establishment of CIs has been widely highlighted as a notable manifestation of the Chinese government's soft power campaigns around the world.[61] CIs are headquartered in Beijing and mainly sponsored by the *hanban*, which claims itself as a "non-profit educational institute" officially affiliated to MOE, but also affiliated with "eleven other ministry-level bodies", including MFA, MOF, MOC, SCIO, NDRC GAPP, etc.,[62] and is chaired by Liu Yandong.[63] CI was named by the State Councilor Chen Zhili, and modeled on France's Alliance Françoise, Germany's Goethe Institute, Spain's Instituto Cervantes, and the British Council to a lesser extent.[64] CIs are operated in one of the three models as follows. Most CIs are operated as a joint venture with local partners including universities, primary and secondary schools. The general operation in the form of joint venture with primary and secondary schools is officially called Confucius Classrooms (CCs). The rest of CIs are operated either directly by the *Hanban* or locally run by offices licensed by *Hanban*.[65]

The top priority of CI project, according to the CI Constitution and By-Laws, aims to satisfy the mounting demands of Chinese language-learning around the world, promote

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[61] David M. Lampton, *The Three Face of Chinese Power: Might, Money and Minds* (Berkeley: California University Press, 2008), 157; Falk Hartig, "Confucius Institutes and the Rise of China," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 17, no. 1 (2012): 53-76.

[62] Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power* , 245.

[63] Marshall Sahlins, "China U.," accessed November 1, 2015. http://www.thenation.com/article/china-u/.

[64] Interview with Jimin Wang, Director of Chinese Language Test (HSK) and Education Assassment Institute, Beijing Language and Culture University, 27 April 2015.

[65] Joe Tin-yau Lo and Suyan Pan, "Confucius Institutes and China's Soft Power: Practices and Paradoxes," *Compare* 46, no. 4 (2016): 516.

understanding of Chinese culture, and strengthen educational and cultural exchange and cooperation between China and other countries. In so doing, the CI project is supposed to contribute to the further development of global cultural diversity that is conducive for the professed harmonious world. From the vantage point of *hanban*, this target is fairly realistic and seems to be *apolitical*. However, some international observers continue to cast doubts on CI's educational and cultural dedication given it has an intimate relationship with the Chinese government.[66] Chinese leaders' customary visits to CIs during state visits give added relevance to this argument. As a result, it may alert target audiences that CIs have a possible hidden political purpose.

It is thus not surprising to see that criticisms—even hostility—against CIs abound particularly in the West. Nevertheless, interestingly, these setbacks did not hinder the fast expansion of CIs globally, especially in the US and Europe. Since the first proper CI was established in Seoul on November 21,[67] 2004, there had been 512 CIs and 1073 CCs in around 140 countries and areas by the end of 2016 (see Table 4–1).[68] It is only on the half way towards the official target of building 1000 CIs by the end of 2020.[69] The expenditure on constructing CIs has risen accordingly (see Figure 4–1).

Table 4–1: The Globalization of Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms (2004–2016)

	Asia	Africa	America			Europe	Oceania
			US	Canada	The Rest		
Number of CIs	115	46	110	12	39	169	18
Number of CCs	100	27	501	35	18	293	99
Total Number (CIs and CCs)	215	73	611	47	57	462	117

Source: http://english.hanban.org/node_10971.htm

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[66] For example, see James F. Paradise, "China and International Harmony: The Role of Confucius Institutes in Bolstering Beijing's Soft Power," *Asian Survey* 49, no. 4 (2009): 659-62.

[67] The first CI was a "pilot institute" established in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in June 2004.

[68] http://www.hanban.edu.cn/confuciousinstitutes/node_10961.htm

[69] Kelly Chung Dawson, "Confucius Institutes Enhance China's International Image," *China Daily*, April 23, 2010.

Figure 4–1： Total Expenditure of CIs from 2006 to 2014

(Currency: in $1,000)
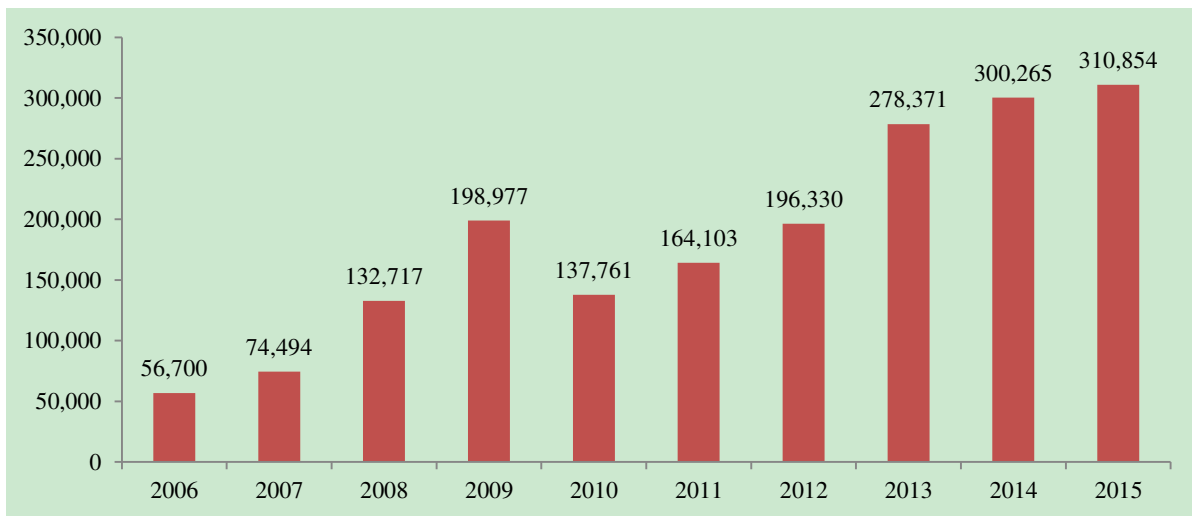
Note: The 2015 statistic is from Hanban, *Confucius Institute Annual Development Report (2015)* (Beijing: Hanban, 2016), 54.

Source: Ying Zhou and Sabrina Luk, "Establishing Confucius Institutes: A Tool for Promoting China's Soft Power," *Journal of Contemporary China* 25, no. 100 (2016): 632.

China's CI project largely tilts towards the West, but has devoted increasing attention to African and Latin American countries recently (see Figure 4–2, 4–3). To some extent, it is the rapid growth of CIs and CCs in the West that has garnered considerable attention and caused a backlash.[70] However, putting these criticisms aside, a key question arises: why are a great number of CIs and CCs successfully established in the West? Ironically, the fundamental reason comes down to the prevailing liberal values of cultural pluralism and freedom of speech in the Western society. While liberal values are generally rendered as a major resource of Western soft power, they were exploited by the Chinese government for its soft power campaigns in the Western countries. Such an irony looms large as the Chinese government would not easily allow hundreds of American cultural institutes like CIs (if US has them) to blossom in China in such a short term, given the Chinese government always alerts the American government's

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[70] Kaisheng Li and Changzheng Dai, "Kongzi Xueyuan zai Meiguo de Yulun Huanjing Pinggu [Report of the U.S. Public Opinion of the Confucius Institutes]," *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi [World Economics and Politics]*, no.7 (2011): 76-93.

"peaceful evolution" strategy against China.

Figure 4–2: The Top 11 Host Countries for CIs (2004–2015)
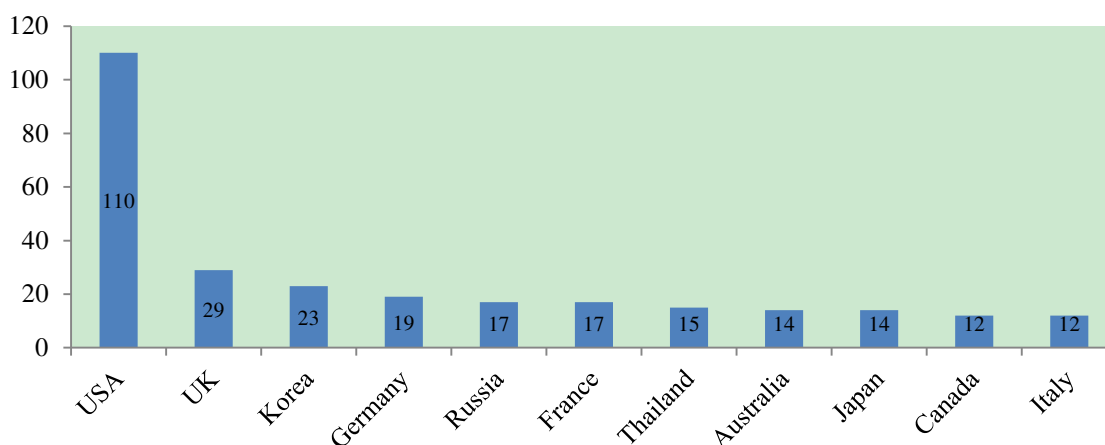
Source: http://english.hanban.org/node_10971.htm

Another crucial question—whether the CI project has actually contributed to the Chinese soft power so far—also merits attention. Its impacts may be viewed differently by various stakeholders in different contexts and at different times and regions. Unfortunately, *Hanban* has not yet systematically measured and qualified the impacts regarding the global operation of CI project.[71] However, there is a rising trend in the media and academic circles to examine the global impacts of CIs on China's political and economic interests, and how can this project really influence the image of China in particular. Interestingly, observers generally stress that the CI project *failed* to build a better image for China according to the cross-national opinion polls of China conducted by, for instance, PEW, in the last decade (see Figure 4–4).[72]

Figure 4–3: The History and Geographical Distribution of CIs

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[71] Joe Tin-yau Lo and Suyan Pan, "Confucius Institutes and China's Soft Power: Practices and Paradoxes," 524.

[72] Ibid., 524-5; Yuan, Guo and Zhu, "Confucius Institutes and the Limitations of China's Global Cultural Network," 343; Tao Xie and Benjamin I. Page, "What Affects China's National Image? A Cross-National Study of Public Opinion," *Journal of Contemporary China* 22, no. 83 (2013): 850-67.

2007

2010

2014

Legend
(Number of institutes in a country)

	1–10
	10–20
	20–30
	30–40
	40–50
	50–60
	60–70
	70–80
	80–90
	90–100
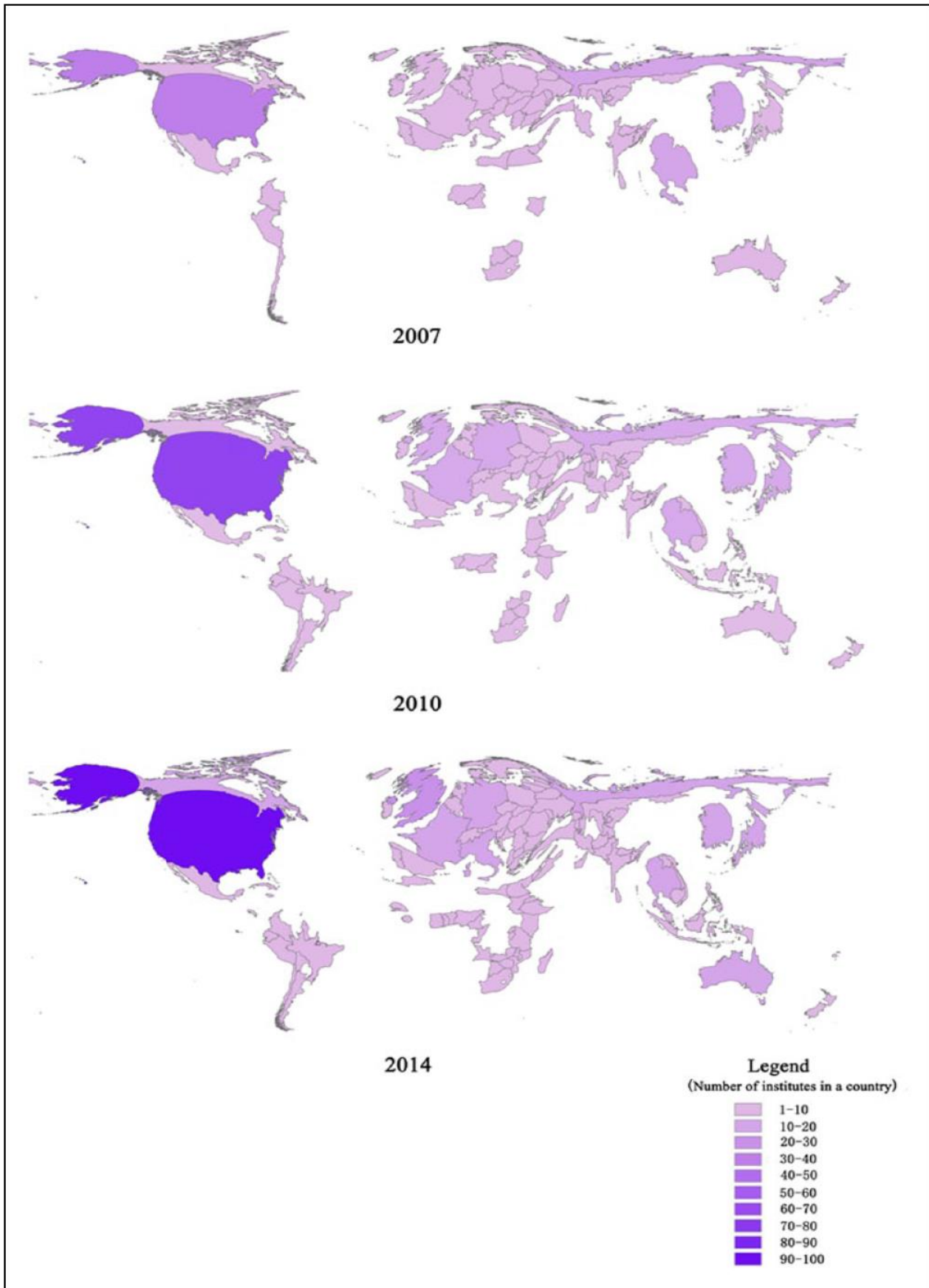
Source: Zhenjie Yuan, Junwanguo Guo and Hong Zhu, "Confucius Institutes and the Limitations of China's Global

Cultural Network," *China Information* 30, no. 3 (2016): 340.

Figure 4–4: Fluctuating Views of China (2005–2016)
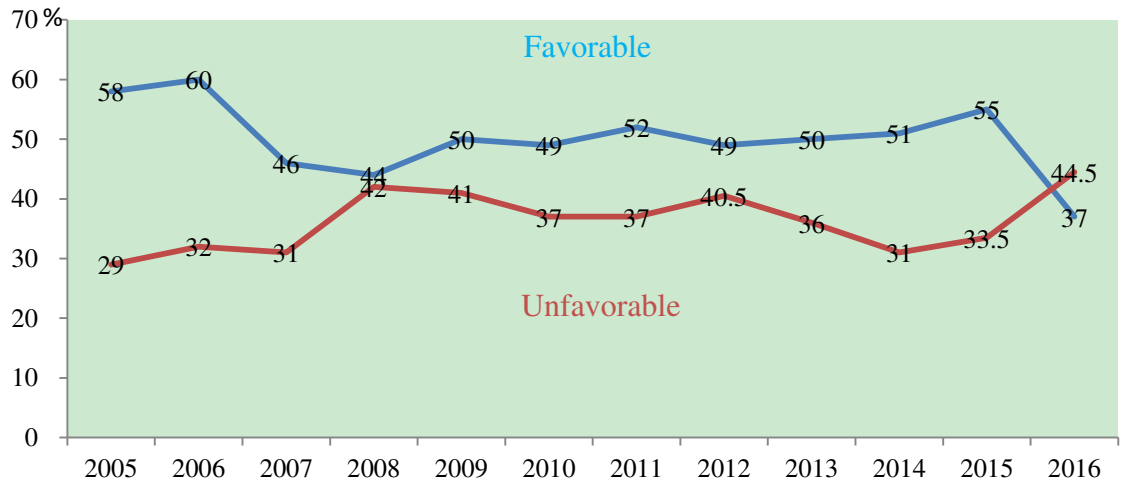
Full question wording: Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of China.

Notes: Favorable combines "very favorable" and "somewhat favorable" responses. Unfavorable combines "very unfavorable" and "somewhat unfavorable". Percentages are medians based on all the countries surveyed at a given year.

Source: Pew Research Center, *Global Indicators Database*,

http://www.pewglobal.org/database/indicator/24/survey/all/.

This preliminary conclusion noted above deserves reconsideration. After all, cross-national opinion polls are fluctuated, and the factors causing fluctuating views of China may vary during surveyed years. More significantly, these polls, more often than not, cannot make a clear distinction between "what the nation is" and "what the state does" in terms of research methodology. Both of them together shape a country's global national image. The CI project may contribute to China's national image in the former part mainly thanks to the rising global demand of learning Chinese language and culture as a way to either further understand Chinese civilization or to benefit from China's rapid economic rise in career advancement.[73] The surging number of participants in the

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[73] I must thank Jingdong Yuan for pointing out this key perspective. Also, see Guo, "Repackaging Confucius: PRC Public Diplomacy and the Rise of Soft Power"; Gil, "China's Confucius Institute Project: Language and Soft Power in

Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK) is particularly illustrative (see Figure 4–5).

Figure 4–5: The Annual Number of Participants in the HSK (2007–15)

(In 1,000)
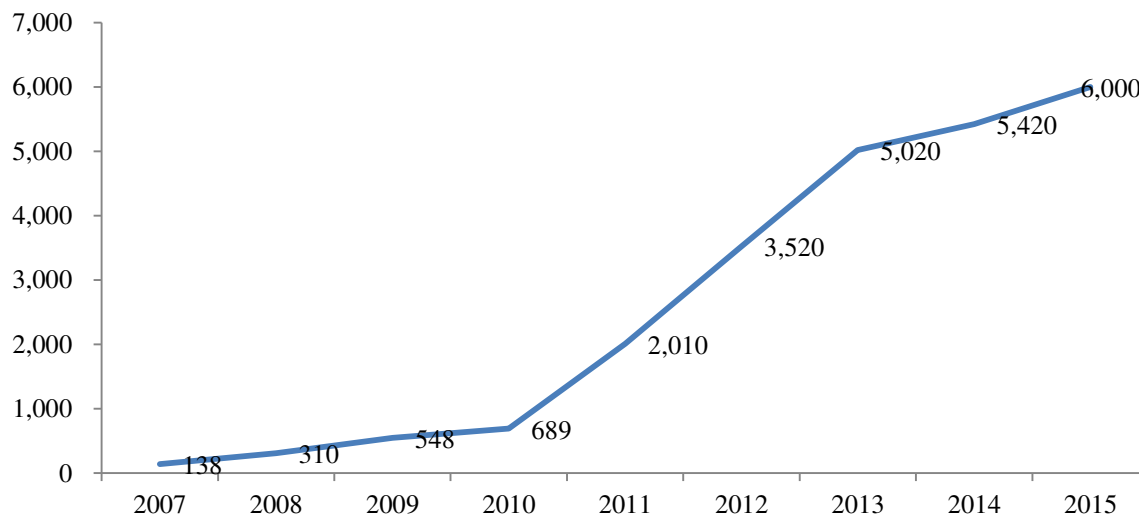
Source: Hanban, *Confucius Institute Annual Development Report* (2007-2015).

The overemphasis on the involvement of Chinese government in this project by the external media and academic circles, however, may finally discount its effectiveness in improving China's global image. Simply put, CIs are widely considered as "an arm of the Chinese state" and are allowed to "ignore academic freedom", according to the statement of American Association of University Professors (AAUP).[74] It is this rising concern that results in the shutdown of the CI within Chicago University,[75] and the Toronto school committee's vote to cancel the CI project.[76] The Western media's criticism against the sinister purpose of CI project manipulated by the Chinese government, albeit not always telling an element of truth, may direct the local target populations' attention on this score and finally help them shape a negative public

World Politics," 59-72; ICEF Monitor, "Confucius Institutes Expanding Rapidly to Meet Demand for Chinese Language Skills," accessed July 14, 2015,
http://monitor.icef.com/2014/07/confucius-institutes-expanding-rapidly-to-meet-demand-for-chinese-language-skills/.
[74] AAUP, "On Partnerships with Foreign Governments: The Case of Confucius Institutes", accessed July 4, 2014. http://www.aaup.org/report/confucius-institutes.
[75] Peter Foster, "China Soft Power Set Back as US Universities Shut Second Confucius Institute in a Week," *The Telegraph*, October 1, 2014.
[76] Karen Howleft and Caroline Alphonso, "Toronto School Committee Votes to End Confucius Institute Programs," *The Global and Mail*, October 1, 2014.

opinion.[77] That is why the Chinese educators have already cautioned against such a close connection between the CI project and the state-led soft power campaigns. They clearly understand that any kind of power is "aggressive" and makes people feel "suspicious".[78] Above all, the cross-national opinion polls compromised by the methodological flaw in relation to the conflation between "what the nation is" and "what the state does" may not sufficiently qualify the exact impacts of China's CI project.

In conclusion, it is safe to say that the gross impact of CI project on the Chinese soft power—the positive attraction—is *mixed* at best so far.[79] Internationally, the continuing suspicion of Chinese government's hidden hand behind the globalization of CIs remains a key impediment to promote China's cultural soft power. However, the absence of Chinese government may imply for the end of this CI project. This is indeed the dilemma of China's state-led CI project. Furthermore, the underlying assumption that foreign audience's familiarity with the Chinese language and culture will allow them to become sympathetic with the Chinese government is problematic. As the world has entered an era of "post-truth politics"—"objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief"[80]—efforts attempting to present a "real" image of CIs may prove less effective in changing public opinion on this project than what the Chinese government would expect. The audience's strong emotion and personal belief against the authoritarian Chinese regime may have even more to say in the post-truth world instead. This is a new challenge that China's soft power campaigns need to face.

This mixed impact of CI project is further complicated by the rising domestic criticism that the huge investment in this program should be instead used for improving

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[77] For example, see Therese L. Lueck, Val S. Pipps and Yang Lin, "China's Soft Power: A New York Times Introduction of the Confucius Institute," *Howard Journal of Communications* 25, no. 3 (2014): 324-49.
[78] James F. Paradise, "China and International Harmony: The Role of Confucius Institutes in Bolstering Beijing's Soft Power," 657-8.
[79] Hartig, *Chinese Public Diplomacy: The Rise of the Confucius Institute*, chapter 6.
[80] Oxford Dictionary, "World of the Year 2016 is…,"
https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/word-of-the-year/word-of-the-year-2016.

educational quality in rural China.[81] This criticism has not gone unnoticed. Yet, it has not discredited the opposing argument supported by other scholars and officials. For example, Xu Lin, the Director General of the *Hanban* since 2004, argues that the CI project is value for money since it functions as a "spiritual high-speed rail" (*xinling gaotie*)—a metaphor signifying the remarkable achievement of mutual understandings and communications—running through different cultures.[82] The growing domestic doubts and critiques did not dampen the Chinese government's enthusiasm about this project. However, it reminds us the difficult tradeoff underlying the CI project: how to balance the domestic demand of improving cultural level and educational quality, and China's pursuit of cultural influence and soft power globally.

The global expansion of China Cultural Centers

Since setting up two China Cultural Centers (CCCs) in Mauritius and the Republic of Benin respectively in 1988, Chinese government has already boosted the building of overseas CCCs especially after 2002. The global expansion of CCCs has been stepping into the third stage of rapid development since 2012.[83] There are 30 overseas CCCs by the end of 2016.[84] The MOC oversees the establishment of CCCs, which are mainly funded by the central government. According to the 13th five-year plan of cultural development supposed by the MOC, the central government attempted to have at least 50 centers up to 2020.[85] In terms of its budget, the Chinese government has invested about 1.336 billion Yuan ($214 million) by the end of 2014 for the total construction and operation of CCCs, and the funding for building and running centers in 2015 increased by 181% than that in 2014, reached 360 million Yuan ($57.92 million).[86]

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[81] Interestingly, an interviewee told me that he was under pressure from *Hanban* after he published an essay that criticized the globalization of CIs. Another two anecdotes also revealed similar pressure from *Hanban*.

[82] Yi Wang, "Wenhua de Kunjing, Zaiyu Buzhi Bujue [Cultural Dilemmas Exist Because Of People's Unawareness and Ignorance: An Exclusive Interview with Xu Lin]," *Jiefang Daily*, September 19, 2014.

[83] Wei Ding, "Rang Haiwai Zhongguo Wenhua Zhongxin Jianghao Zhongguo Gushi [Let the Overseas China Cultural Centers Tell China's Stories]," *People's Daily*, July 24, 2014.

[84] "2020 Nian Haiwai Zhongguo Wenhua Zhongxin Jiangda 50 Ge Yishang [China Cultural Centers Will Be over 50 in 2020]," accessed January 3, 2017. http://news.xinhuanet.com/book/2016-12/16/c_129407323.htm.

[85] The Ministry of Culture of the PRC, *The 13th Five-Year Plan of Cultural Development and Reform* (Beijing: MOC, 2017).

[86] Yulong Shi and Xiang Yuan, "Zai Wenhua Jiaoliu Hujian Zhong Cujin Minxin Xiangtong [People-to-People Bond Can Be Strengthened during Cultural Exchange and Mutual Learning]," *Guangming Daily*, October 5, 2016.

Though its budget pales in comparison to that of CIs as previously described, CCCs abroad have also successfully captured the attention of Chinese central leadership. Chinese leaders visited various CCCs during their state visits, or witnessed the signature of Memorandum of Cooperation by the Chinese representative and the counterpart regarding the establishment of new cultural centers in different host countries.[87]

Regarding the functions and purposes of CCC, three major roles are highlighted. First, it organizes regular cultural events such as Chinese cultural performances, exhibitions and art festival—the "Happy Chinese New Year" in particular recently—in an attempt to display and promote Chinese culture in host countries where it is established. Second, it sets up a library within the center to offer China-related information and data introducing both ancient and modern China. The third major function overlaps with that of CIs, dedicated to the training programs on Chinese language, music, dance, painting, cuisine, medicine and martial arts. Furthermore, it invites Chinese and/or foreign artists, thinkers, and scholars to facilitate cultural exchanges and communications with local people.[88]

The different roles and functions between CCCs overseas and CIs are not always as clear-cut as we see. However, the target audiences of both institutes and their modes of operation are quite different. CIs put more attention to the university students while the CCCs abroad focus on the local people at large. CIs are mainly operated through the inter-university joint venture under the auspice of *Hanban*. In contrast, the establishment of CCCs abroad has been mainly overseen by the MOC with strong financial support from the central government. Additionally, each CCC is co-operated by the MOC and a specific province or municipality in China (*Shengbu duikou hezuo*) (see Table 4–2).[89] Apart from that, the MOC has recently stepped up its efforts to attract Chinese prefecture-level cities, Chinese corporations, Chinese cultural activists

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[87] Chen Lu, "Haiwai Zhongguo Wenhua Zhongxin: Zai Shijie Bantu Shang de Zhongguo Fengjing [Overseas China Cultural Center: Chinese Cultural Landscape around the World]", *China Cultural Newspaper*, January 8, 2015.
[88] Zhenzhi Guo, Xiaoling Zhang and Jue Wang, "Yong Wenhua de Liliang Yingxiang Shijie [Influencing the World via Cultural Efforts: Development Path for Overseas Communication of China Cultural Centers]," *Xinwen yu Chuanbo Yanjiu [Journalism & Communication]* 23, no. 2 (2016): 41-50.
[89] Ibid.

and even external actors to facilitate the further globalization of CCCs and their operations.[90]

Table 4–2: Overseas China Cultural Centers and Partners from China

Location of CCCs	Host Country	Partner (Province/Municipality)
Port Louis	Mauritius	Liaoning
Porto-Novo	Republic of Benin	Hunan
Cairo	Egypt	Shandong
Valletta	Malta	Beijing
Seoul	South Korea	Gansu
Berlin	German	Xinjiang
Tokyo	Japan	Hainan
Ulan Bator	Mongolia	Anhui
Moscow	Russia	Hubei
Madrid	Spain	Guizhou
Bangkok	Thailand	Henan
Abuja	Nigeria	Jiangsu
Mexico City	Mexico	Yunnan
Colombo	Sri Lanka	Tianjin
Sydney	Australia	Guangdong
Paris	France	Shanghai
Copenhagen	Denmark	Zhejiang
Vientiane	Laos	Jiangsu
Islamabad	Pakistan	Henan

Source: compiled by the author from the main page of CCC, see http://cn.cccweb.org/portal/site/Master/index.jsp.

The impacts of CCCs are under researched mainly because of its short period of rapid

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[90] Wei Ding, "Rang Haiwai Zhongguo Wenhua Zhongxin Jianghao Zhongguo Gushi [Let the Overseas China Cultural Centers Tell China's Stories]."

global expansion so far. The project of CCCs is overshadowed by the dazzling globalization of CIs in the last decade. While the program of CIs has been a controversial topic of frequent discussion around the world, the project of CCCs has not yet garnered serious attention in the political, academic and media circles, both in China and abroad. There exist very few researches directly addressing the impacts of CCCs. While the Chinese state media—*China Culture Daily (Zhongguo Wenhua Bao)* in particular[91]—tends to inflate the positive influence of CCCs, extant scholarship in Chinese largely offers a balanced view on the CCCs' global impacts. Analysts generally attribute the limited impact of CCCs to the technical problems, including shortage of budget, professional staff and infrastructural buildings (library in particular).[92] As more and more resources are supposed to invest in the further globalization of CCCs, it may increasingly catch the eyes of global audiences as a result.

Chinese Cultural exports

The export of cultural products and services has become another vehicle for the Chinese government to improve its global soft power.[93] Cultural products generally refer to (1) heritage goods; (2) books, newspapers, periodicals and printed matter including maps, brochures, and designs; (3) recorded and audiovisual media such as film, television, radio, animation, videogames; and (4) visual arts and performing arts. Cultural services involve arts creation, performance and exhibition, theme park building, cultural mega events, and so on.[94] The CCP central committee and the central government have made concerted effort to boost cultural exports since 2005, and they issued a series of guiding opinions and policies afterwards (see Table 4–3). The overriding concern comes down

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[91] *The China Culture Daily* was firstly released in 1986 and directly charged by the MOC. After a significant institutional reform undertaken on November 2009, this daily was directly managed by the China Culture Media Group, a cultural SOE affiliated to the MOC. *The China Culture Daily* mainly reports and comments on various cultural phenomena and issues taking place in China. See
http://www.mcprc.gov.cn/gywhb/jgsz/zgxwcbdw/zgxwcbdw_baozhi/201509/t20150925_458103.html.

[92] For example, see Zhiming Wei and Lu Chen, "Tisheng Haiwai Zhongguo Wenhua Zhongxin de Chuanbo Nengli [Promoting the Communication Capability of Overseas China Cultural Centers]," *Hongqi Wengao [Red Flag Manuscript]*, no. 4 (2015): 29-30.

[93] Antony Funnell, "China Pushes to Expand Its Soft Power through Cultural Exports," accessed November 1, 2015. http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/futuretense/soft-power-with-chinese-characteristics/6446990.

[94] MOFCOM, "Guiding List for Exporting Cultural Products and Services", accessed November 1, 2015. http://www.mofcom.gov.cn/article/b/xxfb/201202/20120207980777.shtml

to the deepening reform of China's cultural/creative industries in order to make it become a "pillar" industry.[95] Therefore, the Chinese government seeks to facilitate commercialization and concentration of cultural enterprises, enlarge economies of scale, provide financial support and cut tax for cultural exports, streamline administrative management, and strengthen bureaucratic coordination. In so doing, the Chinese government is expecting to create a group of globally competitive cultural conglomerates to drive China's cultural soft power campaigns.

The Chinese government's proactive engagement, intensive investment and wide subsidies have driven a rapid increase of cultural exports as expected. However, the "huge" cultural trade deficit remains a challenge for China's soft power campaigns.[96] Despite the fact that China has the advantage of low labor cost for exporting hardware of cultural products, it lags behind in the content-driven cultural exports, if compared with other cultural powers (such as US, EU, Japan and India), as the next chapter will describe. In this sense, the huge cultural trade deficit prompts observers and policy-makers to rethink the importance of the government in increasing cultural exports and reducing China's cultural trade deficit. However, the good intentions or plans of the state do not necessarily translate into desired outcomes. Some argue that the Chinese government's efforts to build large integrated cultural enterprises are more likely to be counterproductive. That is because these efforts may strengthen the dominance of cultural state-owned enterprises (SOEs) at the cost of small- and medium-size private cultural companies. These efforts may further stifle the healthy competition and innovation in the domestic market and heavily undermined its potential expansion of content-driven exports, and accordingly, the promotion of Chinese cultural soft power.[97] In short, China's international soft power campaigns in an attempt to reduce cultural trade deficit through the enhancement of cultural exports is closely linked to its domestic political economy of striking a balance between the marketization and the

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[95] Wei Liu, "Culture to Be Pillar Industry " *China Daily*, February 16, 2012.
[96] Zhe Zhu, "China Faces 'Huge' Cultural Trade Deficit," ibid. April 19, 2006.
[97] Priscilla Jiao, "Culture a Key Priority in Five-Year Plan," *South China Morning Post*, March 28, 2011; Chunyang Zhu, "Zhongguo Wenhua 'Zouchuqu' Weihe Kunnan Chongchong? [Why Does Chinese Culture 'Going Global' Face Many Obstacles?]," *Zhongguo Wenhua Chanye Pinglun [Commentary on Cultural Industry in China]* 16, no. 2 (2012): 84-104.

active role of the state in this regard. It demonstrates that both domestic and international level of China's soft power campaigns matter.

Table 4–3: Guiding Opinions and Policies on Cultural Export

Government Document	Issuing Organization	Issuing Time and Document Number
Guiding opinions on the further development and enhancement of exporting cultural products and services	General Office of CCP Central Committee (GOCCPCC), General Office of State Council (GOSC)	10 July 2005 No. 20
Several policies for encouraging and supporting exports of cultural products and services	GOSC	5 November, 2006 No. 88
Outline of cultural development during the 11th five-year plan (2006-2010)	GOCCPCC, GOSC	13 September 2006
Guiding catalogue for the export of cultural products and services	GAPP, SARFT, MFA, MOFCOM, MOC, SCIO	11 April 2007
Guiding opinions on the financial assistance for cultural exports	GAPP, SARFT, MOFCOM, MOC, China Exim Bank	27 April 2009
Plan on the reinvigoration of Chinese cultural industry	GOSC	22 July 2009
Guiding opinions on the further workings on key cultural exporting companies and programs	GAPP, SARFT, MOFCOM, MOC, CPD, MOF, PBOC, The General Administration of Customs (GAC), The State Administration of Taxation (SAT),	1 February 2010 No. 28

	State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE)	
Guiding opinions on the financial support for boosting the revival and prosperity of cultural industry	CPD, PBOC, MOF, MOC, GAPP, SARFT, China Banking Regulatory Commission (CBRC), China Insurance Regulatory Commission (CIRC), China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC)	19 March, 2010 No. 94
Blueprint for enhancing exports of cultural products and services (2011-2015)	MOC	April 2011
The five-year plan for the press and publication industrial development (2011-2015)	GAPP	22 April 2011 No. 6
Several opinions on facilitating Chinese press and publication industry going global	GAPP, SARFT	9 January 2012 No. 1
Outline of cultural development and reform during the 12th five-year plan (2011-2015)	GOCCPCC, GOSC	15 February 2012
Plan of doubling output of cultural industry during the 12th five-year period (2011-2015)	MOC	28 February 2012 No. 7
Guiding opinions on accelerating the development of foreign cultural trade	GOSC	3 March 2014 No. 13

Source: compiled by the author from information on websites including <news.xinhuanet.com>, <culture.people.com.cn>, and <www.gov.cn>.

Cultural exchanges

Cultural exchanges in the form of popular and high culture exchanges serve China's soft power campaigns as another vehicle. Since the former part focuses on exports of popular culture, this part will examine the high-culture exchanges including academic exchanges, professional trainings, cultural seminars and conferences, and so on.

Compared with popular-culture exchanges, high-culture exchanges take on some salient features. First, tracing the political effect of high-culture exchanges is easier than that of popular culture, as it seeks to directly influence political and social elites who may affect policy outcomes in the future. Even one or two key contacts may bring about a major political impact. For example, policy pundits and scholars argue that the American high-culture exchanges targeting elites from the Soviet Union during the Cold War, has been proved effective as a "Trojan Horse" to infiltrate and even erode the Soviet system.[98] Second, commerce is the fundamental channel for transmitting popular culture, while financial support and endorsement from the government is part and parcel of high-culture exchanges. Third, high-cultural exchanges tend to nurture relationships among key individuals for the long haul.[99] That is why the state prefers to engage directly in high-culture exchanges for the sake of promoting soft power in the long run.

The Chinese government also realizes that high-culture exchanges and communications may enhance Chinese soft power now and the future. Accordingly, the central government has already invested heavily in this soft-power vehicle in some respects. First, the Chinese government has provided thousands of scholarships every year to foreign students for their studies in China. Second, it frequently invites experts and officials mainly from developing countries to have further training in China. Third, it

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[98] Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics,* 45-6.
[99] Ibid., 109-10.

seeks to sponsor a series of seminars and conferences with a focus on the Chinese culture, political economy, media, and the global internet governance, including World Confucian Conference, World Forum on China Study, World Media Summit and World Internet Conference. Fourth, it has orchestrated high-level cultural events, such as 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, 2010 Shanghai World Expo, 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games,[100] and "China Cultural Years".[101] Last, it seeks to enhance philosophy and social science studies, and building regular mechanism for exchanges and cooperation between Chinese research institutes and foreign influential counterparts, renowned Sinologists and leading China Watchers.

It is still unclear how to gauge the impact of China's cultural exports and exchanges on its global soft power so far. However, the inherent dilemma underlying China's cultural exports and exchanges for the promotion of Chinese soft power is abundantly clear. The Chinese government has been caught in an identity dilemma between the Chinese *uniqueness* and what is potentially *universal* for China.[102] For instance, the misalignment of perceptions on the political values between China and the West may hamper the development of Chinese public diplomacy and its soft power in the West.[103] Additionally, the Chinese government also faces a thorny dilemma between domestic imperative (cultural development and national cohesion-building) and the international imperative of image-polishing and the further promotion of its global soft power. The ingrained uneasiness of potential "peaceful evolution" caused by the long-term Western cultural infiltration has caused the Chinese leadership to maintain strict regulation on the importation of Western cultural goods and services. Meanwhile, this anxiety leads to China's heavy reliance on the cultural SOEs—whose domination in the cultural industry has been purposively strengthen as mentioned earlier—to carry out the state-led soft power campaigns globally. To sum up, China's soft power campaigns through cultural

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[100] Ni Chen, "Branding National Images: The 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics, 2010 Shanghai World Expo, and 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games," *Public Relations Review* 38, no. 5 (2012): 731-45.
[101] Christina Maags, "Enhancing China's National Image through Culture Festivals: A Case Study of China Culture Years in Europe," *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 7, no. 1 (2014): 33-55.
[102] Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*, 212.
[103] Ingrid d' Hooghe, "The Limits of China's Soft Power in Europe: Beijing's Public Diplomacy Puzzle," (Hague: Nedlands Institue of International Relations Diplomacy Papers, January 2010).

exports and exchanges vividly illustrate the interplay between domestic and international imperatives.

Chinese media "going global"

Apart from cultural exports and exchanges, external communication and overseas propaganda is also integral to China's global soft power campaigns, according to a marathon of speeches by senior cadres in China.[104] Simply put, Chinese state media is supposed to play a leading role in shaping a positive international image of China in light of struggling for the discursive power in the global media landscape. Therefore, Wang concludes that it is critical to understand how China engages in global communication in order to assess its growing influence of soft power.[105]

External publicity propaganda gathered further momentum during the Hu-Wen administration.[106] The establishment of an "all-dimensional, multi-leveled, and wide-ranging and deep-leveled grand framework of overseas publicity"[107] was underpinned by the strong political will of Chinese leadership. Furthermore, the "great leap outward of Chinese soft power" via this grand external propaganda work has founded on the fast development of advanced communication and information technology, and a heavy investment in telecommunication infrastructural building.[108] More importantly, the mispresentation and distortion of "real China" by the anti-China Western journalism, especially during the days leading up to the 2008 Olympic Games, precipitated the Chinese government's determination to launch a media blitz.[109] Above all, the promotion of communication capacity, discursive power (*huayu quan*) and

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[104] Dongyang Zheng, "Zhonggong 450yi Zhengduo Huayu Quan [The CCP Investing 45 Billion RMB in Striving for Discursive Power]," *Fenghuang Zhoukan [Phoenix Weekly]*, no. 7 (2009).

[105] Wang, *Soft Power in China: Public Diplomacy through Communication*, 3.

[106] Shambaugh, "China's Propaganda System: Institutions, Processes and Efficacy," 50; Xiaoling Zhang, *The Transformation of Political Communication in China: From Propaganda to Hegemony* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company, 2011), chapter 2.

[107] *Chinese State Media Going Global* (Singapore: East Asia Institute Background Briefing No. 488, 2009), 44.

[108] Willy Lam, "Chinese State Media Goes Global," *Asia Times*, January 30, 2009.

[109] Kevin Latham, "Media, the Olympics and the Search for the 'Real China'," *The China Quarterly* 197(2009): 25-43; Elizabeth J. Perry, *Cultural Governance in Contemporary China: 'Re-Orienting' Party Propaganda* (Cambridge: Harvard-Yenching Institute, 2013), 20.

image-building are closely intertwined along with the state-led soft power campaigns.[110]

In face of the dominant status of Western media in the global media landscape, the Chinese government had poured huge amounts of money into Chinese media's going-global project to generate discursive power. Although the official investment figure has not yet been disclosed, the estimated total budget ranges from 45 billion RMB (US$6.58 billion) to 60 billion RMB (US$ 8.79 billion). Several media "aircraft carriers"—CCTV, Xinhua News agency, *China Daily* media group and perhaps plus CRI—gained a lion's share of this budget, each up to 15 billion RMB (US$ 2.19 billion).[111] As a result of the strong financial support from the central government, an aggressive outreach of their global product lines is ready (see Table 4–4).

Table 4–4: Chinese State Media Going Global (2001–present)[112]

Organization	Mission	Schemes	
Xinhua News Agency	A leading international multimedia conglomerate	Established a 24-hour English news channel "China Network Corporation" (CNC). Entered the cell phone video market by providing viewers with 3G-quality imagery.	Strived to become a "real world international news agency" through the vast expansion of overseas bureaus and deepening localization.
CCTV	A global Television giant	Established China Global Television Network (CGTN), including a group of six international multi-language TV	Set up new studios and production facility in Africa (Nairobi) and US

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[110] Wanning Sun, "Mission Impossible? Soft Power, Communication Capability and the Globalization of Chinese Media," *International Journal of Communication*, no. 4 (2010): 54-72.

[111] Cam MacMurchy, "China Spends 45 Billion to Extend Media's Global Reach," *The South China Morning Post*, January 14, 2009; Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*, 227.

[112] The Chinese state media began to expand overseas in the early 1990s, and continued to expand gradually in the early 21st century. However, the all-out "going-global" project has been gaining momentum since the "grand external propaganda strategy (*dawaixuan*)" was officially announced in 2005.

		channels (CGTV news, CGTV Spanish, French, Arabic and Russian, and CGTN Documentary), CCTV-4, the international channel in Mandarin, was expanded. Built up "The Great Wall TV Platform" (GWSTV), a overseas TV package satellite service.	(CCTV America). Established the "China Satellite News Gathering Alliance" (CSNG).
China Daily **Media Group**	A leading English-language news organization in China, a global flagship brand	Launched *China Daily* USA/North America edition, *China Daily* European Weekly/ Asia Weekly/ Africa Weekly/ Latin American Weekly. Set a news agenda rather than just follow it.	Expanded the global network with global mainstream media. Strived to play a key role in the Asia News Network.
People's Daily **Media Group**	One of the world's most authoritative and influential newspapers, express "China voice" to the world	Enlarged *People's Daily* from 16 to 20 pages; Upgraded the multi-linguistic online versions.	Its spin-off *Global Times* launched an English version.
CRI	Transforming from a "propaganda machine" to a "broadcasting organization"; and building "your bridge to China and the world"	Extensively penetrated the local AM market in US. Broadcasted one or two hours per day in more than twenty American and Canadian cities. Launched first overseas FM radio station in Nairobi, Kenya.	Launched CRI Mobile. Established China International Broadcasting Network (CIBN).

China International Publishing Group (CIPG)	Present China to the World through books, magazines and websites	The influential Chinese website <www.china.org.cn> was paired with a new state-level *English* website. Internet Media Center, *Beijing Review* Magazine, and Foreign Language Press launched hiring blitz.	
China News Service (CNS)	A state-level news agency spreading news worldwide, a database of information from global Chinese-language media and an international news agency	*China Newsweek* Magazine issued a Japanese spin-off in May 2007 and the *News China* in English in August 2008.	

Sources: compiled by the author from Yao Yao, *Xinzhongguo Duiwai Xuanchuanshi [The History of PRC Foreign Propaganda]* (Beijing: Tsinghua University Publisher, 2014); David Shambaugh: *China Goes Global*; Gary D. Rawnsley, "To Know Us is to Love Us: Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting in Contemporary Russia and China," 276-8; Xiaoling Zhang, "Chinese State Media Going Global"; Willy Lam, "Chinese State Media Goes Global"; and <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/static_e/2011about.html>, <http://english.cri.cn/about/history.htm>, <http://www.cipg.com.cn/about_cipg/overview/>, <http://www.ecns.cn/aboutus.shtml>.

The table above signals that the globalization of China's state media outlets primarily seeks to win the hearts and minds of Western audience.[113] However, a series of research publications suggest that this global project has increasingly targeted audiences in the

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[113] During the Hu-Wen era, China's soft power campaigns mainly targeted the Western audiences, yet the Xi-Li administration paid increasing attention to the developing countries in this respect. An interview with a Chinese official, February 1, 2016. Also, see: Jianhui Zeng, *Rongbin, Jianqiao, Tuwei [Melting the Ice, Building a Bridge and Breaking the Siege]*(Beijing: Wuzhou Publishing House, 2006), 130.

Global South. In order to shape a positive international image and compete for the discursive power in these regions against the domination of Western media, four vehicles have been particularly used. The first one refers to the direct aid of a series of equipment (such as radio transmitters, studio facilities, and satellite receivers and so on) to foreign state-run media groups. Second, the Chinese news agencies provide their counterparts contents and news-sharing. The third one involves training programs and fully sponsored excursion for journalists to China for professional training and exchanges. The last one focuses on the further development of infrastructural network of telecommunication.[114] In short, the utilization of these vehicles shows that China's soft power campaigns in the form of external propaganda and communication has attuned to specific target audiences and local conditions.

The Chinese government's active role in struggling for the international discursive power is paralleled by its determination to control domestic production, transmission, and circulation of news and content. The "censorate" consisting of CLGPIW, CPD, SCIO, GAPP, SARFT and MII in particular, as a result, plays a crucial role in the all-round control of mass communication system.[115] From the perspective of Chinese government, the strict control of domestic mass communication system is another vehicle of China's soft power campaigns as it acknowledges that government by (physical) force and blind obedience to one ruler cannot ensure united and stable polities.[116] This perspective adds relevance to the domestic production of soft power made on the basis of "widespread voluntary compliance through processes of political

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[114] Douglas Farah and Andy Mosher, "Winds from the East: How the People's Republic of China Seeks to Influence the Media in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia."; Mary Myers, "Funding for Media Development by Major Donors Outside the United States," (Washington DC: Center for International Media Assistance, December 2009); Iginio Gagliardone and Sam Geall, "China in Africa's Media and Telecommunications: Cooperation, Connectivity and Control."; Fackson Banda, "China in the African Mediascape: A Critical Injection," *Journal of African Media Studies* 1, no. 3 (2009): 343-61. Also, see a special issue of "China's Soft Diplomacy in Africa" that was published in *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, vol. 34, no. 3, 2013.

[115] Anne-Marie Brady, "Guiding Hand: The Role of the CCP Central Propaganda Department in the Current Era," *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture* 3, no. 1 (2006): 58-77; Shambaugh, "China's Propaganda System: Institutions, Processes and Efficacy," 25-58; Michael Keane, *Created in China: The Great New Leap Forward* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 165-7.

[116] Anne-Marie Brady, "Conclusion: The Velvet Fist in the Velvet Glove: Political and Social Control in Contemporary China," in *China's Thought Management* ed. Anne-Marie Brady (London and New York: Routledge 2012), 188; Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*, 191.

communication".[117] The control of the mass communication system comes in many dimensions in the Chinese context. It involves the theories and practice of mass persuasion, mass communication, political Public Relations (PR), social psychology and even censorship. These dimensions in function reflect the rebirth of the propaganda state in an attempt to monopolize the power and truth through the "manufacture of consent" and "regimenting the public mind", in order to maintain the political status-quo of CCP leadership, social stability and national unity.[118] This key domestic component of China's soft power campaigns will be further explored in chapter 6. In short, controlling the mass communication system in many dimensions is integral to the domestic production of soft power on the part of the party-state. The Chinese government's *transnational* media control in the last several years even intensifies in scope and nature.[119] Nonetheless, many observers argue that the lack of credibility of Chinese media because of Chinese government's control and manipulation, may heavily compromise China's international soft power campaigns.[120]

Above all, it is important to note that China's soft power campaigns through the Chinese media's going-global project have two constituencies.[121] The State Councilor Yang Jiechi put it bluntly: "we not only have to explain our policies to the world, but also to our own people. We need to listen to our own people, to monitor the internet, and to learn our citizen's views by many means."[122] International observers seem to focus on the international dimension of China's proactive globalization of its state media. However, its domestic dimension needs to be given further attention, as sending the *right* message to domestic audiences is always central to maintain political stability from the perspective of the party-state.[123]

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[117] T. Camber Warren, "Not by the Sword Alone: Soft Power, Mass Media, and the Production of State Sovereignty," *International Organization* 68, no. 1 (2014): 111-41.

[118] Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*, 67-70, 186.

[119] Sarah Cook, "The Long Shadow of Chinese Censorship: How the Communist Party's Media Restrictions Affect News Outlets around the World" (Washington DC: Center for International Media Assitance, 2013).

[120] For example, see Li and Sligo, "Chinese Media Going Global: Issues of Perception and Credibility," 116-27.

[121] Kingsley Edney, "Soft Power and the Chinese Propaganda System," *Journal of Contemporary China* 21, no. 78 (2012): 899-914.

[122] Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*, 227.

[123] Yiyi Lu, "Challenges for China's International Communication," in *China's Soft Power and International Relations*, ed. Hongyi Lai and Yiyi Lu (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 108-9.

Beijing Consensus and the expansion of OSEZs

Analysts have correctly observed that Chinese political and academic elites, more often than not, gave a short shrift to liberal democracy when discussing Chinese soft power. In contrast, Chinese political and academic elites are more prone to elevate its development model—Beijing Consensus—as a major resource of Chinese soft power.[124]

Intensive debate about Beijing Consensus has ensued since this concept was proposed by Ramo in 2004. According to Ramo, the Beijing Consensus substantially differs from Washington Consensus. Simply put, the Washington Consensus mainly refers to a "transnational policy paradigm" predicated on the ideology of neoliberalism, and used by the international financial institutions (IFIs) as a guideline since 1990s for making loans to governments in exchange for liberal policy reforms.[125] In contrast, the new development dynamic of the Beijing Consensus is characterized by an equitable and peaceful high-quality growth, aligned with a substantial transformation of traditional ideas such as privatization and free trade in practice. It is a pragmatic-learning-by doing approach to socioeconomic reform characterized by various bold innovation and experiments. Furthermore, not only does it deal with economic issues, but it also addresses political, social and foreign policy agendas.[126] To sum up, it is a socioeconomic model reflecting the top-down control of development and poverty reduction in which political reform is secondary in comparison to economic reform.[127]

The Beijing Consensus could be an important resource of Chinese soft power as the vast majority of Chinese political elites and scholars have argued.[128] The translation of the

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[124] Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of China's Soft Power Studies from 1992 to 2010]*, 135-6.

[125] Sarah Babb, "The Washington Consensus as Transnational Policy Paradigm: Its Origins, Trajectory and Likely Successor," *Review of International Political Economy* 20, no. 2 (2013): 268-97.

[126] Joshua Cooper Ramo, *The Beijing Consensus* (London: The Foreign Policy Center, 2004): 3-6, 11-13.

[127] Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*, 56; Susan L. Shrik, *The Political Logic of Economic Reform in China* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993); Suisheng Zhao, "The China Model: Can It Replace the Western Model of Modernization?," *Journal of Contemporary China* 19, no. 65 (2010): 422.

[128] There is a minor group of Chinese scholars disagreeing with this argument. For example, see Zhongying Pan,

Beijing Consensus into Chinese soft power through its political application, however, is a complicated issue. The Chinese government is concerned about that too much emphasis on the Beijing Consensus may induce an unnecessary backlash from the West. That is because an overemphasis on the Beijing Consensus can be easily interpreted as a direct challenge to the Washington Consensus, and may end up refueling the China threat thesis.[129] Therefore, the Chinese government did not adopt this terminology officially, and demurred from advancing the Beijing Consensus to any other developing country.[130] Interestingly, international observers argue that the Chinese government has sophisticatedly exported Beijing Consensus in the form of OSEZs to the African countries in particular including Egypt, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Nigeria and Zambia.[131]

The construction of OSEZs is designed to replicate the successful experience of SEZs that flourished across the 1980s and 1990s in China. The SEZ is a pilot zone for economic development, and is located in geographically delimited areas characterized by world-class infrastructure and services in combination with business-friendly policies and incentive regimes.[132] Similarly, OSEZs are considered as the expansion of SEZs overseas. It represents a unique and experimental model of "development cooperation" based on the market-based decisions and investment by Chinese enterprises accompanied by policy support and subsidies from both the Chinese government and the host country. The dynamic integration among Chinese companies, the Chinese government and local government of host countries has been evolving through the operation of OSEZs particularly in Africa.[133]

"China's Soft Power Dilemma: The Beijing Consensus Revisited," in *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics*, ed. Mingjiang Li (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2009), 125-42.

[129] Young Nam Cho and Jong Ho Jeong, "China's Soft Power: Discussions, Resources, and Prospects," *Asian Survey* 48, no. 3 (2008): 463-66.

[130] Jiang Yang, "Rethinking the Beijing Consensus: How China Responds to Crises," *The Pacific Review* 24, no. 3 (2011): 339; Howard W. French, "China Wages Classroom Struggle to Win Friends in Africa," *The New York Times*, November 20, 2005; "Full Text of Chinese Premier's Press Conference in Egypt," accessed November 11, 2015. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-11/11/content_12427606.htm.

[131] Fei-Ling Wang and Esi A. Elliot, "China in Africa: Presence, Perceptions and Prospects," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23, no. 90 (2014): 1021; Martyn J. Davies, "Special Economic Zones: China's Developmental Model Comes to Africa," in *China into Africa: Trade, Aid,and Influence*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Washington DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2008), 137-54; Deborah Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 97-100.

[132] Deborah BrÄUtigam and Tang Xiaoyang, "Economic Statecraft in China's New Overseas Special Economic Zones: Soft Power, Business or Resource Security?," *International Affairs* 88, no. 4 (2012): 803.

[133] Deborah BrÄUtigam and Tang Xiaoyang, "African Shenzhen: China's Special Economic Zones in Africa," *Journal of*

The idea of building OSEZs is not new to China. It can be traced back to 1994, when the Egyptian government asked the Chinese government to support the establishment of an economic zone there. However, the widespread expansion of OSEZs in the Global South has just taken off recently since 2006 due to the strong support from MOFCOM, MOF, China Exim Bank, and CDB. By mid-2012, 15 zones (6 in Africa) had been selected for financial replenishment from the Chinese government. The construction and even the operation of some zones have been undertaken since then (see Table 4–5).[134]

Table 4–5: Chinese OSEZs Officially Supported by MOFCOM

Region and Countries	Zone	Tender Year	Status
Sub-Saharan Africa			
Zambia	Chambishi Nonferrous Metal Mining Group Industrial Park	2006	Operational
	Lusaka sub-zone		Under Construction
Nigeria	Lekki Free Trade Zone	2007	Operational
	Ogun-Guangdong Zone	2006	Operational
Ethiopia	Eastern Industrial Park	2007	Operational
Mauritius	JinFei Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone	2006	Under Construction
North Africa			
Algeria	Jiangling Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone	2007	Not Implemented
Egypt	Tianjin TEDA Suez Zone	2007	Operational
East Asia			
Vietnam	China-Vietnam (Shenzhen-Haiphong) Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone	2007	Under Construction

Mordern African Studies 49, no. 1 (2011): 27-54.

[134]Ibid., 32; "Economic Statecraft in China's New Overseas Special Economic Zones: Soft Power, Business or Resource Security?," 803-5;

	Longjiang Industrial Park	2007	Operational
Thailand	Thai-Chinese Rayong Industrial Zone	2006	Operational
Cambodia	Sihanoukville SEZ	2006	Under Construction
Indonesia	China-Indonesia Economic Trade Zone	2007	Under Construction
South Korea	Korea-China Industrial Park	2007	Delayed due to funding problem
South Asia			
Pakistan	Haier-Ruba Industrial Zone	2007	Operational
Latin America			
Venezuela	Venezuela-China Science Technology Industry Zone	2007	Not Implemented
Mexico	Mexico and China (Ningbo) Geely industrial and trade cooperation zone	2007	Not Implemented due to land access issue
Europe			
Russia	Ussuriysk Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone	2006	Under construction and partly operational
		2007	Operational
	Tomsk Timber Industry and Trade Cooperation Zone		
	St. Petersburg Baltic Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone	2006	Dropped

Sources: Douglas Zhihua Zeng, "Global Experiences with Special Economic Zones—With a Focus on China and Africa" (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2015).

Despite the fact that the Chinese government denied the export of Beijing Consensus noted above, and the further establishment of OSEZs in Africa may be influenced by a mix of economic, political and strategic considerations,[135] the widespread expansion of OSEZs and their future success may significantly promote China's soft power on this continent. Arguably, its successful operation in the long term can *directly* provide the

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[135] Martyn J. Davies, "Special Economic Zones: China's Developmental Model Comes to Africa," 137-54.

host countries with immediate opportunities to acquire rich knowledge and experience from the Chinese counterparts for dealing with their own economic development.[136] For example, the World Bank (WB) has welcomed China's endeavors in this field, and discussed how it can cooperate with China to facilitate China's own overseas development initiatives and adapt its development practice and experience to other developing countries.[137] In any event, we need to recognize the Chinese government's awareness of the potential long-term implications of such projects for Chinese soft power.

The role of Beijing Consensus in the international promotion of Chinese soft power has been widely debated.[138] However, its domestic implications have been comparatively under-researched. It is not an exaggeration to say that Ramo set an influential agenda in China. In addition to the heated discussion within Chinese academia, his publication has been translated and circulated to China's top 5000 leaders, telecast in China during the October national holiday in 2005, and widely propagated in the state media.[139] More interestingly, the Beijing Consensus even became a special topic of reference for national education in Hong Kong, sponsored by the Education Bureau.[140] The massive propagation of the Beijing Consensus idea in mainland China and even Hong Kong has two core underpinnings. Simply put, the domestic popularization of the Beijing Consensus is motivated by the state as it seeks to promote its performance legitimacy as a successful manager of Chinese economy to date on one hand, and tone down the urgent calling for a deeper political reform on the other.[141]

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[136] Thomas Farole, *Special Economic Zones in Africa: Comparing Performance and Learning from Global Experience* (Washington DC: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development /The World Bank, 2011); Yitao Tao, Yiming Yuan, and Meng Li, "Chinese Special Economic Zones: Lessons for Africa," *African Economic Belief* 7, no. 6 (2016): 1-16.

[137] The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *China and the WB: Promote the Innovative Partnership* (Washington DC: Work Bank Publications, 2007), 76-7; Catherine Jones, "Constructing Great Powers: China's Status in a Socially Constructed Plurality," *International Politics* 51, no. 5 (2014): 608.

[138] Stefan Halper, *The Beijing Consensus: How China's Authoritarian Model Will Dominate the Twenty-First Century*; Yasheng Huang, "Rethinking the Beijing Consensus," *Asia Policy*, no. 11 (2011): 1-26; Mark Beeson and Fujian Li, "What Consensus? Geopolitics and Policy Paradigms in China and the United States," 93-109.

[139] The Foreign Policy Centre, "China and Globalisation," accessed August 1, 2015. http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/665.pdf.

[140] Advanced Institute for Contemporary China Studies, *Zhongguo Moshi: Guoqing Zhuanti Jiaoxue Shouce [China Model: A Special Topic for National Condition Teaching]* (Hong Kong: National Education Service Centre, 2012).

[141] "The Beijing Consensus Is to Keep Quiet," *The Economist* 395, no. 8681 (2010): 41-2.

In conclusion, the international and domestic manifestation of China's sophisticated propagation of the Beijing Consensus is notable. Internationally, the role of Beijing Consensus in the promotion of Chinese soft power has been widely debated despite the fact that the Washington Consensus is far from replaced. However, the future sustainability and potential achievements of OSEZs may contribute to the promotion of Chinese soft power in Africa, despite the official denial of its transplantation there. The 2008 Global Financial Crisis (GFC) seems to accelerate this trend.[142] Domestically, the state-led popularization of the Beijing Consensus seeks to strengthen political legitimacy and postponing political reform.

Agenda-setting and institution-building

The capability of setting agendas and building institutions is a manifestation of a country's soft power. This institutional power is supposed to shape the preferences that others express, and make them want and do what the powerful actor wants without resort to "carrots" and "sticks".[143] Agenda-setting generally means attracting attention to particular discourses and excluding other alternative narratives by helping determine "what to think about" and "how to think about it".[144] Moreover, agenda-setting and institution-building are often closely integrated as they can reinforce each other. As America played a leading role in shaping post-WWII international order through the establishment of key multinational institutions in accordance with liberal institutionalism, American hegemony has been institutionalized and sustained.[145] Therefore, it is not surprising that Nye considers institutional power as a key component of American soft power and suggests that Americans should factor multilateral institution-building and governance into a broad definition of American national

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[142] Joseph S. Nye, "American and Chinese Power after the Financial Crisis," *The Washington Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (2010): 144; Wei Liang, "China's Soft Power in Africa: Is Economic Power Sufficent?" *Asian Perspective* 36, no. 4 (2012): 669; Xinbo Wu, "Understanding the Geopolitical Implications of the Global Financial Crisis," *The Washington Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (2010): 159.

[143] *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990), 31-5.

[144] Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald L. Shaw, "The Evolution of Agenda-Setting Research: Twenty-Five Years in the Marketplace of Ideas," *Journal of Communication* 43, no. 2 (1993): 62.

[145] For example, see G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); Robert Latham, *The Liberal Moment: Modernity, Security, and the Making of Postwar International Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

interests.[146]

In the Chinese context, however, the institutional power related to agenda-setting and institution-building is a relatively complicated issue. At the first glance, it seems that the Chinese government is not enthusiastic about promoting its global soft power via the struggle for institutional power. Two reasons are set forth. On one hand, there are few discussions of this matter in Chinese academic circles.[147] The political school—the central argument of which is that political power is the foundation of soft power—does not say much on institutional power, even though it is logically linked to the policy proposal calling for the Chinese government to strengthen international mobilization capability. Similarly, the cultural school—the core argument of which is that culture is integral to the national cohesion and creativity—tends to overlook the significance of institutional power in the promotion of Chinese soft power. Either way, the Chinese government has not yet openly announced its intention to compete for the institutional power of agenda-setting and institution-building as a key vehicle of its soft power campaigns. That is mainly because the Chinese government is worried that its announcement will complicate its peaceful rise in that the status-quo powers (the US in particular) may see it as a challenge to the US-led liberal international order. China's serious concern, ironically, lends credence to the central argument of power-transition theory: China will try to use its rising power to reshape the international order to its liking.[148] As a consequence, the Chinese government's ambiguity in the development of its institutional power may intensify the stereotype that China is more "supplicant than persuader", "more regime-taker than regime-shaper".[149] Similarly, Shih and Huang assert that, the global governance with Chinese characteristic is "reactive rather than proactive, problem-solving rather than goal-driven".[150] To use Shambaugh's term,

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[146] Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone*, chapter 5.

[147] Li, "China Debates Soft Power," 294.

[148] Jack S. Levy, "Power Transition Theory and the Rise of China," in *China's Ascent: Power, Security, and the Future of International Politics*, ed. Robert S. Ross and Feng Zhu (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2008), 13.

[149] Jacques deLisle, "Soft Power in a Hard Place: China, Taiwan, Cross-Strait Relations and U.S. Policy," *Orbis* 54, no. 4 (2010): 498.

[150] Chih-Yu Shih and Chiung-Chiu Huang, "Preaching Self-Responsibility: The Chinese Style of Global Governance," *Journal of Contemporary China* 22, no. 80 (2013): 352.

China "punches well below its weight" in global governance.[151]

The evolution of Chinese government's attitude and position towards the role of institutional power in global governance, however, ought to be given greater consideration. Simply put, China has gradually moved from a regime taker towards a regime shaper. A series of investigations confirm that the Chinese government has used its increasing economic and political leverage to initiate or endorse various agendas, rules and parallel institutions in the 21st century.[152] The 2008 GFC is a turning point of China's attitude towards the particular role of institutional power in the global economic governance: the Chinese government has openly announced that it strives to play a pivotal role in this regard.[153] China's strong interest in seeking institutional power gained momentum after Xi calling for "striving for achievement" in the global (economic) governance.[154]

China's approach to augment its institutional power in global governance has several salient characteristics. First, China has been weaving a multilayer network dealing with various issue-agendas: financial and monetary arrangement, trade and investment, trans-regional infrastructure projects, national and regional security, technology (Information and Communication Technology in particular) development and management, and diplomatic forums (see Figure 4–6).

Second, the Chinese government has demonstrated its finesse to propose and endorse specific initiatives and agendas towards different targets: US, EU, Japan, Russia, Australia, peripheral countries, developing countries, emerging countries, Asia-Pacific

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[151] Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*, 10.

[152] A comprehensive analysis see Sebastian Heilmann et al., "China's Shadow Foreign Policy: Parallel Structures Challenge the Established International Order," (Berlin: Mercator Institute for China Studies, October 2014), 1-9; Injoo Sohn, "After Renaissance: China's Multilateral Offensive in the Developing World," *European Journal of International Relations* 18, no. 1 (2012): 77-101; James F. Paradise, "The Role of 'Parallel Institutions' in China's Growing Participation in Global Economic Governance," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 21, no. 2 (2016): 149-75.

[153] Hongying Wang and James N. Rosenau, "China and Global Governance," *Asian Perspective* 33, no. 3 (2009): 5-39.

[154] Mark Beeson and Fujian Li, "China's Place in Regional and Global Governance: A New World Comes into View," *Global Policy* (2016), doi: 10.1111/1758-5899.12348; "Xi Stresses Urgency of Reforming Global Governance," accessed November 1, 2016.
http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-10/13/c_134710464.htm.

regions, and international and regional organizations as showcased in Figure 4–6. China's capability of setting agendas for global governance, therefore, looms large due to its expansive domains, albeit these proposed agendas not always turning into policy-making during the institutional bargaining.

Figure 4–6: International Parallel and Alternative Structures Promoted by China

Notes: BRICS: the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies including Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa; RCEP: Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership; TTIP: The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership; TTP: The Transpacific Partnership; CHIPS: The Clearing House Interbank Payments System; CIPS: China International Payment System; CICA: Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia; S&P: Standard & Poor's Ratings Services.

Source: Sebastian Heilmann et al., "China's Shadow Foreign Policy: Parallel Structures Challenge the Established International Order," 2.

Third, China has developed an integrated approach to maximize its institutional power across the board. For example, China has initiated or co-initiated new agendas (such as IMF voting power reform), forums (such as The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)) and even multilateral institutions, such as AIIB and the New Development Bank (NDB). Further, China has also reinvigorated and sponsored existing initiatives and institutions that were first proposed by other countries yet caught less attention.

China's proactive engagement with the CICA, which was first proposed by the Kazakhstan President on 1992, and its successfully assuming the role of chairman from 2014–16, is one example.[155] Moreover, analysts observed that China's multiple initiatives are most effective as long as they are promoted in synergy with one another. For example, new funding and currency swaps and transaction mechanisms have gained traction in Asia, Africa, and Latin America within a short period of time. China's dedication to reshaping regional security architecture in peripheral regions overlaps with China's initiated trans-regional project of infrastructural building.[156]

Last, China's initiated- and sponsored-agendas and institutions heretofore, are deployed to either complement or compete with current US-led international order.[157] In short, it represents China's current pragmatic two-pronged strategy of so-called "rightful resistance": accommodating US through the active participation in the existing liberal international order and continuing to reform the current existing regimes on one hand, but delegitimizing the American hegemony through the cost-imposing strategy without risk of hard balancing such as building Beijing-centered multilateral institutions on the other.[158] The recent establishment of AIIB is a good example. On one hand, it has significantly improved China's influence in terms of global economic governance, notwithstanding the notorious boycott by the US-Japan axis. On the other hand, the inclusiveness of AIIB and its actual operation aligned with the prevailing guiding principles embedded in the current multilateral development banks, demonstrate China's willingness to uphold the liberal international order centered by the West in general, and the US in particular.[159]

Overall, China's attitude and position towards competing for institutional power has

[155] http://www.s-cica.org/page.php?page_id=7&lang=1&article_id=104

[156] Sebastian Heilmann et al., "China's Shadow Foreign Policy: Parallel Structures Challenge the Established International Order," 1.

[157] Ibid., 1-9.

[158] Randall L. Schweller and Xiaoyu Pu, "After Unipolarity: China's Visions of International Order in an Era of U.S. Decline," *International Security* 36, no. 1 (2011): 41-72; Stephen Olson and Clyde Prestowitz, "The Evolving Role of China in International Institutions," (Washington DC: The Economic Strategy Institute, 2011).

[159] Detailed analyses see chapter 6.

evolved, but generally in a consistent, patient and low-profile posture. The 2008 GFC has significantly facilitated China's engagement with the global economic governance, and accordingly, added credibility to China's increasing institutional power in different domains and scopes as mentioned above. Despite the lack of the Chinese government's rhetoric defining the relationship between institutional power and its soft power, its policy and behavior in this respect has clearly demonstrated the increasing role of institutional power in China's soft power campaigns.

Chinese "declaratory" and "operational" foreign policy[160]

Chinese foreign policy analysts and experts generally agree that Chinese declaratory and operational foreign policy may serve as a key source of China's global soft power. In rhetoric, "multi-polarity", "democratization of international relations", "peaceful development/rise", "harmonious world", "five principles of peaceful co-existence", "good neighborhood", "win-win diplomacy", "a responsible great power", "peaceful rise", "harmonious world" and the "community of common destiny", are frequently invoked during the discussion of Chinese soft power.[161] In practice, China's charm offensive includes various foreign policies such as foreign aid with no strings attached, nonaggression and nonintervention policy, embracing multilateral diplomacy and regionalism, actively participating in humanitarian rescue and UNPKOs, boosting cooperative economic diplomacy and trade with mutual benefits.[162]

Chinese soft power seen in light of its declaratory and operational policy highlights some inherent tensions. China's so-called "assertive" statements and behaviors during

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[160] Declaratory foreign policy refers to the spoken intent of a government, and operational foreign policy involves the actual action of a government, see Paul H. Nitze, "Atoms, Strategy and Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 34, no. 2 (1956): 187.

[161] David Scott, "China's Public Diplomacy Rhetoric, 1990–2012: Pragmatic Image-Crafting," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 26, no. 2 (2015): 249-65; Sheng Ding, "To Build a 'Harmonious World': China's Soft Power Wielding in the Global South," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 13, no. 2 (2008): 193-213.

[162] Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*; Cho and Jeong, "China's Soft Power: Discussions, Resources, and Prospects," 466-9; Stefan Stähle, "China's Shifting Attitude towards United Nations Peacekeeping Operations," *China Quarterly*, no. 195 (2008): 631-55; Bates Gill and Huang Yanzhong, "Sources and Limits of Chinese 'Soft Power'," *Survival* 48, no. 2 (2006): 21-3; "How to Improve China's Soft Power," *People's Daily*, March 11, 2010.

the maritime territorial disputes in the South China Sea (SCS) and East China Sea (ECS), especially in the wake of 2008 GFC,[163] has reignited this tension. For example, it has been strongly argued that China's hard-won charm offensive in the first decade of 21st century has been hamstrung by its recent assertiveness in its security and foreign policy.[164] However, this argument carries less weight when seen from the vantage point of the Chinese government. Arguably, soft power is not the only instrument to serve Chinese national interests since it is not a panacea to address any thorny issue related to China's *core* interests, including Chinese sovereignty, national security, territorial integrity and national reunification, regime security, and sustainable economic and social development.[165] Like hard power, soft power is not free from shortcomings. That is why Nye stressed the importance of smart power as a strategy to combine both hard and soft power. As a result, it is possible for a country to be "newly assertive" on some limited range of issues while leaving other key policies unchanged.[166]

China's so-called assertive security and foreign policy in the recent SCS disputes may add relevance to its exercise of hard power, but it does not necessarily negate the role of soft power in other policy fields such as economic cooperation, bilateral trade and domestic governance.[167] For example, on one hand, political atmosphere remains tense since the Chinese government seemed unwilling to back down from its tough position in the current SCS maritime disputes. Yet interestingly, on the other hand, the Chinese government continued to dispense strategic economic aid to Vietnam and Philippines, regardless of the fact that both countries were in serious conflict with China in the

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[163] To say that China took a confrontational approach towards SCS maritime disputes does not claim that the Chinese government adopted a newly assertive foreign policy across the board. See an excellent paper deconstructing the popular narrative of China's new assertiveness: Björn Jerdén, "The Assertive China Narrative: Why It Is Wrong and How So Many Still Bought into It," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 7, no. 1 (2014): 47-88.

[164] For example, see Mark Beeson and Fujian Li, *China's Regional Relations: Evolving Foreign Policy Dynamics* (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publisher, 2014), 105.

[165] Michael D. Swaine, "China's Assertive Behavior Part One: On 'Core Interests'" (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, 2011); *White Paper: China's Peaceful Development*; Dai, "Jianchi Zou Heping Fazhan Daolu [Adhere to Path of Peaceful Development]".

[166] Alastair Iain Johnston, "How New and Assertive Is China's New Assertiveness?" *International Security* 37, no. 4 (2013): 46.

[167] Erik Beukel, "China and the South China Sea: Two Faces of Power in the Rising China's Neighborhood Policy" (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, DIIS, 2010); Michael A. Glosny, "Heading toward a Win-Win Future? Recent Developments in China's Policy toward Southeast Asia," *Asian Security* 2, no. 1 (2006): 24-57.

maritime dispute.[168] Even if the strong argument—Chinese soft power has been offset by China's recent assertiveness—proves right, it does not follow that China cannot win back its lost soft power if it substantially changes its foreign policy on a given issue, albeit at a high cost in all likelihood. For example, China flexed its muscles in the 1995 Mischief Reef seizure and the 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis. By contrast, however, analysts agreed that the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis (AFC) is a watershed of China's soft power campaigns as it promised not to depreciate its currency RMB.[169]

China's recent "assertiveness" and its subsequent impact on soft power have become increasingly complicated due to their entanglement with Chinese core interests and the resurgence of Chinese nationalism. The Chinese government frequently mentioned the term of core interests during the period of 2003–2004, and substantiated its content during 2009–2011 in particular. Though the concept of core interests remains rather vague since the boundary between core interests and non-core interests is still movable and porous,[170] its high-profile adoption by the Chinese leadership demonstrates a politically significant implication for external observers and policy-makers. It reveals the "private information" in reference to China's "peaceful bargaining" with status-quo powers (the US in particular) for its status-seeking.[171] For the Chinese government, respecting China's core interests is central, and any violation of these interests by implication will absolutely provoke an instant response from China.[172] It is the very nature of core interest diplomacy that requires the Chinese government to avoid being seen as soft and weak, as any weakness would be repudiated by the Chinese public. As a result, Chinese nationalism seems to justify the utilization of hard power to deal with issues closely tied to China's core interests, even though China does not necessarily favor a militaristic foreign policy.[173] That is why Nye argues the Chinese nationalism

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[168] Baohui Zhang, "Xi Jinping and 'Pragmatic' Offensive Realism," *Global Asia* 9, no. 2 (2014): 71-9.

[169] For example, see Johannes Dragsbaek Schmidt, "China's Soft Power Diplomacy in Southeast Asia," 46.

[170] Jinghan Zeng, Yuefan Xiao, and Shaun Breslin, "Securing China's Core Interests: The State of the Debate in China," *International Affairs* 91, no. 2 (2015): 245-66; Alice Ekman, "China's Two-Track Foreign Policy from Ambiguous to Clear-Cut Positions," (Paris: Center for Asian Studies, 2012).

[171] Kai He and Huiyun Feng, "Debating China's Assertiveness: Taking China's Power and Interests Seriously," *International Politics* 49, no. 5 (2012): 633-44; Kai He and Stephen Walker, "Role Bargaining Strategies for China's Peaceful Rise," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 8, no. 4 (2015): 384-7.

[172] Kai He and Huiyun Feng, "Debating China's Assertiveness: Taking China's Power and Interests Seriously," 640.

[173] Xinhua News Agency, "Xi Eyes More Enabling Int'l Environment for China's Peaceful Development," accessed

will restrain the international promotion of Chinese soft power.[174] In short, China's core-interest diplomacy, nationalism and hard power are closely intertwined.

However, it is important to note that soft power continues to play a key role in China's grand strategy of *proactive* peaceful rise in terms of its regime security, economic and social development and global status-seeking. China's so-called assertive statements and behaviors in maritime territorial disputes in the SCS and ECS do not suggest its deviation from peaceful rise. Rather, it represents the shift from a passive (*taoguangyanghui*) to a proactive peaceful rise (*yousuozuowei*), which is driven by its ascent in comparison to the relative decline of American power.[175] In terms of sovereignty and national security, China has been increasingly active in signaling its political determination and taking instant action to protect its core interests in this regard, but with self-restraint.[176] "Peaceful" remains the key word in its grand strategic design on the part of the Chinese government. After all, China's military strategy remains anchored in "active defense", and the Chinese government reiterates that it has no intention to seek hegemony and any kind of sphere of influence.[177] Although some critical views emerged regarding China's non-alignment strategy,[178] the Chinese government has not yet renounced this strategy. Moreover, defending China's maritime sovereignty does not necessarily involve giving the Chinese military force the authority to pursue territorial expansion.[179] Overall, China's recent so-called assertiveness in its security and foreign policy clearly demonstrates the key role of hard power in China's grand strategic shift from a passive to a proactive peaceful rise. Yet, this does not mean that China's soft power is redundant in this context. Suffice it to say that a grand strategy logically requires the distinctive combination of all elements of national power

November 1, 2016. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-11/30/c_133822694.htm

[174] Global Times, "Different Views Can Boost China's Soft Power," *Global Times,* December 2, 2014.

[175] Dingding Chen and Jianwei Wang, "Lying Low No More? China's New Thinking on the Tao Guang Yang Hui Strategy," *China: An International Journal* 9, no. 2 (2011): 195-216; Xuetong Yan, "From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement," 153-84.

[176] Fangyin Zhou, "Guoji Zhixu Bianhua Yuanli Yu Fenfa Youwei Celve [The Principle of Changing International Order and China's Strategy of Striving for Achievement]," *Guoji Zhengzhi Kexue [Quartley Journal of International Politics]* 1, no. 1 (2016): 33-59.

[177] The Chinese Ministry of National Defense, *China's Military Strategy White Paper* (Beijing: State Council Information Office, 2015).

[178] Feng Zhang, "China's New Thinking on Alliances," *Survive* 54, no. 5 (2012): 129-48.

[179] "Exclusive Q&A with Chinese President Xi Jinping," accessed November 1, 2016. http://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-britain-xi-q-a-idUSKCN0SC03920151018.

to achieve a country's core national interests.[180] As China is likely to continue pursuing a grand strategy of peaceful rise rather than warlike rise in the foreseeable future,[181] or at least before the achievement of "two centenary goals"[182], soft power may continue to serve as a key strategic means as a result.

Soft Power beyond the State and Its Overall Impacts

Having described the basis and mechanics of China's soft power campaigns, I think it is safe to say that the Chinese government is the primary driver of China's soft power campaigns. Unsurprisingly, therefore, it is the Chinese government's active role in driving Chinese soft power campaigns that garners considerable attention around the world.[183] Chinese NGOs, think tanks, social groups and individuals as a whole only play a limited and marginal role during this process, partly for the reason that they cannot behave independently from the Chinese government,[184] and partly because the Chinese government does not know how to get out of the way of civil society to allow this to happen.[185] Along this line of reasoning, any activity or project linked to soft power beyond the control of the Chinese government will be easily condemned and even quashed as a result.[186] From the viewpoint of the Chinese government, soft power

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[180] The definition of grand strategy is manifold and contested, but the discussion of its grandness concerning the strategic means—the distinctive combination of political, economic, military and cultural means—is widely converged. A comprehensive literature review on the debate of grand strategy see Lukas Milevski, *The Evolution of Modern Grand Strategic Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Hal Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy? Power and Purpose in American Statecraft from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2014), chapter 1.

[181] For example, see Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge: China's Grand Strategy and International Security* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy: Past, Present, and Future*; Barry Buzan, "The Logic and Contradictions of 'Peaceful Rise/Development' as China's Grand Strategy," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 7, no. 4 (2014): 381-420; Timothy R. Heath, "What Does China Want? Discerning the PRC's National Strategy," *Asian Security* 8, no. 1 (2012): 54-72.

[182] The first centenary goal is to "bring China into a moderately prosperous society" by the time of the Party's centenary (in 2021), and the second one is to bring China's per capita of GDP "up to the level of moderately developed countries", and "realize modernization" by the time of the centenary of the PRC (in 2049). See Communist Party of China, "Full text of constitution of Communist Party of China", accessed November 1, 2016. http://english.cpc.people.com.cn/206972/206981/8188065.html

[183] Kerry Dumbaugh, "China's Foreign Policy: What Does It Mean for US Global Interests?" (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 2008), 18-9.

[184] d' Hooghe, *China's Public Diplomacy*, 132-3.

[185] Yiwei Wang, "Public Diplomacy and the Rise of Chinese Soft Power," 260; Barry Buzan, "Confusing Public Diplomacy and Soft Power," accessed November 1, 2016. http://blogs.nottingham.ac.uk/chinapolicyinstitute/2016/03/10/confusing-public-diplomacy-and-soft-power/.

[186] Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*, 248; David Feith, "China's Soft Power Problem," *The Wall Street Journal*, December 17, 2015; Xinhua News Agency, "Awarding Liu Xiaobo Nobel Peace Prize May Harm

campaigns by human-rights activists with the Chinese background may actually undermine the state-centered soft power buildup abroad. Accordingly, they should be discouraged.[187]

The party-state remains vigilant to the nonstate actors and continues to tightly control the political and public sphere, notwithstanding the remarkable deregulation of economic and private sphere. Two observers, Kang and Han, conclude that the Chinese government has developed a system of "graduated controls" (*fenlei kongzhi*). That is, the state's control strategies over different types of non-state organizations in the Chinese society vary mainly because of its different perceptions on the threat that may be posed by these organizations against its rule, and their different roles and functions in providing public goods.[188] Since the promotion of Chinese soft power becomes a "paramount state mission",[189] the predominant role of party-state should not be challenged in principle. It also requires that the role of individuals and social organizations ought to be regulated to fit into this state mission; even including the current first lady Peng Liyuan, who is applauded as exhibiting Chinese soft power.[190] In so doing, it is hardly surprising to see that political activists are under intense scrutiny, and even harassed if their activities are considered to embarrass the Chinese government and tarnish its preferred self-image. So much so that, some argue that China's state-led soft power campaigns have a significant deficit—especially compared to the US—because of the absence of independent nonstate actors who can interact with the world freely and directly.[191]

It is less controversial to say that the Chinese government-directed and well-funded soft power campaigns show its strengths and effectiveness especially in the short- and

China-Norway Relations, Says FM Spokesman," accessed November 1, 2015.
http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2010-10/08/c_13547668.htm.
[187] Eric Hyer, "Soft Power and the Rise of China: An Assessment," 9.
[188] Xiaoguang Kang and Heng Han, "Graduated Controls: The State-Society Relationship in Contemporary China," *Modern China* 34, no. 1 (2008): 36-55.
[189] Hu Jintao. Quotations from Jia Gao, Catherine Ingram and Pookong Kee eds., *Global Media and Public Diplomacy in Sino-Western Relations* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 17.
[190] Jee Yun Baik, "Peng Liyuan: China's First Lady in Diplomacy," accessed November 1, 2016.
https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/sites/uscpublicdiplomacy.org/files/BestStudentPaper2014.pdf
[191] Yiyi Lu, "Blind Spots in China's Soft Power," *The Straits Times*, July 15, 2007.

middle-term. The advantages of state-led soft power campaigns loom large particularly in comparison to that of US and other countries that are heavily reliant on efforts from nonstate actors in a much less organized approach.[192] In short, the top-down Chinese model proves efficient to mobilize various bureaucratic apparatuses and cultural SOEs in the short term to carry out soft power campaigns sanctioned by the central leadership in full swing. The globalization of CIs, the promotion of Chinese culture exports and exchanges, the vigorous development of cultural/creative industries, and the Chinese media's going-global projects are good illustration.

The weaknesses and ineffectiveness of these state-led soft power campaigns lie in the uncertain prospect of their sustainability in the long term.[193] Simply put, the predominant role of the Chinese government in soft power campaigns will heavily limit the learning-experiences of Chinese non-state actors in the direct engagement with their counterparts in the future. In turn, their lack of experiences justifies the primary role of the Chinese government in driving soft power campaigns. Such a vicious cycle will remain unchanged as long as the Chinese government continues to rein in these political projects about Chinese soft power. Further, China's long-term soft power campaigns remain in the shadow of China's authoritarian regime. The authoritarian nature of the Chinese regime has complicated China's soft power campaigns around the world, particularly in the West. As the nature of this regime may remain unchanged in the foreseeable future, the sustainability of China's soft power campaigns remains uncertain in the long run.

By taking both strengths and weaknesses of China's state-led soft power campaigns into consideration, I suggest we need to evaluate its overall impacts with caution. It has been often argued that China faces a failure when it comes to soft power. Chinese soft power is weak, as we are told.[194] Contrarily, others assert that Chinese soft power is strong and

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[192] Kingsley Edney, *The Globalization of Chinese Propaganda* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 27.

[193] Suisheng Zhao, "The Prospect of China's Soft Power: How Sustainable?," in *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics*, ed. Mingjiang Li (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2009), 251-2.

[194] Joseph S. Nye, "Why China Is Weak on Soft Power," *International Herald Tribune*, January 17, 2012.

effective. [195] Interestingly, some discuss that China's soft power campaigns are "impressive but not effective".[196] Put it another way, the "outputs" of China's soft power campaigns "are privileged over its real impacts".[197] These contradictory judgments call for rigorous empirical studies. However, it is a challenging undertaking so far given that different standards and criteria are used in various evaluations of China's gross soft power. A commonly accepted measuring rod has not yet been developed so far. In this sense, it is important to treat extant different modes of measurement on the impacts of China's gross soft power on their merits. As the aggregated results (see Table 4-6) demonstrate, the global ranking of China's gross soft power is more likely to be placed in the middle. Simply put, the gross impact of Chinese soft power is mixed.

Table 4–6: Global Rankings of Chinese Soft Power

Year	Ranking # (total number of countries surveyed)	Index Score (maximal score)	Source
2005	8 (14)	31.1 (100)	A
2006	8 (14)	32.2 (100)	A
2007	8 (14)	32.2 (100)	A
2008	8 (14)	32.2 (100)	A
	4 (4)	0.51 (1.00)	C
	28 (50)	N/A	G
	56 (78)	N/A	H
2009	7 (14)	33.7 (100)	A

	22 (50)	54.29 (100)	G
	48 (N/A)	N/A	H
2010	8 (14)	30.7 (100)	A
	17 (26)	0.80	E
	23 (50)	N/A	G
	56 (110)	N/A	H
2011	20 (30)	3.74	E
	22 (50)	N/A	G
	65 (113)	N/A	H
2012	22 (40)	4.237	E
	23 (50)	N/A	G
	56 (118)	N/A	H
2013	6 (80)	245.8	F
	23 (50)	N/A	G
2014	6 (80)	271.5	F
	23 (50)	N/A	G
	28 (75)	N/A	H
2015	30 (30)	40.85 (100)	B
	19 (30)	N/A	D
	23 (50)	N/A	G
	64 (163)	N/A	I

Sources: A=*Rapid Growth Markets Soft Power Index* (London: Ernst & Young, 2012); B=Jonathan McClory, *Soft Power 30* (London: Portland, 2015); C=Christopher B. Whitney and David Shambaugh., *Soft Power in Asia* (Chicago: The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2008); D=Monocle Soft Power Survey 2014/15; E= *The New Persuaders: An International Ranking of Soft Power* (London: The Institute for Government); F= *Elcano Global Presence Report* (Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano); G= *Anbolt-GfK Proper Nation Brand Indexes* (New York: GfK Roper Public Affairs & Media); H= *Country Brand Index* (London and New York: FutureBrand); I=The Good Country Index.

Conclusion

This chapter documents the process, vehicles and impacts of China's soft power campaigns in promoting its positive attractiveness, institutional and constitutive power, and tests four general hypotheses as a result. There are some central arguments of this chapter. First, the national interest has become a guiding principle in shaping Chinese foreign policy-making in post-Mao China and the recent application of soft power as a political project. Second, China's soft power campaigns are a two-level game as they target both domestic and international audiences. Third, the Chinese government is a dominant driver of China's soft power campaigns. Last, the Chinese government has employed different vehicles to deal with different scopes and domains in the course of these campaigns. Overall, the global impacts of Chinese soft power are mixed and its global ranking is more likely to stand in the middle. In the next chapter, I will explain the *international* incentives of China's state-led soft power campaigns.

Chapter 5: National Interests, Global Power and China's

Soft Power Campaigns

After surveying China's soft power campaigns in the previous chapter, this chapter will explore the key motivations of these campaigns. The core argument of this chapter is that China's global soft power campaigns are less reflective of the logic of appropriateness than the logic of consequence. That is because the consideration of soft power as morally good and designed to serve the human interests comes second to the national interest, which includes cultural, economic and political interests. Put another way, soft power has been widely utilized by the Chinese government to preserve cultural/ideological security, reduce cultural trade deficit in terms of cultural goods and services, promote creative cultural industries, reshape a favorable image of the Chinese government, and institutionalize its growing economic and political influence through setting influential agendas and initiating new multilateral institutions. The synthesis of both high and low politics along with China's soft power campaigns is quite salient as a result.

The explanations of China's soft power campaigns demonstrate the utility of analytical eclecticism. The rationale of promoting cultural security and sovereignty is consistent with the realist school of thought, as the primacy of the state and the zero-sum logic linked to the conflict of national interests in this regard have more to say. In addition, the process of its securitization of Chinese culture in contrast to the liberal Western model is by and large constructivist. However, China's solution to its cultural trade deficit, its positive image-building and its attempt to take an active role in the agenda-setting and institution-building at least partially reflects the liberal mode of thinking associated with commercial, sociological and institutional liberalism respectively. This chapter will first briefly review the logic of consequence closely linked to the guiding force of national interests that underpins China's soft power

campaigns, and then examine the driving forces behind China's soft power campaigns in both hard and low politics according to the analytical eclecticism.

The Guiding Force of "National Interest"

As articulated in chapter 1, soft power is closely bound up with the logic of consequences of which the formulation and achievement of national interests is the top priority. According to the statist mode of thought outlined by Krasner, the state is neither one interest group among many, nor the servant of particular societal needs and class interests, but an institution with powers, rights and purposes of its own. The national interest, along this line of thought, is a set of objectives designed to promote the material utility and ideational values of the state primarily through the statements and behaviors of policy-makers. Having said that, the national interest is not whatever politicians say. The statements and behaviors of policy-makers are qualified as being synonymous with the national interest only if two criteria are met: the actions of policy-makers must derived from the dominant concern of general objectives, rather than preferences or needs of any particular group or class; and the ordering of preferences must remain consistent over time.

The formulation and achievement of national interests, therefore, is characterized by a top-down decision-making process, and it does not deny the role played by subnational interests in this regard. However, from the statist perspective, national interests should not be relegated into various subnational interests. Similarly, although there are some sort of overlapping concerns between national and human interests, national interests should not be replaced by the human interests since nation state continues to dominate international politics. The logic of appropriateness related to human interests therefore is not extinguished but heavily constrained by the logic of consequence marked with the dominant concern of national interests.

As the guiding principle of the national interest for soft power campaigns is widely recognized, a further consideration of its forms and levels is in order. The forms of national interest are specified in accordance with analytical eclectic approach given that both material and ideational factors (including security, power, wealth, reputation and identity) matter equally. There are three major forms of national interest as far as I am concerned: cultural, economic and political interests. There are also four levels of national interests: survival, vital, major, and peripheral interests. Vital and major interests are the key concerns for the state in peaceful times, when survival interests are not threatened. Therefore, three forms (political, economic and cultural) and two levels (major and vital) of national interests warrant attention in examining the motivations of China's soft power campaigns, as the following section explains.

Regarding the forms of national interest driving China's soft power campaigns, the Chinese government has attached a great significance to these campaigns in order to preserve cultural/ideological security, reduce cultural trade deficit and promote cultural/creative industries, reshape a favorable image of the Chinese government, and institutionalize its growing economic and political influence through setting agendas and initiating new institutions. In terms of levels, the soft power agenda in the eyes of Chinese policy-makers has been elevated from a "major" concern during Jiang's era to a "vital" concern in the period of Hu-Wen and even the Xi-Li administration. That is, while Jiang called for cultural development and prosperity, Hu strived for a further cultural florescence in this respect. While Jiang's concern of protecting cultural security and interest is basically defensive, Hu pushed forward the so-called charm offensive.

Although the three forms and two levels of national interests are closely linked to China's soft power campaigns, two caveats are worth noting. First, the theoretical simplification of developing threefold typologies of national interest (cultural, economic and political interests) does not assume away the actual interdependence between them. After all, not only did the Chinese government stress the significance of cultural interests along with the proactive campaign of *cultural* soft power, it also took the

political and/or economic interests into account at the same time. However, the interactive relationship between three forms of national interest in this Chinese case is beyond the topic of this chapter, given that the central concern lies in the exploration of which forms of national interests have driven China's soft power campaigns.

Second, the levels of national interests are not fixed but in flux because of the changing contexts and capabilities of the state.[1] Therefore, it is problematic to assume that some forms of national interest are by nature less important than others. This caveat merits attention as there remains an influential argument that political interests (such as national security and status-seeking) and/or economic interests should be weighted more heavily than cultural interests in China's foreign policy-making process. For example, in the first seminal Chinese monograph examining the core issue of Chinese national interests, Yan asserts that culture generally plays an "indirect" role in China's modernization, and its impact is not directly observed in comparison to what the political interest of national security usually shows. Therefore, cultural interest is less significant.[2] Yan's seemingly strong argument deserves consideration, as ascribing an indirect role to the impact of culture does not necessarily imply that it is less important.[3] In the Chinese historical and political context, the aesthetic role of culture and its practical utility has always been important during political debate.[4] Suffice it to mention the "Cultural Revolution", the novelty of which is reflected in a self-conscious understanding of it as a cultural rather than an economic or political revolution in the first place.[5] The intertwined relationship between culture and socialist ideology and the corresponding reaction from the party-state further adds relevance to a direct and

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[1] For example, see Kaisheng Li, *Lijie Zhongguo Waijiao (1949-2009) [Understanding Chinese Diplomacy: Identity, National Revival and China's Foreign Strategy 1949-2009]* (Beijing: China Social Science Publisher, 2011).

[2] Xuetong Yan, *Zhongguo Guojia Liyi Fenxi [Analysis of Chinese National Interests]* (Tianjin: Tianjin People's Press, 1996), 108.

[3] For example, He Xin, a leading and controversial strategic thinker in China, argues that the history of Western modernization demonstrates that cultural innovation and emancipation of thought predated economic and political modernization. Modernization without the pillar of advanced spirit and culture will not succeed at all. See *Zhonghua Fuxing Yu Shijie Weilai [China's Revival and the World's Future: Vol. I and II]* (Sichuan: Sichuan People's Press, 1996), 672-83.

[4] Ted Huters, "Between Praxis and Essence: The Search for Cultural Expression in the Chinese Revolution," in *Marxism and the Chinese Experience*, ed. Arif Dirlik and Maurice Meisner (Armonk and London: M. E. Sharpe, 1989), 316-40.

[5] Ann Anagnost, "Cultural Nationalism and Chinese Modernity," in *Cultural Nationalism in East Asia: Representation and Identity*, ed. Harumi Befu (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1993), 69-70.

significant influence of culture. Above all, levels of national interest are conditional and not determined by the inherent nature of each form.

China's soft power campaigns led by the guiding force of the national interest are widely entertained by Chinese and non-Chinese observers.[6] For example, Ding Xueliang, a leading scholar at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, argues that a prudent definition of national interest sets the foundation for the assessment of China's soft power campaigns.[7] Another ardent advocate of Confucianism in China, Kang Xiaoguang, also argues that the promotion of Chinese soft power is not only necessary for the sake of increasing Chinese cultural influence internationally, but also closely integrated with China's political interests, including the long-term development of its political regime. Cultural interests are intermingled with political interests. Consequently, there will be much contestation between Confucianism and the Westernization of China in the next 20–50 years. In short, cultural soft power campaigns, according to Kang, should serve Chinese national interests.[8] Hu Huilin, a leading propagator of cultural security in China, also asserts that the global competition of soft power will directly affect China's national interests in general and cultural security in particular.[9] External observers and experts also highlight the driving force of national interests behind China's soft power campaigns. For example, there is an influential report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) concluding that: China was projecting soft power to promote its own national interests rather than to challenge the US.[10]

Although the logical connection between Chinese soft power and its national interests is warranted, the question of how the Chinese government's major concern of cultural,

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[6] Shaomin Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of Soft Power Studies in China from 1992 to 2010]*, chapter 3.

[7] Xueliang Ding, *Zhongguo De Ruanshili Yu Zhoubian Guojia [China's Soft Power in Asia: Projection and Profile]*.

[8] Xiaoguang Kang, *Zhongguo Guilai [The Return of China: A Research on the Cultural Nationalist Movement in Contemporary China]* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2008).

[9] Huilin Hu, *Zhongguo Guojia Wenhua Anquan Lun [On China's Cultural Security]*, 2nd ed. (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2011).

[10] Garola McGiffert, ed. *Chinese Soft Power and Its Implications for the United States* (Washington D. C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2009),v.

economic and political interests drives its soft power projection in the international arena is under-researched. Former President Hu gave a crucial indication of its potential significance as he emphasized that China's soft power campaigns would be conducive to the further development of national cohesion and the promotion of Chinese comprehensive national power (CNP).[11] However, no detailed explanations were provided. Taking Hu's argument as an analytical starting point, this chapter attempts to explain how specific concerns of perceived Chinese national interests motivated China's soft power campaigns. Several key motivations are put forward: cultural/ideological security, cultural trade and cultural/creative industries, cultural identity, good images and reputations, and the institutionalization of China's rising influence. These concerns can be identified either through the Chinese government's verbalization of them or by logical extrapolation and inference from its policy and behavior closely linked to the international projection of Chinese soft power. Overall, the state-led soft power campaigns are more or less consistent with an overriding concern of national interests including cultural, economic and political interests in post-Mao era.

Cultural Interests and Cultural Security

The Chinese government's state-led cultural soft power campaigns necessitate the examination of cultural interests in the first place. The rising concerns of cultural security and its supposed global cultural influence give an impetus to China's soft power campaigns. The Chinese government realized that culture has become an increasingly important source of national cohesion and creativity, and a key element of comprehensive national competition in the international arena, as emphasized throughout this thesis. Meanwhile, the Chinese government has always been alert to the "hostile forces" attempting to westernize and divide China, and to threaten China's cultural security. As a result, the Chinese government has devoted considerable resources and efforts in an attempt to strengthen Chinese cultural security, build up a

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[11] Hu, "Report at the CCP 18th National Congress: Firmly March on the Path of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive to Build a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects."

strong socialist cultural power, and enhance the global cultural diversity as a bulwark against the increasing trend of cultural homogenization led by the West.[12]

The key political concerns of cultural interests in general and cultural security in particular called for China's further promotion of Chinese soft power. The urgency of promoting Chinese soft power has been frequently raised by the top leadership since the 16th CCP National Congress in 2002, and it has successfully captured the attention of Chinese scholars and political advisors who warned against "Western cultural imperialism", American "cultural hegemony" and "cultural invasion".[13] This key concern explains why the Chinese government devoted special attention to the "cultural" aspect of its soft power campaigns and officially called it "*cultural* soft power", notwithstanding cultural attractiveness being an integrated part of soft power as it is commonly understood. Therefore, some even argue that the concept of soft power was re-contextualized in China as equivalent to "cultural power".[14] As the rectification of names is crucial for the Chinese political regime, attention should be accorded to the nuanced meaning process in a specific context.

A further consideration of "culture" from the vantage point of the party-state is therefore in order. How did the party-state define the role of "culture" within China's changing political and/or economic landscape? Unfortunately, this key issue has long been overlooked by analysts both in China and abroad in extant Chinese soft power studies. The following section seeks to fill in this research gap regarding the role of culture on the part of the party-state, and proceeds to explore the connection between cultural security, cultural influence and China's soft power campaigns.

The party-state defined the role of culture from both macro- and micro- perspectives. In

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[12] Party Documents Research Office of the CCP Central Committee, ed. *Shiliuda Yilai Zhongyao Wenxian Xuanbian [Selected Works of CCP (2002-2007)]* (Beijing: Central Document Press, 2008); *Shiliuda Yilai Zhongyao Wenxian Xuanbian [Selected Works of CCP (2007-2012)]* (Beijing: Central Document Press, 2013).

[13] Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010) [A Critique of China's Soft Power Studies from 1992 to 2010]*, 275-8; Jukka Aukia, "The Cultural Soft Power of China: A Tool for Dualistic National Security," *Journal of China and International Relations* 2, no. 1 (2014): 79-84.

[14] Qing Cao, "China's Soft Power: Formulations, Contestations and Communication," 176.

terms of the macro-aspect of culture, the predominant socialist ideology and core values, together with moral and thought work (*sixiang daode gongzuo*), become the very "lifeblood" of the CCP.[15] Culture in this light is conflated with ideology and completely subject to political power at the expense of its aesthetic value. Chinese Marxists generally agreed that culture is considered as a superstructure, and it is logically required to serve the interests of the ruling class—the Chinese proletariat led by the CCP. In short, culture in this sense functions as an ideological custodian of public morality, and cultural workers are primarily Marxist ideologues.[16]

This notion of considering culture as a means to serve political ends—"cultural politics"—was undergirded by Mao's 1942 Yan'an Talks.[17] Cultural politics since then had been the guiding force of the CCP's cultural policies, notwithstanding some covert and overt criticism against it.[18] The influence of cultural politics reached a peak during the Cultural Revolution, characterized by the ultra-leftist theory and its political application in light of using proletarian revolutionary culture to exert "dictatorship" against socialist revisionism in Chinese literary and art circles (*wenyi heixian zhuanzheng lun*).[19] Its legacy has continued to influence post-Mao China even to date, since socialist ideology nominally remained the official guideline for a variety of cultural creations and activities.[20] According to the logic of cultural politics, cultural security is interchangeable with ideological security under some circumstances, as senior Chinese leaders publically observed.[21] This logic of cultural politics has faced increasing criticism in Chinese academic circles in the 21st century, but it was not extinguished as there are still scholars asserting that the socialist ideological security is

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[15] Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*, 1.

[16] For example, see Fengcheng Yang, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Yu Dangdai Zhongguo Wenhua Fazhan Yanjiu [A Study of Relationship between the CCP and Modern Chinese Cultural Development]* (Beijing: The CCP History Publishing House, 2013), chapter 1, 2 and 3; Arnold Perris, "Music as Propaganda: Art at the Command of Doctrine in the People's Republic of China," *Ethnomusicology* 27, no. 1 (1983): 16.

[17] Bonnie S. McDougall, *Mao Zedong's 'Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art': A Translation of 1943 Text with Commentary* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Study, University of Michigan, 1980).

[18] Yang, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Yu Dangdai Zhongguo Wenhua Fazhan Yanjiu [A Study of Relationship between the CCP and Modern Chinese Cultural Development]*, 57-62.

[19] Dingguo Bo, *Zhongguo Dangdai Wenyi Sixiang Shilun [On China's Intellectual History of Modern Art and Literature]*(Beijing: China Social Science Publisher, 2006), chapter 6.

[20] Cary Huang, "Xi, Mao and the Dark Art of Ideology," *South China Morning Post*, October 21, 2014.

[21] Yunxia Shi, "Dangdai Zhongguo Wenhua Fazhan Zhongde Yishi Xingtai Anquan Wenti [Ideological Security Along with the Development of Modern Chinese Culture]," *Zhongguo Tese Shehui Zhuyi Yanjiu [Studies on the Socialism with Chinese Characteristics]* no. 2 (2012): 34.

the kernel of cultural security.[22] In short, the macro-perspective of culture during the Maoist era can be summarized to the formulation: culture ⊆ socialist ideology = the CCP leadership. Simply put, culture is a subset of socialist ideology that represents the CCP leadership.

The dominant paradigm of cultural politics will inevitably hinder non-state sanctioned cultural creativity and development. Therefore, the post-Mao regime felt compelled to revamp this formulation in order to reshape a favorable environment for reform and opening policy. Consequently, on one hand, the revolutionary "hegemony" of Maoism in a Gramscian sense, characterized by ideological determinism, had been jettisoned and replaced by a concern with economic modernization guided by pragmatism. On the other, the discursive formation of socialism inherited from Mao, with its formal and rhetorical features, survived as a useful tool to legitimize the leadership of the CCP.[23] As a result, the ultra-leftist doctrine calling for "the service of art and culture to politics" was officially substituted by "the service of art and culture to the people and socialism".[24] "Cultural politics" was renounced and a depoliticized notion of "cultural policies" prevailed in the post-Mao thaw.[25]

The micro-view of culture, driven by the globalization and China's economic reform and opening-up, generally refers to the commercialization of popular culture and high culture relatively independent of Chinese socialist ideology.[26] As a result, multiple political values coexist. These values include the mainstream official values created and

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[22] For example, Li Zhao, "Wenhua Anquan Ruhe Wei Guojia Anquan Baojia Huhang [How Can 'Cultural Security' Safeguard National Security]," *Fazhi Ribao [The Legal Daily]* 23 April, 2014; Yuan Han, "Quanqiuhua Beijingxia Woguo Wenhua Anquan De Zhanlve Sikao [Strategic Thoughts about Safeguarding China's Cultural Security under Globalization]," *Mao Zedeng Deng Xiaoping Lilun Yanjiu [Studies on Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping Theories]*, no. 4 (2004): 9-16.

[23] Kang Liu, *Globalization and Cultural Trends in China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 54-5; Arif Dirlik, "Revolutionary Hegemony and the Language of Revolution: Chinese Socialism between Present and Future," in *Marxism and the Chinese Experience*, ed. Arif Dirlik and Maurice Meisner (Armonk and London: M. E. Sharpe, 1989), 27-42.

[24] Dayang Wang, "Wenyi Wei Shehui Zhuyi Fuwu, Wei Renmin Fuwu [Calling for Artists to Serve Socialism and People]," *Maozedong Sixiang Yanjiu [Maozedong Thought Study]* 29, no. 1 (2012): 76-9.

[25] LaiKwan Pang, "Post-Socialism and Cultural Policy: The Depoliticization of Culture in Late 1970s' and Early 1980s' China," in *Popular Culture and the State in East and Southeast Asia*, ed. Nissim Otmazgin and Eyal Ben-Ari (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 147-61.

[26] Richard Curt Kraus, *The Party and the Arty in China: The New Politics of Culture* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004).

disseminated by the "ideological state apparatuses" (ISAs),[27] the Marxist dogmatism from the leftist old guard and its new version advocated by the new left intellectuals, and a form of neoliberalism calling for economic marketization and political reform, and nationalism.[28] Furthermore, culture in this sense was further separated from science and education from the 1980s, when the subtitle of "science, education and cultural enterprise" was often used in government work reports. To sum up, culture in a narrow sense mainly includes (1) art and literature, (2) philosophical and social science studies including the Sinicization of Marxism: the adaption of Marxism to a Chinese context, (3) mass media and publications, and (4) public cultural facilities (such as museums, libraries, art galleries, memorial halls) and popular entertainment. In this sense, the micro-perspective of culture in post-Mao China is best represented through the new formulation: culture ∩ socialist ideology = the CCP leadership. That is, the CCP leadership is the only intersection between the micro-aspect of culture and the Chinese socialist ideology. In essence, China's soft power campaigns in the 21st century have largely anchored in this depoliticized notion of culture.[29]

Above all, the macro-view of culture as inextricably linked to socialist ideology remains influential as the ISAs still hold sway over the Chinese society irrespective of a widespread disbelief in the orthodox Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought.[30] Yet in the meantime, the micro-aspect of culture has become increasingly pronounced especially since the early 21st century as the creation, production, dissemination and consumption of cultural products within China has been increasingly integrated with the global cultural market. Two remarkable policy transformations shed light on the growing importance of the micro-aspect of culture that has been increasingly, though not completely, liberated from the "yoke" of political power. The state-funded "institutional work-units" (*shiye danwei*) in the cultural sphere—by tradition used to systematically organize cultural activities—were gradually transformed into cultural

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[27] Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971).
[28] Xudong Zhang, *Postsocialism and Cultural Politics* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2008), chapter 1.
[29] Yuezhi Zhao, "China's Quest for 'Soft Power': Imperatives, Impediments and Irreconcilable Tensions?" *Javnost–The Public: Journal of the European Institute for Communication and Culture* 20, no. 4 (2013): 21.
[30] *Communication in China: Political Economy, Power and Conflict* (Lanham and Boulder: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008); Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*.

industries in the post-Mao period, as the Chinese government sought to flourish the nascent cultural economy that was negated during the Maoist era.[31] Another policy transformation involves the growing conceptual influence of cultural security among the political and academic elites. The rising influence of the notion of cultural security reoriented the socialist ideological concern to a realistic and pragmatic concern of protecting national cultural survival and development from the threat of Western cultural imperialism.

Cultural security and China's cultural soft power

The concept of cultural security was first raised by Jiang on 26 February 1999 in his speech at the national workshop about external propaganda. This concept is closely linked to an earlier concept of "cultural independence" also raised by Jiang in 1996.[32] The concept of cultural independence was developed to justify policy efforts to shield China from the Western cultural imperialism. Cultural security in the Chinese context mainly involves shielding China from Western cultural imperialism on one hand, and promoting the international influence of Chinese culture and values by maintaining their relevance and dynamism on the other.[33] Cultural security in this sense was not simply considered as a passive way to address the perceived cultural threat from without. Rather, it raised the consciousness among the party cadres of the significance of Chinese cultural interests, and motivated them to enhance cultural prosperity and actively promote the Chinese cultural influence abroad. This purpose was consistent with Jiang's calling for building a socialist spiritual civilization (*jianshe jingshen wenming*). This line of thought had been further established during Hu's era, also taken seriously by the current Xi-Li administration. So much so that, cultural security is paralleled with political, economic and social security, and it becomes an indispensable part of overall national security. Furthermore, cultural influence is a crucial part of the

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[31] Xiaoming Zhang, "From Institution to Industry: Reforms in Cultural Institutions in China," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 9, no. 3 (2006): 297-306; Michael Keane, *Created in China: The Great New Leap Forward* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 65-70.

[32] Hu, *Zhongguo Guojia Wenhua Anquan Lun [On China's Cultural Security]*, 74.

[33] Kingsley Edney, "Building National Cohesion and Domestic Legitimacy: A Regime Security Approach to Soft Power in China," *Politics* 35, no. 3-4 (2015): 259-72.

CNP.[34]

China's soft power campaigns were helped by Hu's support and imprimatur, as well as the central collective leadership's endorsement.[35] Jiang set the stage for cultural interests in general and cultural security in particular to become prominent, yet Hu took this further through the initiative of cultural soft power campaign. Both Jiang and Hu indeed shared common concerns, but diverged on some ways of solving them.

Both Jiang and Hu agreed that the protection of Chinese cultural security or cultural sovereignty (*wenhua zhuquan*) should be absolutely under the strict purview of the party-state's control. Cultural security is largely constructed by the political and intellectual elites, rather than seen as an objective matter existing "out there". During this process of construction, Western liberal culture and ideologies are often considered as a real or potential threat to Chinese cultural security, and the CCP's ideological security and political legitimacy accordingly.[36] Meanwhile, both Jiang and Hu realized the significant construction of *Chineseness* through the promotion of Chinese traditional culture in an attempt to protect Chinese cultural security. As a result, Chinese traditional cultures were proactively propagated by the party-state as a crystallization of Chinese "national spirit (homeland)" or "national soul", and elevated to strengthen national cohesion against Western cultural imperialism. This trend was even furthered accelerated by the current Xi-Li administration.

Facing perceived challenges from Western cultural imperialism in forms of cultural infiltration and erosion, Hu fundamentally differed from Jiang in addressing cultural interests in general and cultural security in particular. Jiang's approach to deal with this

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[34] The CCP Central Committee, "Zhonggong Zhongyang Guanyu Jiaqiang Dang De Zhizheng Nengli Jianshe De Jueding [Decision of the Central Committee of CCP on Enhancing the Party's Ruling Capacity]," http://news.xinhuanet.com/zhengfu/2004-09/27/content_2027021.htm; Xinhua News Agency, "Zou Tese Guojia Anquan Daolu [Walking the Road of Chinese National Security with Chinese Characteristics],"accessed November 2, 2016. http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-04/15/c_1110253910.htm

[35] Weihong Zhang, "China's Cultural Future: From Soft Power to Comprehensive National Power," 388-90.

[36] Renwick and Cao, "China's Cultural Soft Power: An Emerging National Cultural Security Discourse," 316; Xudong Jiang, "Ruan Quanli Yu Zhongguo De Wenhua Anquan Tanxi [Analysis of Soft Power and China's Cultural Security]," *Zhongguo Tese Shehui Zhuyi Yanjiu [Studies on the Socialism with Chinese Characteristics]*, no. 5 (2010): 88-91.

challenge was domestically oriented and defensive in essence. In contrast, Hu's solution was compatible with the internationally oriented "charm offensive", as Kurlantzick called it.[37] Therefore, instead of standing firm in a passive defense domestically, Chinese culture and values were pushed to go global as an active defense in order to struggle for discursive power, strengthen cultural security and promote China's cultural influence globally. In so doing, Hu developed a more ambitious goal than Jiang's of pursing the florescence of socialist culture (*dafazhan, dafanrong*), in which the promotion of Chinese cultural soft power comes to the fore.[38] Therefore, it is not surprising that state-led public diplomacy was set in motion during Hu's era.[39] The vital concern of Chinese cultural interests generally and cultural security particularly, continues to shape the cultural policy of the Xi-Li administration.

In conclusion, state-led cultural soft power campaigns since the early 21st century have represented both continuities and changes in the post-Mao regime's cultural policy. In terms of policy continuities, cultural soft power campaigns were launched to promote cultural interests in general and safeguard cultural security in particular given the culture in China has been increasingly independent from the straitjacket of orthodox socialist ideology. Further, the party-state continues to play a pivotal role in managing China's soft power campaigns in the cultural field. However, China's attention to cultural soft power and its application as a political project in the first decade and a half of the 21st century also demonstrates the nuanced transformation of cultural policy. Compared with the passive defense logic and the domestic orientation of Jiang's cultural policy, Hu's logic in this regard is one of the active defenses, and both the domestic and the international level were taken in to consideration. Xi's thinking on Chinese soft power campaigns so far is more consistent with Hu's than Jiang's.

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[37] Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*.

[38] According to the 17th CCP National Congress report, the "vigorous development and prosperity of socialist culture" rests on the hard effort to "keep to the orientation of advanced socialist culture, bring about a new upsurge in socialist cultural development, stimulate the cultural creativity of the whole nation, and enhance culture as part of the soft power of our country [China] to better guarantee the people's basic cultural rights and interests, enrich the cultural life in the Chinese society and inspire the enthusiasm of the Chinese people for progress." http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-10/24/content_6938749_6.htm

[39] Kejin Zhao, "The Motivation behind China's Public Diplomacy," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 8, no. 2 (2015): 167-96.

Cultural Trade, Cultural/Creative Industries and Cultural Soft Power

Apart from cultural security, China's cultural soft power campaigns seek to achieve three key economic interests along with the de-ideologization of Chinese culture. First, the state-led cultural soft power campaigns aim to reduce cultural trade deficit particularly in the core cultural services. Second, these campaigns are supposed to turn China's cultural/creative industries into a national "pillar industry" that is loosely defined to contribute at least 5% of China's annual GDP.[40] The most likely way to develop a coherent definition of cultural/creative industries is to set the boundaries between cultural/creative and the non-cultural/creative kinds of production, especially between the "non-utilitarian" (artistic/aesthetic/entertaining) and the "utilitarian" functions of symbolic products.[41] Third, the promotion of global competitiveness of China's cultural/creative industries is the key to reduce its cultural trade deficit by boosting cultural export. The triple economic interests noted above are clearly reflected in a series of guiding opinions and policies issued by the CCP central committee and the central government.[42] While the logic of Chinese cultural security reveals its origins in realist thinking about national security,[43] its efforts to address cultural trade deficit and the development of cultural or creative industries is at least partially compatible with commercial liberalism.

China's cultural trade deficit and cultural soft power

The negative impact of cultural trade deficit in reference to core cultural/creative products on China's global cultural influence has become a commonsense in the Chinese political circle and scholarly community.[44] A clear definition of cultural

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[40] Priscilla Jiao, "Culture a Key Priority in Five-Year Plan," *South China Morning Post*, March 28, 2011.

[41] David Hesmondhalgh and Andy C. Pratt, "Cultural Industries and Cultural Policy," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 11, no. 1 (2005): 8.

[42] The Bureau for External Cultural Relations and the Institute for Cultural Industries Studies, *The Annual Report on International Cultural Trade of China* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2014): 32-7.

[43] Renwick and Cao, "China's Cultural Soft Power: An Emerging National Cultural Security Discourse," 317-8.

[44] Keane, *Created in China: The Great New Leap Forward*, 116.

products is the first step to examine China's cultural trade deficit.

Cultural products, including cultural goods and services, according to UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), are divided into "core" and "related" domains in line with the distinction made between cultural industries and creative industries. While the traditional cultural goods and services linked to cultural industries are classified as core products, the related goods and services are closely associated with the creative industries including software, advertising, architecture, business intelligence services, and so on. Further, core cultural products generally deal with cultural "content", whereas the related form involves the services, equipment and support materials that contribute to the creation, production, distribution and consumption of core cultural products.[45]

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) sees the relation between cultural and creative industries differently in contrast to the UNESCO model in this respect. Simply put, the UNCTAD has a broad definition of "creativity" and considers the cultural industries as a subset of creative industries. Creative industries, according to UNCTAD, refer to the creative goods and services produced, distributed and consumed through the primary inputs of creativity and intellectual capital. Creative industries include not only the traditional "upstream activities" such as performing arts or visual arts that are defined by the UNESCO as the core of cultural industries, but also "downstream activities" associated with the related industries defined by the UNESCO. The UNCTAD classification of creative industries is displayed in Table 5–1.

Table 5–1: UNCTAD Classification of Creative Industries

*A. **Heritage***
✧ Traditional cultural expressions
-    Arts and crafts, festivals and celebrations
✧ Cultural sites

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[45] UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), *International Flows of Selected Cultural Goods and Services, 1994-2003* (Montreal: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2005), 14.

- Archaeological sites, museums, libraries, exhibitions, etc.

B. Arts
● Visual arts
  - Painting, sculpture, photography and antiques;
● Performing arts
  - Live music, theatre, dance, opera, circus, puppetry, etc.

C. Media
➤ Publishing and printed media
  - Books, press and other publications.
➤ Audiovisual
  - Film, television, radio and other broadcasting.

D. Functional creations
◆ Design
  - Interior, graphic, fashion, jewellery, toys.
◆ New media
  - Software, video games and digitalized creative content
◆ Creative services
  - Architectural, advertising, cultural and recreational, creative research and development (R&D), digital and other related creative services.

Source: UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Report 2008* (New York and Geneva: UNCTAD), 14.

The UNESCO then incorporated some specific creative industries (such as design and advertising) advocated by the UNCTAD into its "core" cultural domains, and finalized its 2009 Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) (see Figure 5–1), in an attempt to resolve part of the creative-cultural debate.[46] As a result, this paper combines the UNESCO and the UNCTAD approach towards cultural and creative industries, and uses both terms together in such a way as "cultural/creative industries", notwithstanding their different preferences of using the terminology of either cultural or creative industries. The terminological usage of cultural/creative industries can be further justified by other two factors. That is, both UNESCO and the UNCTAD seek to produce the internationally comparable data through the common understanding of culture and the use of standardized classification of cultural/creative industries. Further, both UNESCO and the UNCTAD have developed a similar understanding on the significance of

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[46] UIS, *The UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics* (Montreal: UNESCO, 2009).

cultural cycle for measuring cultural/creative industries.

Figure 5–1: The 2009 Framework for Cultural Statistics Domains
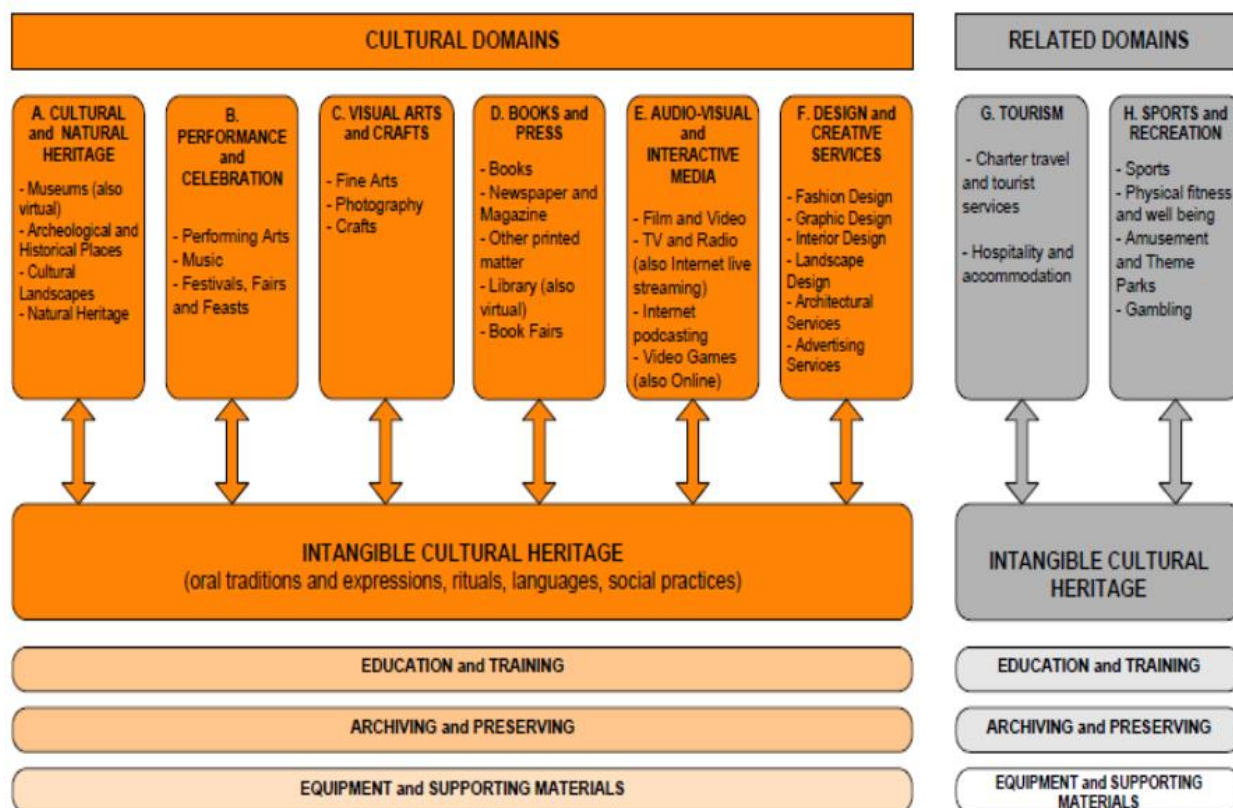
Source: UIS, *The UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics*, 24.

The usage of cultural/creative industries can be also applied to the specific case study about China's major incentives to promote cultural economy along with its cultural soft power campaigns. Both terminologies—cultural and creative industries—have been used widely in China. More significantly, the National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBSC) took both UNESCO and UNCTAD frameworks into account and then developed an operational framework to evaluate China's cultural economy.[47]

Statistics indicate that China has become a major exporter of cultural/creative goods since the beginning of the 21st century. The export value of cultural/creative goods was $32,348 million in 2002, and reached $84,807 million in 2008 with a fast annual growth

[47] Xiaoming Zhang, Jiaxin Wang and Jiangang Zhang, *Wenhua Lanpishu: Zhongguo Wenhua Chanye Fazhan Baogao* (2015-2016) [Annual Report on Development of China's Cultural Industries 2015-2016] (Beijing: Social Science Academy Press, 2016).

rate of 16.9% on average.[48] China secured its first ranking with cultural/creative goods export value of $151,182 million in 2013.[49] Compared with other major cultural trading partners, China's annual average growth rate in either cultural/creative goods exports or imports during different periods, as illustrated in Table 5–2, looks impressive, and even much higher than the world average. Art crafts, design and new media together accounted for the lion's share of cultural/creative goods export and the corresponding trade balance mainly because of China's low-labor-cost advantage (see Table 5–3).[50] Although China's export values of cultural/creative industries fell during 2008-09, it soon recovered and continued to rise in the following years, and significantly contributed to its cultural trade balance (see Figure 5–2). Above all, China is a *big* trading power particularly in cultural/creative goods.

Table 5–2: Annual Average Growth Rates of Cultural/Creative Goods Exports and Imports

(In %)

Flows \ Countries		China	US	Germany	UK	Japan	India*	World
Exports	2003-12	15.48	8.48	7.00	3.64	9.86	19.95	8.68
	2008-12	16.33	1.28	-4.10	3.96	-6.39	16.46	5.34
Imports	2003-12	21.79	1.39	6.28	3.70	5.91	28.31	6.60
	2008-12	12.01	0.34	-0.49	1.28	4.87	31.01	1.74

Note: statistics from India are estimated.

Source: *UNCTAD secretariat calculations, based on UN DESA Statistics Division, UN COMTRADE*

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[48] UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Report 2010* (Geneva: UNCTAD, 2010): 161.
[49] *Creative Economy Outlook and Country Profiles: Trends in International Trade in Creative Industries* (Geneva: United Nations, 2015), 4.
[50] Jingchen Jiang and Yanqing Jiang, "An Analysis of the Trade Barriers to the Chinese Cultural Trade," *Journal of Asian Business Strategy* 5, no. 4 (2015): 63; Ying Fang, Huailiang Li, and Liyan Sun, "Zhongguo Wenhua Maoyi Jiegou He Maoyi Jingzhengli Fenxi [An Analysis of China's Cultural Trade Strucutre and Its International Competitiveness]," *Shangye Yanjiu [Commercial Research]*, no. 1 (2012): 25.

Figure 5–2: China's Cultural/Creative Industries Trade Performance, 2003–12

(Value in Millions of USD)
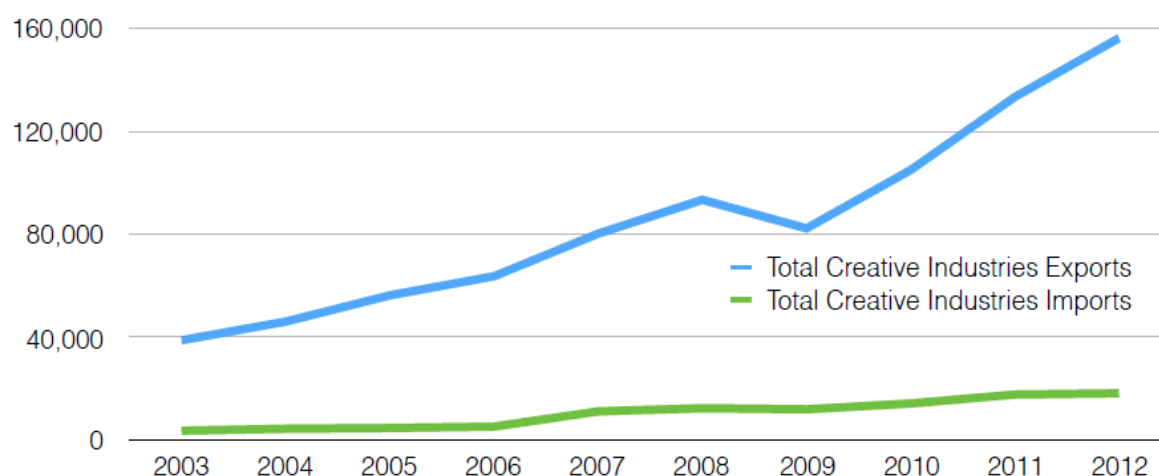
Source: UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Outlook and Country Profiles: Trends in International Trade in Creative Industries*, 34.

Table 5–3: China's Trade of Cultural/Creative Goods and Services (2000, 2008–12)

(Value in Millions of USD)

Year / Products		2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Art Crafts	Balance	2811.00	9826.325	8128.21	9595.099	11740.6	13535.27
	Export	3012.00	10721.82	8979.584	10614.71	12867.12	14689.58
	Share*(%)	17.7	35.4	33.7	34.9	36.0	42.8
Audio Visuals	Balance	0	-1634.45	-1617.09	-2259.4	-2515.69	-2453.84
	Export	2.00	1294.415	1201.555	1212.148	1405.183	1472.874
Design	Balance	21285	53765.29	49968.72	68097.8	88657.4	101025.6
	Export	22440.00	56063.17	52265.09	70953.35	92991.5	105468.4
	Share*(%)	14.7	25.4	25.2	29.7	31.2	37.0
New Media	Balance	115.00	11703.36	7991.738	7461.014	7051.527	9823.113
	Export	343.00	14752.02	10456.84	10302.22	10445.77	13062.94
	Share*(%)	4.9	31.6	26.0	25.5	25.9	32.0
Performing	Balance	-235.00	1240.549	992.9919	1181.672	1294.434	1366.962

Arts	Export	58.00	1321.349	1081.091	1290.953	1436.385	1529.704
Publishing	Balance	91.00	1884.268	1343.994	1423.36	1654.333	1858.797
	Export	433.00	2420.653	2126.406	2391.182	2660.53	2933.407
Visual Arts	Balance	2166.00	3647.428	3529.6	4902.655	7096.029	11829.04
	Export	2186.00	3715.298	3604.807	5010.611	7226.266	12024.81
AD, MR & POP**	Balance	-33.00	261.00	360.00	845.00	1245.00	1978.00
	Export	11.00	2202.00	2313.00	2885.00	4018.00	4751.00
PCRS**	Balance	21.00	163.00	-181.00	-248.00	-277.00	-438.00
	Export	223.00	673.00	375.00	494.00	523.00	690.00
Royalties & License fees	Balance	-1201.00	-9748.96	-10635.8	-12209	-13962.8	-16704.9
	Export	80.00	570.536	429.453	830.484	743.302	1044.102

Note: Share* refers to the proportion of export value of given Chinese goods to the total world export value of same item indicated; AD, MR& POP** refers to advertisement, market research & public opinion polling; PCRS*** amounts to personal, cultural and recreational service.

Source: UNCTAD secretariat calculations, based on UN DESA Statistics Division, UN COMTRADE.

According to Table 5–3, however, China is nowhere near becoming a *strong* cultural power because of its particularly weak competitiveness of core cultural services in the global cultural market.[51] China's relatively weak competiveness of core cultural products is measured against its strong competitiveness of relevant cultural products in the global cultural trade, and against the domination of high-income economies regarding the international trade in cultural services.[52] China's relative advantage in terms of labor-intensive cultural/creative industries such as art crafts and design ("made in China"), failed to translate into its competiveness in terms of technology-intensive and content-driven cultural/creative industries ("created in China").[53] China's copyright

[51] Binglan Xu, "'Cultural Deficit' Cause for Concern," *People's Daily*, March 10, 2006.
[52] UIS, *The Globalisation of Cultural Trade: A shift in Consumption* (Montreal: UNESCO, 2016), chapter 2.
[53] Michael Keane, "Re-Imaging China's Future: Soft Power, Cultural Presence and the East Asian Media Market," in *Complicated Currents: Media Flows, Soft Power and East Asia*, ed. Daniel Black, Stephen Epstein, and Alison Tokita (Clayton: Monash University Press, 2007); Libin Luo and Junxin Sun, "Zhongguo Wenhua Changpin Maoyi Yu Wenhua Fuwu Maoyi Jingzhengli [China's Cultural Trade Competitiveness: Comparision and Future Trend]," *Caimao yu Jingji [Finance & Trade Economics]*, no. 2 (2013): 91-100.

trade in terms of books, audio-visual products, software and movies in the last decade is the root cause of China's overall service trade deficit (see Table 5–4 and Table 5–5). Above all, while China's trade competiveness index (TCI)[54] of cultural goods shows its strong competitiveness in the global cultural trade, the TCI of cultural services is clearly overshadowed by the US in particular (see Table 5–6).[55] Analysts even observed that China's overall competitiveness of cultural/creative industries in terms of production and demand factors, industrial linkages, the value-chain of cultural enterprises, cultural trade and the role of government in long-term cultural policy-making and its effective policy-implementation generally fell behind what was achieved by other leading Western competitors and Japan.[56]

Table 5–4: China's Copyright Trade in Quantity (2005–15)

Year	Import & Export	Books	Audio-Visual Products	Electronic Publications	Software	Movies	TV programs
2005	Import	9382	204	155	401	0	3
	Export	1434	2	3	78	0	0
2006	Import	12386	690	106	174	434	29
	Export	2057	2	0	5	0	0
2007	Import	10255	376	130	337	1	0
	Export	2571	19	1	0	0	2

[54] Trade Competitiveness Index (TCI) here is closely linked to the intra-industry trade measurement proposed by Herbert G. Grubel and P. J. Lloyd, with relevant revisions notwithstanding. It can be formulated as a ratio of *balance of trade* to the *total value of trade* for a specific goods, service or industry as concerned. It can serve as a proxy to evaluate the health of foreign trade. The ratio is from -1 to 1. That is, the higher ratio logically indicates the higher international trade competitiveness. Its equation can be described in this way: TCI=$\frac{X_i-M_i}{X_i+M_i}$ (X$_i$ refers to the Export value of a given item *i* while M$_i$ means the import value of same item). See Herbert G. Grubel and P. J. Lloyd, *Intra-Industry Trade: The Theory and Measurement of International Trade in Differentiated Products* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1975), part 1; An empirical application of TCI please see: Pranusha Manthri, Ketan Bhokray, and Kirankumar S. Momaya, "Export Competitiveness of Select Firms from India: Glimpse of Trends and Implications," *Indian Journal of Marketing* 45, no. 5 (2015): 7-13.

[55] Xiaocun Gu, "Yingdui Zhongmei Wenhua Maoyi Nicha de Zhanlve Sikao [Strategic Thinking on Handling Sino-US Cultural Trade Deficit]," *Lilun Shiye [Theoretical Horizon]*, no. 10 (2012): 59-64.

[56] Qingxin Lan and Xuedang Zheng, "Zhongguo Wenhua Chanye Guoji Jingzhengli Pingjia Ji Celve Yanjiu [A Study of China's Cultural Industry Competitiveness and Its Corresponding Strategy]," *Caijing Wenti Yanjiu [Research on Financial and Economic Issues]*, no. 3 (2012): 32-9.

Year							
2008	Import	15776	404	117	362	0	2
	Export	2440	11	1	3	0	0
2009	Import	12914	386	86	249	0	155
	Export	3103	77	34	0	0	988
2010	Import	13724	795	49	304	284	1446
	Export	3880	44	187	0	0	1561
2011	Import	14708	699	185	273	37	734
	Export	5922	150	125	5	2	1559
2012	Import	16115	978	100	189	12	190
	Export	7568	148	115	2	0	1531
2013	Import	16625	926	72	169	0	381
	Export	7305	493	646	20	0	1937
2014	Import	15542	659	120	46	8	316
	Export	8088	212	433	5	0	1555
2015	Import	15458	223	292	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Export	7998	217	650	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: compiled by the author based on the annual data from the National Copyright Administration of the PRC (NCAC), see http://www.ncac.gov.cn/chinacopyright/channels/6468.html. Data for the year of 2015 is sourcing from SAPPRFT, *A Brief Report on China's News and Press Industries in 2015* (Beijing: SAPPRFT, 2016).

Table 5–5: China's Copyrighted Books Trade (2005–13)

	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	2013
Import	41.9696	43.2441	78.12.91	81.5524	83.1665	94.0201	116.6691	137.0799	280.4863
Export	29.2087	31.9199	32.9889	31.3059	29.6203	32.3211	32.7661	42.5009	52.1638
Balance	-12.7609	-11.3242	-45.1455	-50.2465	-53.5462	-61.6990	-83.903	-94.579	-228.3225
I/E Ratio*	1.44:1	1.35:1	2.37:1	2.61:1	2.81:1	2.91:1	3.56:1	3.22:1	5.37:1

Notes: Value in Millions of USD. Minus (-) refers to the deficit in China's trade of copyrighted books; * I/E Ratio is an abbreviation of Import/Export Ratio.

Source: compiled by the author based on the annual data from the SAPPRFT, see

http://www.gapp.gov.cn/govpublic/60.shtml

Table 5–6: Chinese and American Cultural Trade Competitiveness Index

Year / CT Index		05	06	07	08	09	10	11	2012
Creative Goods	China	0.975	0.975	0.950	0.954	0.951	0.947	0.944	0.942
Creative Service	China	-0.638	-0.624	-0.580	-0.594	-0.648	-0.602	-0.571	-0.562
	US	0.478	0.526	0.557	0.537	0.505	0.510	0.535	n/a
AD, MR & POP	China	0.201	0.204	0.177	0.063	0.084	0.171	0.183	0.262
PCRS	China	-0.070	0.062	0.346	0.243	-0.482	-0.502	-0.530	-0.636
Royalties & License fees	China	-0.943	-0.940	-0.920	-0.900	-0.925	-0.880	-0.904	-0.889
	US	0.489	0.539	0.574	0.550	0.517	0.524	0.535	0.495

Source: compiled according to the UNCTAD database.

How to redress China's unbalanced structure of cultural trade, therefore, has become a key agenda of China's soft power campaigns. Some policies continue to reflect China's long-held cultural protectionism.[57] For example, screen quotas and broadcast time quotas were renewed and broadly applied, which heavily affected the importation of some sorts of cultural goods such as overseas TV drama.[58] However, some other policies are consistent with commercial liberalism. Various supporting policies

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[57] For example, see Chua, *Structure, Audience and Soft Power in East Asian Pop Culture*, chapter 2; Yu Hong, "Between Corporate Development and Public Service: The Cultural System Reform in the Chinese Media Sector," *Media, Culture & Society* 36, no. 5 (2014): 610-27.

[58] Keane, "Re-Imaging China's Future: Soft Power, Cultural Presence and the East Asian Media Market."

attempting to boost exports and then reduce cultural service trade deficit through multi-ministerial efforts were announced, which will be described below. In terms of policy implementation, enormous financial and policy supports had been poured into the development of cultural sector as a new pillar industry, and were supposed to strengthen the global competiveness of China's cultural/creative industries. The Chinese government's evolving attitudes and policies towards culture set a strong foundation for the highly expected promotion of Chinese cultural trade and its international influence through the development of cultural/creative industries. According to Cai Wu, the former MOC, the Chinese government "used to treat culture as a vehicle of propaganda and education", but in the future, it "will advantage cultural trade to occupy the [international] cultural market, to strengthen the [Chinese] cultural competiveness internationally, and to attract [international] audiences and readers".[59]

Cultural/creative industries and China's cultural soft power

The booming cultural/creative industries may have a positive impact on China's cultural trade and economy, and accordingly, on China's cultural soft power in the international arena. The depoliticized categorization of cultural/creative industries mentioned earlier embodies a pivotal shift of the party-state's understanding of culture from a handmaiden of socialist ideology to an expedient conceptualization of culture as a resource or capital that can be exploited to boost trade, economic transformation and development.[60] Moreover, China's enthusiasm and ambition for the development of cultural/creative industries since the beginning of the 21st century is crucial for reclaiming its cultural influence or authority in the face of Western domination in the global cultural landscape.[61] Specifically, the development of cultural/creative industries characterized by "autonomous innovation" (*zizhu chuangxin*) is central to China's cultural soft power campaigns on the part of Chinese government.[62]

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[59] Liao Yi, "Interview with Cai Wu", http://www.gov.cn/jrzg/2009-09/16/content_1419195.htm, accessed November 1, 2013.
[60] Jing Wang, "Culture as Leisure and Culture as Capital," *Positions* 9, no. 1 (2001): 83-90.
[61] Michael Keane, "Reclaiming China's Former Soft Power," *Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia* 24 (2010): 64; Shi-lian Shan, "Chinese Cultural Policy and the Cultural Industries," *City, Culture and Society* 5, no. 3 (2014): 119.
[62] Michael Keane, "Between the Tangible and the Intangible: China's New Development Dilemma," *Chinese Journal*

Autonomous innovation is supposed to play a pivotal role in gearing up the development of China's cultural/creative industries. Autonomous innovation may take place in the following areas in particular. First, China's cultural/creative industries are required to upgrade through the further inclusion of burgeoning information and communication technologies (ICTs). Second, the creation of competitive Chinese cultural conglomerates and strategic investors that have the majority or monopoly ownership of state capital has been strongly encouraged. Third, the development of specialized cultural precincts, clusters, creative zones as well as "creative cities" has also been highly advocated. Fourth, national cultural enterprises with their own intellectual property rights have privilege to get financial support from the Chinese government, and have been motivated to create world famous "national brands" (*minzu pinpai*). Fifth, the close integration between cultural/creative industries and other industrial sectors (such as tourism, sports, logistics and information industries) is supposed to be enhanced, in an attempt to enlarge the cultural value chain for seeking greater value-added. Last, the reform of institutional work-units, the modernization of cultural markets and the transformation of the managerial role of government during the production, distribution and consumption of cultural products, are in the process of deepening for the sake of fully utilizing social talents and human capital.[63] The autonomous innovation noted above may usher in the promotion of China's cultural soft power if policies in this regard can be successfully translated into practice.

The supposed autonomous innovation within the cultural/creative industries may demonstrate a broad implication for China's economic transformation now and the future. Cultural/creative industries driven by autonomous innovation may function as a new engine of economic growth, a key fulcrum for strategic economic reconfiguration from labor-intensive industries to knowledge- and technology-based industries, and a

of Communication 2, no. 1 (2009): 81.

[63] The CCP Central Committee, "Decision of the CPC Central Committee on Major Issues Pertaining to Deepening Reform of the Cultural System and Promoting the Great Development and Florescence of Social Culture," accessed November 1, 2016.

http://www.cctb.net/bygz/wxfy/201111/W020111121519527826615.pdf

turning point for a new eco-friendly economic development model. These autonomous innovation in a broad sense also sets a sound ground for driving China towards "scientific development" (*kexue fazhan*). [64] Overall, the development of cultural/creative industries along with the state-led autonomous innovation serves a key economic motivation to facilitate China's cultural soft power campaigns.

The apparent contradiction between promoting and controlling Chinese cultural/creative industries on the part of the Chinese government, however, ought to be given attention. After all, autonomy and innovation logically are separate and perhaps even contradictory.[65] The Chinese government's effort to pursue a synergy of liberalizing cultural economy and controlling its social impact remains a tough challenge.[66] On one hand, the Western liberal mode of creative industries has significantly influenced the mindset of China's district, municipal, and even central government since the beginning of the 21st century, and was finally registered and sanctioned by the central government, who initially strongly resisted this Western concept.[67] Some sorts of liberal thinking, related to the unbridled individual creativity and cultural democracy pertaining to the creation, production, distribution and consumption of cultural artifacts within China, may significantly promote its cultural economy—even China's soft power in the international arena—in the long run. On the other hand, the Chinese authoritarian regime has turned into a primary architect of cultural/creative industries.[68] It is a form of top-down innovation that is designed to maintain the traditional state-defined industry boundaries and entry barriers, the existing authoritarian regulatory approaches,

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[64] Ibid.

[65] Arthur R. Kroeber, *China's Economy: What Everyone Needs to Know*? (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[66] Changchun Li, "Zhengque Renshi He Chuli Wenhua Jianshe Fazhanzhong De Ruogan Zhongda Guanxi [Correctly Recognizing and Addressing Some Pairs of Key Mutual Relationships during the Process of Cultural Development]," *Qiushi [Seeking Truth]*, no. 12 (2010): 3-13.

[67] Michael Keane, "Brave New World: Understanding China's Creative Vision," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 10, no. 3 (2004): 265-79; Andrew White and Sujing Xu, "A Critique of China's Cultural Policy and the Development of Its Cultural and Creative Industries: The Case of Shanghai," *Cultural Trends* 21, no. 3 (2012): 249-57; Wuwei Li, *Chuangyi Gaibian Zhongguo [Creative Industries Are Changing China]* (Beijing: Xinhua Publishing House, 2008); Justin O'Connor and Gu Xin, "A New Modernity?: The Arrival of 'Creative Industries' in China," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 9, no. 3 (2006): 271-83; Desmond Hui, "From Cultural to Creative Industries: Strategies for Chaoyang District, Beijing," ibid.: 317-31.

[68] Michael Keane, "Creative Industries in China: Four Perspectives on Social Transformation," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 15, no. 4 (2009): 440.

and the enduring cultural legacy of conformity and conservatism.[69] In this sense, the Chinese government's effort to promote cultural/creative industries may fail to improve China's cultural soft power internationally. A good intention does not necessarily translate into a good result in this respect.

In conclusion, the idea of cultural/creative industries in China is not a political slogan but a key policy initiative seeking technological, managerial and industrial innovation on one hand, and cultural creativity and prosperity on the other. Although the policy-making in terms of cultural/creative industries assuredly cannot be reduced to the logic of economic determinism, the economic motivation matters a lot.[70] The major challenge is how to balance liberal creativity and innovation with the currently highly regulated cultural/creative industries in China. "Never the twain shall meet"? The answer is not clear yet. However, it is abundantly clear that economic interests involving the promotion of cultural trade and the development of cultural/creative industries gave a catalyst to China's initiative regarding the global campaigns of its cultural soft power.

Soft Power and China's International Image-Building

Apart from cultural and economic interests, political interests also act as a vital catalyst for China's international soft power campaigns. Shaping a favorable international image of China through discursive power, and turning its rising economic power into political influence through agenda-setting and institution-building are two crucial political interests motivating China's soft power campaigns in the 21st century. The following section will further analyze both political interests in turn.

The Chinese political and intellectual elites were acutely aware of the requisite

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[69] Keane, *Created in China: The Great New Leap Forward*, 35-46, 92-3.

[70] Jing Wang, "Framing Policy Research on Chinese 'Cultural Industry': Cultural Goods, Market-State Relations, and the International Free Trade Regime," Paper Presented in the Workshop on Critical Policy Studies, Cambridge, MA, November 15-16, 2003.

struggling for the discursive power to promote Chinese soft power in general, and shape a favorable international image of China in particular.[71] Discursive power is heavily reliant on the building of internationally influential Chinese media outlets equipped with multiple languages, rich information, wide coverage, and extensive audiences around the world.[72] Given the mass media is part and parcel of the micro-dimension of culture from the perspective of the party-state as discussed earlier, mass media, international image, discursive power, and cultural soft power therefore are logically integrated. Although there are other vehicles (such as mega public events including 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and 2010 Expo Shanghai) employed by the Chinese government to improve its international standing,[73] the globalization of leading Chinese media outlets controlled by the party-state plays a decisive role in communication capacity building and the management of China's international image. Therefore, the struggle for discursive power through the globalization of Chinese state media deserves further attention. Former CCP propaganda leader Li Changchun put it bluntly as follows:

> "In the modern age, whichever nation's communication methods are most advanced, whichever nation's communication capacity is strongest…has the most power to influence the world."[74]

It is also noted that China's international image-polishing with reference to an "orderly, prosperous and legitimate" image of China—is inexorably linked to its domestic nation-building in order to further legitimize the leadership of the CCP.[75] However, the international orientation is a central concern in this section and its inward-looking aspect will be examined in the next chapter.

International image-building is by no means a brand new enterprise for China.

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[71] Ibid., 144-5; Falk Hartig, "How China Understands Public Diplomacy: The Importance of National Image for National Interests," *International Studies Review* (2016).

[72] Xu, *Zhongguo Ruanshili Yanjiu Pipan (1992-2010)[A Critique of China's Soft Power Studies from 1992 to 2010]*, 153-4.

[73] For example, see Zhongying Pang, "The Beijing Olympics and China's Soft Power"; "Shanghai World Expo Showcases China's Soft Power," *The China Daily*, April 28, 2010.

[74] http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2008-12/23/content_10545118.htm, accessed September 23, 2015.

[75] Michael Barr, "Nation Branding as Nation Building: China's Image Campaign," *East Asia* 29, no. 1 (2012): 81-94.

Projecting a positive image as a morally benevolent hegemon was an important part of Chinese statecraft in ancient times.[76] Since the PRC was founded in 1949, shaping a positive international image under the circumstances of domestic and/or international restraints has always been an abiding concern of the national propaganda apparatus.[77] Analysts observed that various international images have been deliberately projected since the PRC was established. These carefully crafted images involve, for example, "peace-loving country", "victim of foreign aggression", "socialist country", "bastion of revolution", "anti-hegemonic force", "developing country", "major power", "international cooperator", "autonomous actor", "responsible power" and "potential global power".[78] The image-building in the Maoist era was tilted towards China as a socialist country, bastion of revolution and anti-hegemony, while China as the international cooperator and the major power were the dominant images in post-Mao China. In terms of the continuity of image-building, the Chinese government has consistently portrayed itself on the international stage as a peace-loving country, a victim of foreign invasion, an opponent of hegemony and a developing country, albeit with different degrees of vigor.[79]

These self-images remain in circulation currently, but target audiences more often than not see China through a different lens. To some extent, the discrepancy between the party-state's self-portrait and its perception by international audiences is a serious challenge for China.[80] This perceptional gap significantly motivated the party-state to invest heavily in pursuing discursive power to shape a self-image of "real China" in the international arena, where the international perceptions of its image are heavily influenced by the dominant status of Western media outlets. The 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident is a turning point of China's image-building on the international stage. That is, Chinese leaders were frustrated by the Chinese government's unfavorable

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[76] Su-Yan Pan and Joe Tin-Yau Lo, "Re-Conceptualizing China's Rise as a Global Power: A Neo-Tributary Perspective," *The Pacific Review* (2015).

[77] Yao, *Xinzhongguo Duiwai Xuanchuanshi [The History of PRC Foreign Propaganda]*.

[78] Hongying Wang, "National Image Building and Chinese Foreign Policy," *China: An International Journal* 1, no. 1 (2003): 46-72; Gungwu Wang, "China's New Paths for National Reemergence," in *China's Political Economy*, 95-147; Yong Deng, "China: The Post-Responsible Power," *The Washington Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (2015): 118-20.

[79] Wang, "National Image Building and Chinese Foreign Policy," 52.

[80] Ramo, "Brand China," 12-3.

international media exposure during the whole incident, and its international image was further exacerbated by the sweeping collapse of communist regimes in the East Europe and then the Soviet Union. As a result, a set of new coordinating groups and bureaucratic organs were swiftly established to polish China's international image. For example, a top-level coordinating mechanism—the Small Leading Group for Propaganda and Ideology Work—was reestablished in 1990. Meanwhile, the State Council Information Office (SCIO), also known as the CCP Central Foreign Propaganda Office, was created and tasked with the following missions: telling China's story to the world; voicing a Chinese perspective; heading off hostile foreign propaganda; resisting support for Taiwanese independence; and propagating Chinese foreign policy mainly through the Chinese government white papers.[81]

This wave of image-burnishing campaigns in the early 1990s is not as pervasive as the current wave of image-polishing through the public diplomacy campaigns. The current campaigns of image-polishing were precipitated by the extensive and intensive coverage of China in negative and even demonized images over the months running up to and during the 2008 Olympic Games.[82] The former image-burnishing campaigns immediately after 1989 were preoccupied with selective information dissemination against the misinformation and misperception of China abroad. In comparison, the current campaigns of image-polishing embody a *grand* external publicity strategy in line with the "mixed-motive model" characterized by public information dissemination, scientific persuasion and the promotion of mutual understanding and dialogue to manage conflict.[83] In so doing, discursive power had been prioritized by China's top leadership who attempted to cement a positive international image and reinforce Chinese soft power. Put another way, the Chinese leadership sought to "seize the initiative, gain the right to speak, maintain an active role, and grasp the power to raise

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[81] Rogier Creemers, "Never the Twain Shall Meet? Rethinking China's Public Diplomacy Policy," *Chinese Journal of Communication* 8, no. 3 (2015): 308-9.

[82] Susan Brownell, "'Brand China' in the Olympic Context," *Javnost—The Public: Journal of the European Institute for Communication and Culture* 20, no. 4 (2013): 65-82; Kevin Latham, "Media, the Olympics and the Search for the 'Real China'," *The China Quarterly* 197(2009): 25-43.

[83] Juyan Zhang, "Making Sense of the Changes in China's Public Diplomacy: Direction of Information Flow and Messages," *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* 4, no. 4 (2008): 303-16.

the appeal of Chinese positions in public opinion and in international broadcasting".[84]

The struggle for discursive power revolves around the building of international communication capacity and the effective engagement with wider sections of international society. Discursive power based on international communication capacity requires Chinese externally oriented media outlets to project a positive image of China to counter the unfavorable Chinese images shaped by the Western mainstream media in particular. In this sense, the preferred international image of China is synonymous with the positive and favorable international image of China that the Chinese government craves. This image-polishing campaign mainly targeted mainstream Western audiences. The competition for discursive power also requires the broad engagement with wider sections of international society. Appealing to the "opinion leader" strata of Western political and intellectual elites has been given a greater emphasis.[85] The mass media and international communication, therefore, has been supplemented by other modes of public diplomacy, cultural exchanges and people-to-people diplomacy, as was highlighted in the 18th CCP National Congress report. It is a central report worth quoting from at length:

> "We will take solid steps to promote public diplomacy as well as people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and protect China's legitimate rights and interests overseas. We will conduct friendly exchanges with political parties and organizations of other countries and encourage people's congresses, national and local committees of the Chinese People's Consultative Conference, local governments and people's organizations to increase overseas exchanges so as to consolidate the *social foundation* for enhancing China's relations with other countries" [Italic mine].[86]

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[84] Wu Wei, "Tuijin Waixuan Kexue Fazhan Shuli Guojia Lianghao Xingxiang [Facilitate Scientific Development of Foreign Propaganda and Shape a Favorable International Image of China]," accessed June 10, 2015. http://news.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2008-11/19/content_10387779.htm

[85] Xiguang Li, "Soft Power's Reach Depends on Friendly Internet," *Global Times*, November 2, 2011.

[86] http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012cpc/2012-11/18/content_15939493_12.htm

These multi-leveled campaigns related to Chinese image-polishing were also emphasized in the *Outline of the National Plan for Cultural Development during the 11ᵗʰ Five Year Period (2006–2011)*:

"Vigorously participating in the formulation of corresponding international regulations, strengthening the discursive power of our country [China] in international cultural activities…expanding people-to-people exchanges and cooperation, encouraging civic organizations, folk organizations, private enterprises and individuals to engage in foreign cultural exchanges…strengthening the international exchanges of philosophy and social sciences, expanding the global influence of our country's [Chinese] philosophy and social sciences; establishing and perfecting Sino-foreign academic exchange mechanisms, strengthening exchange and cooperation with foreign influential philosophy and social science institutions, foreign famous Sinologists, China Watchers and research institutions".[87]

The rationale for building China's international communication capacity and facilitating public diplomacy campaigns comes down to a strong belief that discursive power can make target audiences believe what China wants them to believe is the "real China". Anecdotally, in a keynote speech on propaganda and ideology work delivered in 19 August 2013, President Xi acknowledged that this *superior* dimension of discursive power has been sophisticatedly and unswervingly conducted by China's Western counterparts in a seemingly invisible way. That is, according to Xi, "the best propaganda must let the target of the propaganda march in the direction that you hoped, believing that it is the path he has chosen himself".[88] Discursive power in this form is compatible with the third dimensional perspective of power proposed by Lukes. Interestingly, foreign analysts and experts have already debunked the covert dimension of China's struggle for discursive power along with the extensive campaigns of public

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[87] https://chinacopyrightandmedia.wordpress.com/2006/09/13/outline-of-the-national-11th-five-year-plan-period-cultural-development-plan/, minor revisions of original translation.
[88] https://chinacopyrightandmedia.wordpress.com/2013/11/12/xi-jinpings-19-august-speech-revealed-translation/

diplomacy targeting the general society abroad.[89] From the perspective of foreign analysts and experts, China's image-polishing through its public diplomacy campaigns acted as a "conceptual imperialism"—the right perception and interpretation of China is almost a privilege of Chinese insiders. As a result, it is a moral imperative for China to control any other entities' narratives, accounts and comments on China.[90]

In conclusion, China's soft power campaigns are carried out by the party-state in an attempt to achieve political interests related to China's international image enhancement through its struggle for discursive power. Competition for discursive power in the international arena rests as much on the international competitiveness of China's media outlets as the effectiveness of China's engagement with the international society. If China gains some successes in this struggle for discursive power, it will transfer its positive international image into *prestige*[91] and ameliorate the international fear of China's rise to a great power status.[92] If it fails, the negative international image of China may continue to complicate and even constrain China's foreign policies. Whether it succeeds or not, the Chinese government's attempt to shape a positive image of China through the struggle for discursive power, particularly in Western society, reflects some of the assumptions of sociological liberalism.

Agenda-Setting, Multilateral Institutions and Chinese Soft Power

China's soft power campaigns are also supposed to achieve Chinese political interests as China's ascendancy garners greater attention, especially from the beginning of the 21st century. The legitimization of China's rising power in regional and even global

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[89] For example, see Mareike Ohlberg and Bertram Lang, "How to Counter China's Global Propaganda Offensive," *The New York Times*, September 21, 2016.

[90] For example, see Christopher A. Ford, "Sinocentrism for the Information Age: Comments on the 4th Xiangshan Forum," accessed 1 November 2016. http://www.newparadigmsforum.com/NPFtestsite/?p=1498

[91] Prestige is defined as "recognition of importance" in a minimalist way. It is socially constructed and not isolated from power: material, social or imaged. However, being powerful does not guarantee a state or an individual prestige. Therefore, scholarship documents that states are keen to achieve the simultaneous acquisition of both power and prestige. See Steve Wood, "Prestige in World Politics: History, Theory, Expression," *International Politics* 50, no. 3 (2013): 387-411.

[92] Mingjiang Li, ed. *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2009).

governance is being pursued through agenda-setting and institution-building.[93] It seems that China has started to imitate the US, which successfully legitimized its global influence by shaping the global order through the establishment of liberal international institutions and setting key agendas within since the end of WWII.[94] Both capacities—agenda-setting and institution-building—clearly embody a country's soft power, whatever resources and wherewithal it will draw on. For China, economic resources and human capital have been utilized to set multiple agendas internationally and to build multilateral institutions in a legitimate way as documented in chapter 4. The recent China-led establishment of AIIB is a good case to illustrate China's soft power by turning its increasing wealth into a show of political influence in a sophisticated and subtle way.

The AIIB and Chinese soft power

The AIIB is a new multilateral institution epitomizing China's soft power. Chinese President Xi initiated the proposal of building the AIIB in October 2013. The Chinese government has subsequently accelerated the establishment of the AIIB. Chinese Premier Li delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) in April 2014, in which he mentioned that China was ready to enhance consultations with relevant parties across Asia and beyond on the preparations for the formal establishment of the AIIB. Two months later, the Chinese government announced it would double the registered capital of the AIIB from $50 billion to $100 billion, and invited India to be a founding member of the AIIB. Negotiations and consultations with parties who expressed strong interest to participate in the AIIB moved forward smoothly, and 21 countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the building of the AIIB in Beijing in 24 October, 2014. Another milestone for the AIIB occurred when the UK became the first major Western power to lodge an application to be a founding member on 12 March, 2015. It was followed by other key

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[93] Mark Beeson and Fujian Li, "China's Place in Regional and Global Governance: A New World Comes into View."

[94] Mark Beeson and Richard Higgott, "Hegemony, Institutionalism and US Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice in Comparative Historical Perspective," *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 7 (2005): 1173-88; John Agnew, *Hegemony: The New Shape of Global Order* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005).

European countries, including Germany, France and Italy. South Korea and Australia also decided to join the AIIB in April 2015. The participation of the major economic powers noted above has strengthened the prestige of the AIIB. Five Chief Negotiators Meetings (CNMs) were conducted for the negotiation of the AIIB's legal framework, and the Articles of Agreement (AOA) were concluded in the fifth CNM in May 2015. The AOA were signed on the 29 June 2015 by 50 of the 57 named prospective founding members in Beijing. Jin Liqun, the former Vice-President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the Vice Minister of Finance of PRC, is currently the President of the AIIB.[95]

The remarkable progress of the AIIB's realization, however, was accompanied by an American and Japanese snub of this new multilateral development bank. The US government assiduously lobbied its important allies including Japan, UK, Australia and South Korea to boycott the AIIB,[96] and continued to press them to "think twice" before signing up to becoming founding members.[97] It seemed that the US government's strong opposition to the AIIB revolved around its possibly loose standards in terms of governance, transparency, procurement, labor and environmental safeguards in comparison to that of WB and ADB.[98] However, this anxiety was significantly soothed as other developed countries (such as the UK, Germany, France and Australia) have promised to adopt the best standards and practices for the AIIB.[99] Therefore, observers argued that the US was actually worried that the AIIB will inevitably undermine the influence of US dominated WB and Japanese controlled ADB.[100] Some analysts even argued that the AIIB represents China's long-term strategic thinking to replace the

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[95] Daniel Bob, ed. *Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: China as Responsible Stakeholder?* (Washington DC: Sasakawa Peace Foundation, 2015).

[96] Jane Perlez, "U.S. Opposing China's Answer to World Bank," *The New York Times*, October 9, 2014.

[97] Matthias Sobolewski and Jason Lange, "U.S. Urges Allies to Think Twice before Joining China-Led Bank," accessed March 20, 2015, http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/18/us-europe-asia-bank-idUSKBN0MD0B320150318.

[98] The Standard, "Washington Rebukes Britain's Decision to Join China-Backed Asian Infrastructure Bank," accessed June 13, 2015,
http://www.thestandard.com.hk/breaking_news_detail.asp?id=58463&icid=2&d_str=20150313.

[99] Sobolewski and Lange, "U.S. Urges Allies to Think Twice before Joining China-Led Bank".

[100] Eric Voeten, "Why the U.S. Effort to Curb the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank Is Doomed to Fail," *The Washington Post*, March 19, 2015; Xiao Ren, "China as an Institution-Builder: The Case of the AIIB," *The Pacific Review* 29, no. 3 (2016): 435-42.

existing American-led international order with its own proposed alternative.[101]

The American government's deep concern does not take place in a vacuum and it prompts us to rethink the major purpose of the AIIB and its implications for Chinese soft power. The AIIB was supposed to provide funds to meet some of the huge demands of infrastructure investment in Asia mainly including energy (electricity in particular), telecommunications, transport, water and sanitations. The 2009 ADB report suggested that countries in the Asian-Pacific region need to invest a total amount of almost $8 trillion in infrastructural building and replacement over 2010-2020 (see Table 5–7).

Table 5–7: Asia's Total Infrastructure Investment Needs by Sector (2010–2020)

(Value in 2008 USD Million)

Sector/Subsector	New Capacity	Replacement	Total
Energy (Electricity)	3,176,437	912,202	4,088,639
Telecommunications	325,353	730,304	1,055,657
Mobile phones	181,763	509,151	690,914
Landlines	143,590	221,153	364,743
Transport	1,761,666	704,457	2,466,123
Airports	6,533	4,728	11,260
Ports	50,275	25,416	75,691
Railways	2,692	35,947	38,639
Roads	1,702,166	638,366	2,340,532
Water and Sanitation	155,493	225,797	381,290
Sanitation	107,925	119,573	227,498
Water	47,568	106,224	153,792
Total	5,418,949	2,572,760	7,991,709

Source: Asian Development Bank and Asian Development Bank Institute, *Infrastructure for a Seamless Asia* (Tokyo: Asian Development Bank Institute, 2009): 167.

This extensive and intensive investment in Asian infrastructural construction faces challenges, because this huge investment is obviously beyond the financing capabilities of the relevant governments in Asia, also far beyond the ADB capacities, as it has admitted.[102] Similarly, the China-led AIIB lending capacity undoubtedly *cannot* plug

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[101] Fareed Zakaria, "China's Growing Clout," *The Washington Post*, November 13, 2014.
[102] Asian Development Bank, *Infrastructure for Supporting Inclusive Growth and Poverty Reduction in Asia*(Manila:

such a massive funding gap in the short or medium term according to two likely scenarios of AIIB loan portfolio as suggested (see Figure 5–3). The AIIB is even unlikely to address this infrastructure deficit in Asia in the long term.[103] In this sense, it is reasonable to suggest that the economic mandate of funding Asian infrastructure investment for long-term economic growth is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the establishment of the AIIB. The AIIB is neither indispensable for China's macroeconomic rebalancing strategy between the eastern coastal areas of China and its western inlands, nor for the further development of China's nascent project of "One Belt and One Road" (OBOR)[104], as strongly endorsed by the Chinese policy-makers.[105] This is because, on one hand, the Chinese government can utilize the existing avenues (such as the "Silk Road Infrastructure Fund"[106] and capital from China's policy banks[107]) to finance infrastructure projects in Asia without necessarily resort to the AIIB.[108] On the other, the lending scale of AIIB is much too small to make a macroeconomic rebalance for China.[109] There is a possibility that the US may not launch major campaigns against the AIIB if it is only designed to finance Asian infrastructure investment and serve China's macroeconomic rebalancing strategy.

Despite China's geo-economic calculations underlying the building of the AIIB, analysts argued that China's long-term geo-strategic thinking might have more to say about its establishment in the end.[110] That is, the establishment of the AIIB clearly demonstrates China's soft power as the Chinese government legitimately wielded its

Asian Development Bank, 2012), 3.

[103] Rahul Mishra, "Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: An Assessment," *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs* 72, no. 2 (2016): 163-76.

[104] The "one belt and one road" project refers to the "New Silk Road Economic Belt" and "the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road", see http://csis.org/publication/building-chinas-one-belt-one-road

[105] Da Wang, "Yatouhang De Zhongguo Kaoliang Yu Shijie Yiyi [Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: China's Considerations and Global Significance]," *Dongbeiya Luntan [Northeast Asia Forum]*, no. 3 (2015): 48-64.

[106] Paul Carsten and Ben Blanchard, "China to Establish $40 Billion Silk Road Infrastructure Fund," accessed Novermber 8, 2015.
 http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/08/us-china-diplomacy-idUSKBN0IS0BQ20141108

[107] Yuzhe Zhu, "Policy Banks Linked to 'Belt and Road' Plans Said to Get US$ 31 Bln," accessed November 8, 2015. http://english.caixin.com/2015-07-21/100831133.html.

[108] Mike Callaghan and Paul Hubbard, "The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: Multilateralism on the Silk Road," *China Economic Journal* 9, no. 2 (2016): 117.

[109] David Dollar, "China's Rise as a Regional and Global Power," *Horizons*, no. 4 (2015): 165-6.

[110] Beeson and Li, "China's Place in Regional and Global Governance: A New World Comes into View"; Beeson, "Geopolitics Versus Geoeconomics: The New International Order," accessed November 14, 2016.
http://theconversation.com/geopolitics-versus-geoeconomics-the-new-international-order-38824

economic power to significantly influence regional and even global governance.[111] Specifically, Chinese policy-makers set a key agenda of Asian infrastructure investment, and a series of concerned countries had to either take it or leave it, but could not ignore it. The Chinese government also effectively persuaded America's close allies to join in this new international institution, and as a result, it was established as an inclusive multilateral institution, notwithstanding the US government's strident opposition to its building. In short, the establishment of the AIIB is a telling indicator of Chinese soft power as it "may prove to be one of the most important regional initiatives in recent history" as Beeson writes,[112] and "would be a cause for universal celebration" as Stiglitz notes.[113] More significantly, Danny Quah even argues that, the AIIB can be seen as a precursor of a new "inclusive" international order led by China, and could "well end up winning over the world's people who don't live along the transatlantic axis".[114]

Figure 5–3: Likely Scenarios of AIIB Loan Portfolio, 2016-2025

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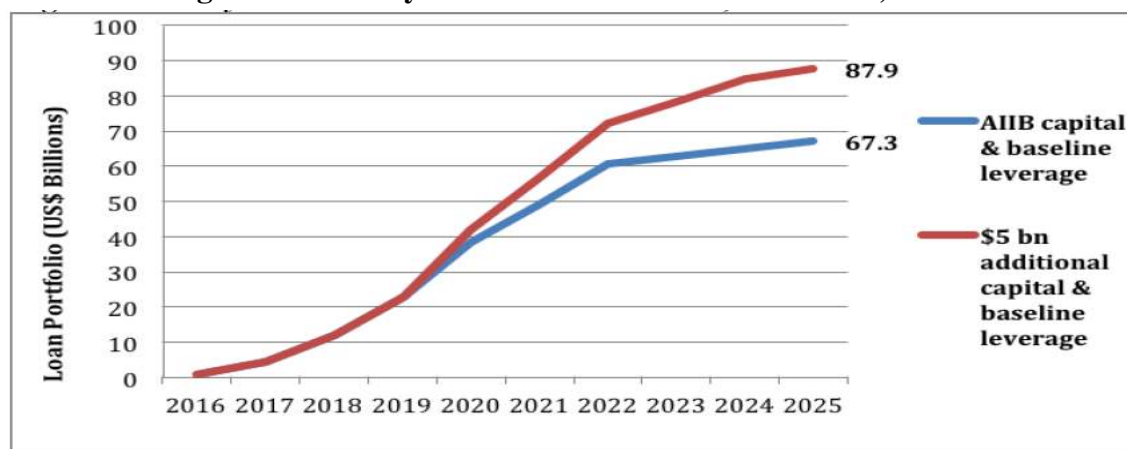
[111] An interviewee argued that the China-led AIIB adds *no* relevance to Chinese soft power as other countries embraces this new multilateral development bank mainly because of their realistic calculations of prospective economic benefit as a founding member. However, this argument calls for reconsideration in two aspects. First, becoming a founding member of the AIIB is obviously not without cost in that founding members are required to contribute funding capital to the AIIB. Second, it fails to make a distinction between economic power and economic resources employed to achieve soft power. The establishment of AIIB does not solely rely on China's economic power and financial resources as its lending scale obviously cannot meet the increasing financial demand of infrastructure investment in Asia. China's economic power alone will not smoothly bring the AIIB into view. Rather, the swift process of building the AIIB demonstrates China's diplomatic and political statecraft to advantage its economic resources to legitimize its key role in the regional, and even, global economic governance. It is the latter concern that led to the America's strident opposition against the AIIB. Interview with Fangyin Zhou, Professor in Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (GDUFS), Guangzhou, May 11, 2015.

[112] Mark Beeson, "Should the West Worry About China's New Bank?," accessed November 15, 2015. https://agenda.weforum.org/2014/10/west-worry-chinas-new-bank/

[113] Joseph Stiglitz, "In Defence of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank," *The Guardian*, April 15, 2015.

[114] Danny Quah, "How China's Rise is Revealing the Cracks in US Claims to Legitimacy as Global Leader," *South China Morning Post*, August 19, 2015.

Source: Chris Humphrey, "Developmental Revolution or Bretton Woods Revisited?" (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2015), 14.

Chinese soft power may be strengthened if further political implications of the AIIB are taken into account. That is, the Chinese government had provided an attractive outside option for other members who, like China, also criticized the glacial pace of global economic governance reform, particularly related to the International Financial Institutions (IFIs).[115] Empirical studies find that international institutions such as multilateral development banks facing extensive competition from within or without generally offer attractive outside options to member states. The attractive outside options will make the member states prone to be supportive of the "distributive change" regarding the redistribution of representation and influence among member states in a way commensurate with emerging geo-political and/or geo-economic realities.[116] Scholars and experts from China and abroad agree that the underrepresentation of China within the existing international institutions and the US's stalling reform motivated China to initiate an alternative like the AIIB.[117] The recent establishment of the New Development Bank (NDB) mainly operated by the BRICS bloc (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa)—is also illustrative.[118] That is why the US government stridently opposed the China-led AIIB as the long-term implications of an outside option will significantly compromise the US dominance of WB, and threaten its economic and political clout in Asia.[119]

The establishment of AIIB and its promising future operation seem to reflect the Chinese government's stratagem of "killing two birds with one stone". On one hand, it

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[115] Hongying Wang and Erik French, "China in Global Economic Governance," *Asian Economic Policy Review* 9, no. 2 (2014): 262-5.
[116] Phillip Y. Lipscy, "Explaining Institutional Change: Policy Areas, Outside Options, and the Bretton Woods Institutions," *American Journal of Political Science* 59, no. 2 (2015): 341-56.
[117] Shujie Yao, "Yatouhang: Zhongguo Handong Shijie Diyuan Zhengzhi De Lichengbei [The Establishment of AIIB is a Milestone for China in Shaking the International Geopolitics]," *Renmin Luntan [People's Forum]*, no. 4 (2015): 55-7; "Why China Is Creating a New 'World Bank' for Asia," *The* Economist, accessed November 11, 2014. http://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2014/11/economist-explains-6.
[118] Anita Powell, "BRICS Leaders Optimistic About New Development Bank," accessed November 1, 2016. http://www.voanews.com/content/brics-summit-leaders-optimistic-about-new-development-bank/1629583.html
[119] Callaghan and Hubbard, "The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: Multilateralism on the Silk Road," 123-5; Tania Branigan, "Support for China-Led Development Bank Grows Despite Us Opposition," *The Guardian* 14 March, 2015.

has translated China's increasing economic power into a greater international status in a legitimate and subtle way without necessarily undermining the extant US-led international order since the end of WWII.[120] On the other, it may propel the existing leading international institutions to deepen the redistributive reform commensurate with China's weight in the global economy, if China can successfully transfer a "Chinese initiative" to a "China-led initiative" in this regard.[121] It is thus not surprising to see that the Chinese government has placed great emphasis on its either already or potentially crucial role in global economic governance, especially in the wake of 2008 GFC.[122] In so doing, China's potential capacity of agenda-setting and institution-building for the global economic governance may set a strong foundation for the Chinese soft power in the near future.[123] It embodies China's two-pronged strategy now and in the future: to legitimize its increasing economic and political power through regional and international institutions yet without destroying the existing US-led international order.[124] Despite the fact that engaging with existing international institutions remains the dominant strategy of China's multilateral diplomacy in the foreseeable future as some argued,[125] its tried-and-tested approach towards proactive agenda-settings and the establishment of international institutions, especially in terms of global economic governance, will become increasingly pronounced.[126] China's soft power campaigns through agenda-setting and institution-building, therefore, seems to confirm some of the assumptions and expectations embedded in the logic of liberal institutionalism.

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[120] Hai Yang, "The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and Status-Seeking: China's Foray into Global Economic Governance," *Chinese Political Science Review* 1, no. 4 (2016): 754-78.

[121] Mishra, "Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: An Assessment," 173.

[122] For example, see Pang Zhongying and Hongying Wang, "Debating International Institutions and Global Governance: The Missing Chinese IPE Contribution," *Review of International Political Economy* 20, no. 6 (2013): 1203.

[123] Significantly improving China's capacity and influence in terms of agenda-setting and rules-making through the multinational institutions (*zhidu xing huayuquan*) was a key concern of the Chinese government according to the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020). See http://news.cnr.cn/native/gd/20151103/t20151103_520379989.shtml.

[124] Randall L. Schweller and Pu Xiaoyu, "After Unipolarity: China's Visions of International Order in an Era of U.S. Decline," *International Security* 36, no. 1 (2011): 41-72; Yuan-kang Wang, "China's Response to the Unipolar World: The Strategic Logic of Peaceful Development," *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 45, no. 5 (2010): 554-67; Jonathan Tepperman, "Beijing's Brand Ambassador: A Conversation with Cui Tiankai," *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 4 (2013): 10-17; Tiankai Cui, "China's Ambassador: We Stand with U.S. for Peace," *US Today*, 2 September, 2015.

[125] Joel Wuthnow, Xin Li, and Lingling Qi, "Diverse Multilateralism: Four Strategies in China's Multilateral Diplomacy," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 17, no. 3 (2012): 269-90.

[126] Jianwei Wang, "China's Multilateral Diplomacy in the New Millennium," in *China Rising: Power and Motivation in Chinese Foreign Policy*, ed. Yong Deng and Feiling Wang (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005), 159-200.

Conclusion

China's global soft power campaigns are by and large consistent with the logic of consequence as the fulfillment of Chinese cultural, economic and political interests is prioritized. That is, soft power has been widely employed by the Chinese government preserve cultural security, reduce cultural trade deficit in terms of cultural goods and services, and facilitate the development of cultural/creative industries. China's soft power campaigns also aim to reshape a favorable international image through the struggle for discursive power, and learn to legitimize its rising power in light of setting influential agendas and initiating new multilateral institutions, as the recent establishment of the AIIB demonstrates. As a result, China's soft power campaigns are characterized by the integration of high and low politics. Further, analytical eclecticism was applied to explain China's soft power campaigns. The logic of cultural security is more consistent with the realist school of thought, and the process of its securitization of Chinese culture in contrast to the liberal Western culture is by and large constructivist. However, China's policy prescription to its cultural trade deficit, its positive image-building and its attempt to take an active role in agenda-setting and institution-building at least partially reflect the liberal mode of thinking related to commercial, sociological and institutional liberalism respectively.

As China continues to rise, it is highly possible that the Chinese government may give more attention to its capability of agenda-setting and institution-building in the international arena. Arguably, the Chinese government may continue to bring its soft power campaigns—through agenda-setting and institution-building—to bear on the legitimization of its growing influence without overturning the US-led international order now and in the future.[127]

One of the key hypotheses of this thesis—soft power is primarily operational in the international arenas—seems to be confirmed through this case study of China's soft

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[127] Will Shield, "The Middle Way: China and Global Economic Governance," *Survival* 55, no. 6 (2013): 147-68.

power campaign. Kurlantzick even argues that soft power has been the most potent "weapon" in Beijing's foreign policy "arsenal".[128] That being said, the international operation of China's soft power campaigns does not necessarily mean that it has no domestic implications or impacts. The next chapter will seek to examine the possibility of China's domestic soft power campaigns.

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[128] Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*, 5.

Chapter 6: National Cohesion, The Propaganda System and China's Domestic Soft Power Campaigns

Having investigated the international factors driving China's soft power campaigns, this chapter focuses on their domestic motivations. As mentioned in chapter 1, one of the most widespread assumptions is that soft power is by and large internationally-oriented. This hypothesis is also widely applied to the external studies of China's soft power campaigns, which highlight its international motivations and implications. That is, the Chinese government has launched a series of soft power campaigns to struggle for the discursive power, offset the China threat thesis, polish China's international image, boost Chinese cultural influence, reduce cultural trade deficit, promote its normative soft power and institutionalize its rising economic and political influence. Above all, soft power is assumed to play a significant role in helping China become one of the "legitimate greater powers"[1] in the long run.

The emphasis on the international driving force behind China's soft power campaigns, however, was challenged by those who argue that China's soft power campaigns are actually a two-level game. That is, these campaigns are motivated by China's domestic and international concerns, and both concerns are closely linked to each other. This dualistic perspective on China's soft power campaigns takes the domestic-foreign nexus of China's policy-making into account.[2] It also matches what the party-state actually advocates, that is, paying attention to both domestic and international situations (*tongchou guonei guowai liangge daju*).[3] As the domestic situations of China's soft power campaigns are under-researched, this chapter seeks to enrich and deepen this

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[1] "Legitimate great powers" mainly refers to status seekers that are recognized by their peers as qualified to have certain level of privileges, rights and responsibilities. In so doing, they can play a determining role in shaping the peace and security of international system. See Larson Deborah Welch and Shevchenko Alexei, "Status Seekers: Chinese and Russian Responses to U.S. Primacy," *International Security* 34, no. 4 (2010): 63-95.

[2] For example, see Hongyi Lai, ed. *The Domestic Sources of China's Foreign Policy: Regimes, Leadership, Priorities and Process*(New York: Routledge, 2010), chapter 2; Michael D. Swaine, *China: Domestic Change and Foreign Policy* (Santa Monica, California: Rand, 1995).

[3] Hu, "Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive for New Victories in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects: Report to the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China."

field of research.

This chapter will begin with a brief literature review regarding China's domestic soft power campaigns, and subsequently takes the building of national cohesion as an analytical starting point to explore its meaning, function and implications for the CCP's political legitimacy in general, and the state-led domestic cultural soft power campaigns in particular. More importantly, the role of the propaganda system in this process deserves particular attention. It finally draws three key conclusions.

First, national cohesion-building, as a starting point of China's domestic soft power campaigns, is intimately tied to the identity politics, state strength, regime security, propaganda system and the political legitimacy of the CCP leadership. Second, the CCP's ideological reformulation, harmonious society initiative, and the Patriotic Education Movement (PEM) are key agendas of national cohesion-building and closely linked to the state-led domestic soft power campaigns. Third, the propaganda system plays a significant role in driving China's domestic soft power campaigns for national cohesion-building through the increasingly sophisticated use of its institutional and constitutive power. On one hand, the propaganda system propagates official articulations in order to shape public opinion, set agenda and control the construction of national identity. On the other, it makes efforts to suppress unwanted discourses that are considered a threat to the CCP's discursive hegemony and its political legitimacy. Overall, China's domestic soft power campaigns are intended to enhance its nation-building and state-making in the 21st century.

What Does the Literature Say?

Most of the existing scholarship dealing with China's domestic soft power campaigns accords a great significance to the national cohesion, identity politics, the CCP's political legitimacy, regime security, state strength and the crucial role of propaganda

system in the course of these campaigns.[4] Three perspectives ought to be given special attention. First, soft power discourse has become an important part of China's identity politics. Second, Chinese soft power sounds negative since Chinese identity and security is constructed through the negative exclusion of "others", mainly in reference to the West (US in particular) and Japan. Third, the soft power discourse and its application as a political project are supposed to play a significant role in the state-led national cohesion-building.

By using the discursive analysis of soft power in the Chinese context, scholars and experts reveal the identity politics underlying China's domestic soft power campaigns. After all, discourse is generally defined as "systems of meaningful practices that form the identities of subjects and objects".[5] Discourses, as a result, are inherently political and historical construction, and power is involved in the process of their production. The discourse of soft power has become popular in China since the early 21st century, and the discursive analysis of its popularity in China sheds light on its implications for China's identity politics. For example, Callahan notes that national identity and security have dominated contemporary Chinese politics, as they are directly linked to the CCP's political legitimacy.[6] The recent popularization of soft power discourse adds relevance to this identity politics. That is, the discourse of Chinese soft power sounds negative as the policy makers and intellectuals define the positive Chinese "self" through the exclusion of negative "others", mainly in reference to the West (US in particular) and Japan. This definition of symbolic borders between the positive China and the negative others is made through the domestic process of social construction. The historical contingency related to China's century of humiliation—"civilized" China was

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[4] For example, see Mingjiang Li, "China Debates Soft Power," 287-308; Cho and Jeong, "China's Soft Power: Discussions, Resources, and Prospects," 453-72; Wang and Lu, "The Conception of Soft Power and Its Policy Implication: A Comparative Study of China and Taiwan," 425-47; Mingjiang Li, ed. *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics*; Michael Barr, "Nation Branding as Nation Building: China's Image Campaign," *East Asia* 29, no. 1 (2012): 81-94; Jean-Marc F. Blanchard and Fujia Lu, "Thinking Hard About Soft Power: A Review and Critique of the Literature on China and Soft Power," *Asian Perspective* 36, no. 4 (2012): 565-89; Wanfa Zhang, "Has Beijing Started to Bare Its Teeth? China's Tapping of Soft Power Revisited," ibid.: 615-39.
[5] David Howarth and Yannis Stavrakakis, "Introducing Discourse Theory and Political Analysis," in *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identity, Hegemonies and Social Change*, ed. David Howarth, Aletta J. Norval, and Yannis Stavrakakis (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 2-4.
[6] William A. Callahan, *China: The Pessoptimist Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

humiliated by the outside "barbarians"—further explains the construction of China's negative soft power. This historical mentality still influences, though not dominates, the current discussion of soft power and its political application.[7]

Although the construction of negative soft power may play a significant role in solving China's identity dilemma and strengthen the political legitimacy of the CCP, the CCP's efforts in this regard may also be complicated by the interplay between state-led nationalism and the bottom-up cultural nationalism. Simply put, state-led nationalism calls for Chinese citizens' loyalty to the party-state. Bottom-up cultural nationalism, by contrast, refers to an ideological movement in an attempt to cultivate transcending loyalty to the nation rather than the state. Cultural nationalism is based on common cultural assets such as ethnic values, linguistics, historical narratives and memories. It is driven through the process of communication and socialization among the members of the national community.[8] The interactive dynamics between the state-led nationalism and cultural nationalism generally revolves around the content of national identity, the right and power to represent the nation, the legitimacy of the party-state, and the pattern of similarity and dissimilarity in depictions of the Chinese self and the Western other.[9] The rising influence of cultural nationalism among the Chinese national community and the dwindling ideology of Marxism, has forced the party-state to accommodate the appeal of cultural China in order to justify its leadership as a guardian of Cultural *Chineseness*. However, the party-state continues to depress the cultural conservatives who seek to challenge the official ideology of Marxism on one hand, and facilitate the Sinicization of Marxism on the other.[10]

China's state-led soft power campaigns, as a result, represent the party-state's pragmatism at best or the unsettled identity dilemma at worst. On one hand, the

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[7] "Identity and Security in China: The Negative Soft Power of the China Dream," *Politics* 35, no. 3-4 (2015): 216-29.

[8] Guo, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity under Reform*.

[9] Zheng, *Discovering Chinese Nationalism in China*; Ian Seckington, "Nationalism, Ideology and China's 'Fourth Generation' Leadership," *Journal of Contemporary China* 14, no. 42 (2005): 23-33; Jungmin Seo, "Nationalism and the Problem of Political Legitimacy," in *Legitimacy: Ambiguities of Political Success or Failure in East and Southeast Asia*, ed. Lynn White (Singapore: World Scientific, 2005), 141-82.

[10] Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, chapter 7; Peter Hays Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy*.

party-state emphasizes the Chinese traditional culture and values as a crucial source of Chinese soft power. The depoliticized aspect of "culture" detached from the straitjacket of Marxism has been advocated as a result.[11] On the other, the official ideology of Marxism still matters. For instance, the party-state has been increasing investment in philosophy and social science research as a way to promote Chinese soft power.[12] Both theoretical research and policy-informed studies directly associated with the sinicized Marxism were prioritized according to the political demands for addressing serious and urgent Chinese problems and challenges. Meanwhile, the new Academy of Marxism was founded in late 2005 under the auspices of the Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS), and funded with hundreds of millions in RMB in the name of a 10-year project labeled "Marxist engineering" (*Ma Gongcheng*).[13] To some extent, the re-emphasis on party ideology during Hu's era reflects CCP's enduring efforts to adapt and innovate under changing situations, to maintain CCP's historical claim to a monopoly of both power and truth.[14]

The two-tier discursive system of de-ideologization and re-ideologization along with the state-led soft power campaigns looms large. Some argue that the Marxist ideology will be superseded by an alternative ideological system that incorporates some elements of cultural nationalism.[15] However, others assert that China's political ideology remains anchored in Marxism. In this sense, the revival of Chinese traditional cultures (neo-Confucianism in particular) promoted by the CCP is best seen as its attempt to secure cultural leadership in a pragmatic way.[16] These contradictory views demonstrate China's unsettled identity dilemma, and will be further critically analyzed in the

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[11] Zhao, "China's Quest for 'Soft Power': Imperatives, Impediments and Irreconcilable Tensions?" 17-29.

[12] The CCP Central Committee, "Zhonggong Zhongyang Guanyu Jinyibu Fanrong Fazhan Zhexue Shehui Kexue De Yijian [The CCP Central Committee Opinion Concerning Further Letting Philosophy and Social Sciences Flourish and Develop]," https://chinacopyrightandmedia.wordpress.com/2004/03/20/ccp-central-committee-opinion-concerning-further-letting-philosophy-and-social-sciences-flourish-and-develop/.

[13] Heike Holbig, "Shifting Ideologics of Research Funding: The CPC's National Planning Office for Philosophy and Social Sciences," *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 43, no. 2 (2014): 15.

[14] "Remaking the CCP's Ideology: Determinants, Progress, and Limits under Hu Jintao," *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 38, no. 3 (2009): 35-61.

[15] Qing Cao, "China's Soft Power: Formulations, Contestations and Communication," 188; Guo, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity under Reform*, 143.

[16] Shufang Wu, "The Revival of Confucianism and the CCP's Struggle for Cultural Leadership: A Content Analysis of the People's Daily, 2000–2009," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23, no. 89 (2014): 971-91; Elizabeth J. Perry, "The Populist Dream of Chinese Democracy," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 74, no. 4 (2015): 910.

following section.

National identity formation is central to China's national cohesion-building, which logically becomes a key concern of state-led soft power campaigns. The party-state has attached a great significance to cultural soft power in parallel with the political, economic and social construction. This is because the party-state believes that the promotion of cultural soft power can strengthen national cohesion that has been seriously undermined by mounting economic inequality and social injustice.[17] The national cohesion-building along with China's soft power campaigns, as a result is assumed to lend support to the maintenance of the CCP's political legitimacy.[18]

This national cohesion-building has many dimensions. It calls for the party-state to "generate social consensus" (*ningju gongshi*), "unify the people" (*ningju renxin*) and "strengthen the united front" (*ningju liliang*).[19] In this sense, China's soft power campaigns can be seen as a key component of its development strategy.[20] Consequently, various official policies figure prominently in the discussion of Chinese soft power in political and academic circles. These policies include institutional reform and reconstruction, anti-corruption campaigns, ethnic cohesion building, the protection of cultural heritage, the promotion of moral standards and the cultural "quality" (*suzhi*) of the Chinese people, and so on.[21] In so doing, the propaganda authorities are responsible for cultivating a harmonious and stable domestic environment for national cohesion-building according to a double-track strategy. On one hand, official discourses and policies are disseminated to shape public opinions and set agendas for the public. On the other, undesirable and threatening discourses that are disposed to challenge the

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[17] Kingsley Edney, *The Globalization of Chinese Propaganda*, chapter 4.

[18] Renwick and Cao, "China's Cultural Soft Power: An Emerging National Cultural Security Discourse," 69-86; Kejin Zhao, "The Motivation behind China's Public Diplomacy," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 8, no. 2 (2015): 167-96; Jukka Aukia, "The Cultural Soft Power of China: A Tool for Dualistic National Security," *Journal of China and International Relations* 2, no. 1 (2014): 71-94.

[19] Kingsley Edney, "Building National Cohesion and Domestic Legitimacy: A Regime Security Approach to Soft Power in China," *Politics* 35, no. 3-4 (2015): 259-72.

[20] Cho and Jeong, "China's Soft Power: Discussions, Resources, and Prospects," 458.

[21] Barr, *Who's Afraid of China? The Challenge of Chinese Soft Power*, 30; Mingjiang Li, "Soft Power in Chinese Discourse: Popularity and Prospect," in *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics*, ed. Mingjiang Li (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2009), 28.

official discursive hegemony are suppressed.[22] This mode of thinking resonates with the appeal of "ruling soft power" that is assumed to advance the position of ruling body by attracting members of society and seeking widespread public support.[23]

To sum up, existing scholarship has explored China's domestic soft power campaigns through the lens of identity politics, national cohesion, political legitimacy of the CCP, and paid special attention to the central role of propaganda authorities in these campaigns. However, current scholarship on this topic has two notable shortcomings. First, the current literature fails to develop a systematic and comprehensive analysis of China's domestic soft power campaigns. Second, the current literature fails to specify how the state-led soft power campaigns could enhance cohesion-building. Therefore, this chapter attempts to integrate the current research findings and takes national cohesion-building as an analytical point of departure. This is because the discourse of national cohesion is integral to that of soft power and its political application since the political agenda of soft power was firstly announced by the central leadership. In so doing, this chapter centers on the following questions: (1) What is national cohesion from the perspective of the party-state? (2) Why is national cohesion a key concern of the party-state? (3) Why does cultural soft power enhance the national cohesion as presumed? (4) How does cultural soft power promote national cohesion? All these questions start with a key concern of national cohesion, yet the corresponding exploration ends up with a logical integration of various fundamental domestic agendas across the board, from national identity to the propaganda system, and from state strength and security to the CCP's political legitimacy.

National Cohesion: Meaning and Function

The discourse of national cohesion is regularly referred to in the political discussion

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[22] Edney, *The Globalization of Chinese Propaganda*, 8.

[23] Liaoning Li and Shi Jun, "Ruling Soft Power: A Strategy for the Construction of Harmonious Society," in *Soft Power Innovation and Development in Today's China*, ed. Konglai Zhu and Henry Zhang (Riverwood: Aussino Academic Publishing House, 2011), 201-6.

generally, and the current propagation of cultural soft power specifically. Although the concept of national cohesion is nebulous and difficult to define, its key components that are embedded in the party-state's official narratives are quite clear and stable. The Chinese term "*ningju*" in the socio-political context means "coalesce", "unite" or "build cohesion or solidarity". Therefore, the term of "*ningjuli*" literally means the power of cohesion or cohesive power. Furthermore, political statements from the party-state also regularly specify the objects or targets of cohesion-building as noted above: *ningju gongshi*, *ningju renxin*, and *ningju liliang*.

Simply put, cohesion for the party-state's part can be broken down into three major parts as follows. The first part is cohesion within the political system—either in terms of intra-party cohesion or cohesion in the relationship between CCP, the state, and the PLA—of which coalescing consensus around the guiding ideology is a top priority. The second part involves cohesion between the political system (or its individual components) and the Chinese people, of which maintaining harmonious relations between the state and society is the key. Last, it refers to cohesion among the Chinese people, especially between different groups defined in terms of either ethnic ties or income, or geographic division. As a result, building a state-centered Chinese national identity is a central political mission in this regard.[24] The following sections will examine how the tripartite dimensions of national cohesion are closely bound up with the current cultural soft power campaigns.

The special attention that is devoted to the building of national cohesion by the party-state in the course of cultural soft power campaigns in the 21st century deserves further analyses. It should be noted that national cohesion-building is not an exclusive concern of China. To the contrary, national cohesion is generally a global concern as every nation-state in reality has to deal with it seriously, provided it is directly linked to state strength and regime legitimacy. It should also be noted that, the recent elevation of national cohesion to a top concern of the party-state does not deny the fact that it was

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[24] Edney, *The Globalization of Chinese Propaganda*, 36-41.

once cast in the shadow of "class struggle" in the Mao's era. Therefore, China's current consideration of national cohesion takes on two unique characteristics, compared to its socio-political atmosphere during Mao's reign and other countries' national conditions.

The first characteristic is that the emphasis on national cohesion is a corollary of the CCP's transformation from a "revolutionary party" (*geming dang*) that struggles for power by means of force to a "governing party" (*zhizheng dang*) that intends to exert power on the basis of popular consent.[25] Economic, social and political reforms have been put forward to remake the state and maintain national cohesion since the start of the reform and open policy process in the late 1970s.[26] The second characteristic is that the building of national cohesion has long been undertaken under a so-called "nationless" and "contentless" shadow. That is, the ultimate definition of Chinese nation and the content of Chinese nationalism are by and large shaped by the state as a reward of military and political victory.[27] It is in this sense that nation-building relies on a simultaneous process of state-making. Furthermore, the deep-seated historical consciousness that internal disorder will incur external intervention, as mentioned in chapter 3, has made the building of national cohesion and the maintenance of social stability a long-standing political concern of the party-state. The perceived threat against the national cohesion even validates the use of coercive power against the so-called "three evil forces": terrorism, ethnic separatism and religious extremism.[28]

National cohesion and political power are interlocked in the Chinese context. Political power is wielded to promote national cohesion, and in turn, national cohesion plays a crucial role in the legitimation of political power, and contributes to the consolidation of state strength accordingly. That is why national cohesion has been of particular importance in the mindset of Chinese political and intellectual elites. In general, state

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[25] Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*, 71, 190-1.
[26] Daili L. Yang, *Remaking the Chinese Leviathan: Market Transition, Political Leadership, and Economic Growth* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).
[27] Fitzgerald, "The Nationless State: The Search for a Nation in Modern Chinese Nationalism," 75-104; Pye, "How China's Nationalism Was Shanghaied," 107-33; "China: Erratic State, Frustrated Society," 56-74.
[28] "Xinjiang to Crack Down on 'Three Evil Forces'," accessed November 4, 2014. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-03/06/content_14766900.htm.

strength contains three fundamental elements: (1) infrastructural capability in terms of the capacity of state institutions to undertake essential tasks and enact policy; (2) coercive power in relation to the state's ability and willingness to employ force against challenges to its authority; and (3) national identity and cohesion in reference to the extent of the population's identification with the nation state and accepts its legitimacy in their lives.[29] These core factors are highly similar to what Gerschewski calls the three pillars of stability—"legitimation", "repression" and "co-optation"—for the authoritarian or autocratic regime.[30]

A tripartite element of state strength, in the Chinese socio-political context, is significant in the official discourse of national cohesion and its political application. During the "uninterrupted revolution" during Mao's reign from 1949 to 1976,[31] class struggle guided by the revolutionary ideology, backed by the strong coercive capacity of the state, dominated the building of national cohesion. Although the doctrine of class struggle in its violent and turbulent form has been officially renounced by the post-Mao regime,[32] effective repression and strong coercive capability remain a last resort to ensure national cohesion, social stability and the durability of authoritarian regime.[33] For example, heavy-handed and coercive measures were finally brought to bear in meeting challenges from such as 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident, the 1999 *Falun Gong* protest, the recent surge of ethnic unrest in the western regions of China, and numerous "mass incidents" (*qunti shijian*).

The primary role of coercive power in repression and the maintenance of national cohesion have been increasingly downgraded after the 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident, notwithstanding its employment under some circumstances after that. The logic is

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[29] Richard Jackson, "Regime Security," in *Contemporary Security Studies*, ed. Alan Collins(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 164.

[30] Johannes Gerschewski, "The Three Pillars of Stability: Legitimation, Repression, and Co-Optation in Autocratic Regimes," *Democratization* 20, no. 1 (2013): 13-38.

[31] Li Xing, "From 'Politics in Command' to 'Economics in Command': A Discourse Analysis of China's Transformation," *The Copenhagen Journal of Asia Studies*, no. 18 (2005): 65-87.

[32] Orville Schell and John Delury, *Wealth and Power: China's Long March to the Twenty-First Century*.

[33] Yuhua Wang, "Coercive Capacity and the Durability of the Chinese Communist State," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 47, no. 1 (2014): 13-25.

straightforward. The Chinese leadership realized that the political legitimacy of CCP could be undermined by the widespread abuse of coercive force again.[34] Analysts observe that post-socialist China has transformed from a coercive into a systemic regulatory form of governance since the 1990s.[35] Arguably, the long-term consolidation of political legitimacy comes down to the domestic utilization of soft power, rather than hard power, for the justification of the "rightness" of a state in the following levels. They include conformity to the rules (legal validity), justifiability of rules in terms of shared beliefs between the dominant, and subordinate and legitimation through expressed consent to that particular power relation.[36] Along this line of legitimation, China's nation-building and state-making after 1989 have relied less on coercion but more on soft power. There is now a common understanding that the overreliance on force for protecting the short-term security of regime will erode the foundation of state security in the end.[37] To quote a pointed saying by Talleyrand, "you can do anything with bayonet except sit on them". China's current political project of building national cohesion and developing cultural soft power, therefore, is best understood under these circumstances, in reference to the decreasing role of coercion in the nation-building and state-making.[38]

National Cohesion, Cultural Soft Power and Nationalism

Apart from the meaning and function of national cohesion in the Chinese socio-political context, the following question—why soft power campaigns can strengthen national cohesion—merits attention. As far as the party-state is concerned, on one hand, the fine traditions of Chinese culture are the cornerstone of Chinese soft power. For example, according to the former minister of MOC called Cai Wu, "culture is the core element of

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[34] Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*.
[35] Jing Wang, "Culture as Leisure and Culture as Capital," *Positions* 9, no. 1 (2001): 69-104.
[36] David Beetham, *The Legitimation of Power*(Hampshire: Macmillan, 1991), 20.
[37] Jackson, "Regime Security," 169; Peter Hays Gries and Stanley Rosen, "Introduction," in *Popular Protest and State Legitimation in 21st Century China*, ed. Peter Hays Gries and Stanley Rosen (New York and London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 6.
[38] Interview with an intellectual, Beijing, April 8, 2015.

a country's soft power".[39] An anonymous editorial in the English edition of CCP's mouthpiece—*People's Daily*—writes that culture is the kernel of Chinese soft power as it represents a country's influence, cohesion and popularity.[40] President Xi also emphasizes that traditional culture is the "most profound" element of Chinese soft power.[41] On the other, culture has become an increasingly important source of Chinese national cohesion as former President Hu claimed in the 2007 CCP National Party Congress. His view is also widely entertained by other top leaders. For instance, Liu Yunshan, a Politburo Standing Committee (PSC) member since 2012, sees culture as a "spiritual bond that unites the people".[42] National cohesion, spiritual homeland/bond and cultural soft power are bound together during the propagation of fine traditions of Chinese culture. Above all, China's state-led soft power campaigns, particularly in reference to the resurrection of traditional culture, are supposed to enhance the building of Chinese national cohesion.[43]

The hypothetical role of cultural soft power campaigns in enhancing Chinese national cohesion-building, however, calls for a critical reexamination as anti-traditionalism had once been a defining characteristic of Chinese Marxists in the modern and even contemporary China. Therefore, a brief analysis of historical evolution of nation-building since the beginning of 20th century is required to understand the changing roles of Chinese traditional culture in this regard. Simply put, the CCP has moved away from the opposing binary logic between Marxism and the Chinese traditional culture, and leaned towards an *eclectic* mode of thinking on this matter. Consequently, Chinese traditional culture has become increasingly pronounced in the current national cohesion-building, as the Chinese central leadership has admitted.

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[39] "Guowuyuan Xinwenban Zhuren Cai Wu Wei 'Kua Wenhua Chuanbo Luntan Zhici' [State Council Information Office Director Cai Wu Addresses the 'Cross-Cultural Broadcasting Forum']," accessed Accessed February 4, 2015. http://www.china.com.cn/txt/2006-08/31/content_7120988.htm.

[40] "How to Improve China's Soft Power?," *People's Daily*, March 11, 2010.

[41] "Cultural Reflection Can Improve Modern Governance: Xi," accessed October 14, 2014. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-10/13/c_133713764.htm.

[42] Yunshan Liu, "Jianfu Shidai Fuyu De Chonggao Shiming He Lishi Zeren Wei Tuidong Wenhua Dafazhan Dafanrong Gongxian Zhihui Liliang [Shoulder Sublime Mission and Historical Responsibility, and Contribute Wisdom and Energy to Promote Cultural Prosperity]," *Guangming Daily*, December 5, 2011.

[43] Edney, *The Globalization of Chinese Propaganda*, 109.

The fundamental "turn" from universal culturalism to particularistic nationalism from the end of the 19th century to the early decades of the 20th century, as illustrated in chapter 3, is a watershed of modern Chinese history. Although the distinction between culturalism and nationalism during this process is not always clear and sharp, intellectuals generally agree that culturalism that is characterized by the concern of *Tianxia* with its roots in Confucianism has gradually given way to China's nation-building. The purposes of China's nation-building in the context of globalization of the European-centered Westphalia nation-state system, generally revolve around the protection of its autonomy, identity and unity against foreign invasions and colonization.[44] In this sense, national cohesion is an important part of continuous endeavors for nation-building and state-making in modern China. The logic is straightforward. Without the entity of nation, there is no room for the national cohesion-building.

In the early stage of nation-building, the construction of "Chinese nation" was ironically stimulated by imperialists' external threat to China's territorial, political, and even racial survival. The demise of Chinese culturalism and the realization of powerful driving force of nationalism behind the European countries' modernization and expansion significantly motivated China's political and intellectual elites to embark on its nation-building.[45] The popularization of the idea of the "Chinese nation" is further driven by the urgency to resist the massive Japanese invasion in the 1930s.[46] The circulation and popularization of "China Threat thesis" in China in the early 21st century, furthermore, seems to be politically motivated by the Chinese government to construct a national identity through a "negative logic of estrangement" to separate a peaceful-rise China from the ill-intentional foreign others.[47] Above all, external challenges and pressures have played a negative role in activating China's nation-building so far. That

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[44] Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, 40-51.

[45] Ibid., 48-51; Werner Meissner, "China's Search for Cultural and National Identity from the Nineteenth Century to the Present," *China Perspectives*, no. 68 (2006): 41-54.

[46] Dahua Zheng, "Zhongguo Jindai Minzu Zhuyi Yu Zhonghua Minzu Ziwo Yishi De Juexing [The Chinese Modern Nationalism and the Self-Awareness of Chinese Nation]," *Minzu Yanjiu [Ethno-National Studies]*, no. 3 (2013): 9-14.

[47] William A. Callahan, "How to Understand China: The Dangers and Opportunities of Being a Rising Power," *Review of International Studies* 31, no. 4 (2005): 701-14.

is why the negative soft power comes into being in China nowadays: the positive image of China is shaped in contrast to the negative others.

Regarding the *internal* sources of nation-building, contradictions and dilemmas occur. According to Zhao, conflicts and contests revolve around the relationship between Chinese tradition and the Western modernity, the relationship between the Han Chinese and other minority ethnic groups (mainly including Manchu, Zhuang, Mongol and Hui), and the relationship between the state and individuals or sub-state units.[48] Various schools of thought—mass anti-foreign nativism, cultural conservatism, liberal/Marxist anti-traditionalism, pragmatic eclecticism, and even anarchism—provide different answers to the nation-building.[49]

As the anti-traditionalist bent rose to preeminence during the heyday in the New Cultural Movement and the May Fourth Movement of 1916-1919, the building of national cohesion was heavily influenced by political nationalism and cultural iconoclasm. Political nationalism originally centers on the manner of government: the equal rights of citizen in the state should be prioritized, and the traditional status order is supposed to be replaced by a modern legal-rational political order.[50] However, the external interventions against China and its internal disorder had activated the long-standing historical mentality of building a unitary and strong state as a necessary foundation for political nationalism. This is because the Chinese political and intellectual elites increasingly realized that: without a unitary and strong state, there were no equal rights for the Chinese nation and its citizen.[51] The rising nationalist fever for a strong state equipped with anti-imperialism and cultural iconoclasm, as a result, significantly underpinned the popularity of Marxism in the first half of the 20th century, and ultimately led to the CCP leadership in China.[52]

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[48] Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, 51-78.
[49] Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "The Many Facets of Chinese Nationalism," *China Perspectives*, no. 59 (2005): 26-40.
[50] John Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 9-14.
[51] Michael H. Hunt, "Chinese National Identity and the Strong State: The Late Qing-Republic Crisis," in *China's Quest for National Identity*, 62-79.
[52] Wei-ming Tu, "Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center," 28.

The legacy of anti-traditionalism and strong-state mentality remain influential since the CCP defeated the Nationalist Party (*Kuomintang*) in 1949. Chinese traditional mainstream culture (Confucianism in particular) was heavily suppressed and even destroyed at the Mao's helm.[53] The earlier repression of Confucianism in the nation-building process does not deny the claim that some parts of Confucianism may be tapped to serve the state-making. For example, Pye argues that Confucianism is compatible with Marxism as the Confucian tradition of rule by men not by law is able to blend with the preciousness of the Party, which leads to a "Confucianist Leninism" underscored by an infallible and indispensable leader.[54] In addition, leading Chinese thinkers (such as Li Zehou and Jin Guantao) also stress the historical continuity between Marxism and the Confucianism, particularly in terms of the moralization of politics.[55] However, the fundamental contradiction between orthodox Marxism and the Confucianism pertaining to the nation-building project resulted in the marginalization of Chinese traditional culture for the nation-building in the first three decades of PRC (see Table 6–1).[56] In short, "class nation" rather than "cultural nation" dominated the official way of thinking on the building of national cohesion in the Mao's era.

Table 6–1: A Comparison of Cultural Nationalism and State Nationalism

Cultural nationalism		State nationalism
Nation	≠	Party
Attaching to cultural nation		Loyalty to the party
Ascending legitimacy[57]		Descending legitimacy
		Instrumental culture
		Party: embodiment of nation's will

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[53] Gongqin Xiao, "Minzu Zhuyi Yu Zhongguo Zhuanxing Shiqi De Yishi Xingtai [Nationalism and Ideology in China in Transitional Era]," *Zhanlve yu Guanli [Strategy and Management]*, no. 2 (1994): 21-5.

[54] Lucian W. Pye, *The Mandarin and the Cadre: China's Political*, 135.

[55] SÉBastien Billioud, "Confucianism, 'Cultural Tradition', and Official Discourse in China at the Start of the New Century," 56-7.

[56] Myron L. Cohen, "Being Chinese: The Peripheralization of Traditional Identity," in *The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today*, 100-8.

[57] "Ascending legitimacy" emerges just only when the government is legitimized by popular will, when it serves the interests of the nation and when it expresses the nation's identity. In comparison, "descending legitimacy" refers to the state's insistence to define the national will, national interests and national identity, notwithstanding its agreement with the basic argument of ascending legitimacy. See Craig Calhoun, *Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1997), 3-4.

Nation	→	**State**
Essence of nation: civilization		Independent statehood
Instrumental state		A strong state
Minben ("people-as-the-basis")*		State sovereignty

Cultural nation	←	**Class nation**
Cultural identity		Revolutionary identity
National harmony		Class struggle
Traditional morality		Socialist ethics

Ethnic nation	↔	**Civic nation**
Historical community		Political-territorial unit
Organic being		Political institutions
Genealogy		Common laws
Primordial expression		Citizenship
Natural solidarity		Popular participation
Shared memories/beliefs/values		
Participation in cultural practices		

Note: "≠" denotes an absence of significant reconciliation. "→" refers to mutual reconciliation, where differences are basically a matter of degree. "→" represents accommodation of state nationalist by cultural nationalism and, "←" indicates accommodation of cultural nationalist elements by state nationalism. Differences in both these cases are also a matter of degree. * English translation is mine.

Source: Guo, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity under Reform*, 20.

The revival of Chinese traditional culture (the reiteration of Confucianism in particular) is a significant part of cultural nationalism since the 1980s, because of the development of "cultural self-awareness (*wenhua zijue*)"[58] during the recurring intense debate about Westernization and Chinese modernization.[59] Chinese historians, Confucians, Chinese

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[58] Cultural self-awareness refers to one's clear understanding of the origin, the development process and future trends, and the key features of national culture to which one belongs. It makes no claims for cultural conservatism nor suggests "wholesale Westernization". Rather, cultural self-awareness is intimately linked to the self-strengthening cultural transformation and the cultural autonomy that is developed to adapt to the changing environment. See Xiaotong Fei, "Fansi Duihua Wenhua Zijue [Reflection, Dialogue and Cultural Self-Awareness]," *Beijing Daxue Xeubao [Journal of Peking University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)]*, no. 3 (1997): 22.

[59] Xianlin Song, "Reconstructing the Confucian Ideal in 1980s China: The 'Culture Craze' and New Confucianism," in *New Confucianism: A Critical Examination*, ed. John Makeham(New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 81-104.

linguists and intellectuals in favor of post-colonialism are the major facilitators of this campaign of cultural nationalism at large.[60] Initially, cultural nationalists were neither well-coordinated nor monolithic during the 1980s, and the party-state did not orchestrate this wave of cultural nationalism, the reinstatement of Confucianism in particular.[61] However, their strong appeal of cultural nationalism, unlike its unfortunate fate nearly a century ago, has not been gone unnoticed, and accordingly, gained momentum in the following two decades.[62]

Two significant factors—China's remarkable economic growth and the reconsideration of the CCP's performance legitimacy—lead to the growing prominence of cultural nationalism in China in the 21st century. On one hand, China's remarkable economic development in the last three decade has enormously enhanced confidence about Chinese culture among the Chinese elites and the public in the face of Western culture.[63] Chinese political and intellectual elites seek to reclaim the central authority in order to influence the agenda of "cultural China", which according to Tu, was significantly shaped by the intellectual discourses from the periphery, including Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore.[64] On the other, the severe side effects of unrestrained economic growth has stirred Chinese political and intellectual elites to rethink the CCP's legitimacy of overreliance on economic performance, [65] and increasingly embrace cultural nationalism, as one of the feasible solutions, to reclaim CCP's moral legitimacy and promote social harmony and stability.[66] Consequently, the status of Chinese traditional culture has been elevated by the party-state since the beginning of 21st century. China's recent cultural soft power campaigns are a further development of this trend, used to

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[60] Guo, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity under Reform*.

[61] John Makeham, *Lost Soul: 'Confucianism' in Contemporary Chinese Academic Discourse* (Cambridge and London: The Harvard University Asia Center, 2008); Guo, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity under Reform*.

[62] For example, see Daniel A. Bell, *China's New Confucianism: Politics and Everyday Life in a Changing Society* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

[63] Kelvin Chi-Kin Cheung, "Away from Socialism, Towards Chinese Characteristics: Confucianism and the Futures of Chinese Nationalism," *China Information* 26, no. 2 (2012): 205-18.

[64] Tu, "Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center," 1-34.

[65] Jinghan Zeng, "The Debate on Regime Legitimacy in China: Bridging the Wide Gulf between Western and Chinese Scholarship," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23, no. 88 (2014): 612-35.

[66] Christopher A. Ford, "The Party and the Sage: Communist China's Use of Quasi-Confucian Rationalizations for One-Party Dictatorship and Imperial Ambition," *Journal of Contemporary China* 24, no. 96 (2015): 1032-47; Jeremy Page, "Why China Is Turning Back to Confucius," *The Wall Street Journal*, 20 September, 2015; Heike Holbig and Bruce Gilley, "Reclaiming Legitimacy in China," *Politics & Policy* 38, no. 3 (2010): 395-422.

consolidate its political and social cohesion through ideological reformulation, popular consent and national identity-building, as the follow section explains.

Overall, the role of Chinese traditional culture in the building of national cohesion depends on how the political and intellectual elites evaluate its refunctioning in the changing internal and external environment. Its role should not be taken for granted in the building of national cohesion, as the history of nation-building in the early 20th century demonstrates. Nowadays, it seems that the now highly regarded Chinese traditional culture that is described as an embodiment of *Chineseness*, mainly in reference to the Chinese world outlook, a Chinese unique identity and pragmatic attitude towards cultural assimilation,[67] has more to do with the current Chinese nation-building and state-making. Therefore, a further elaboration on the links between cultural soft power campaigns and national cohesion-building in the 21st century is in order. The role of propaganda system, as a result, ought to be given greater attention. The logical connection between the propaganda system, cultural soft power campaigns, national cohesion-building and target audiences of this political project, is summarized in Figure 6-1.

Figure 6–1: The Propaganda System, National Cohesion-building and Cultural Soft Power Campaigns

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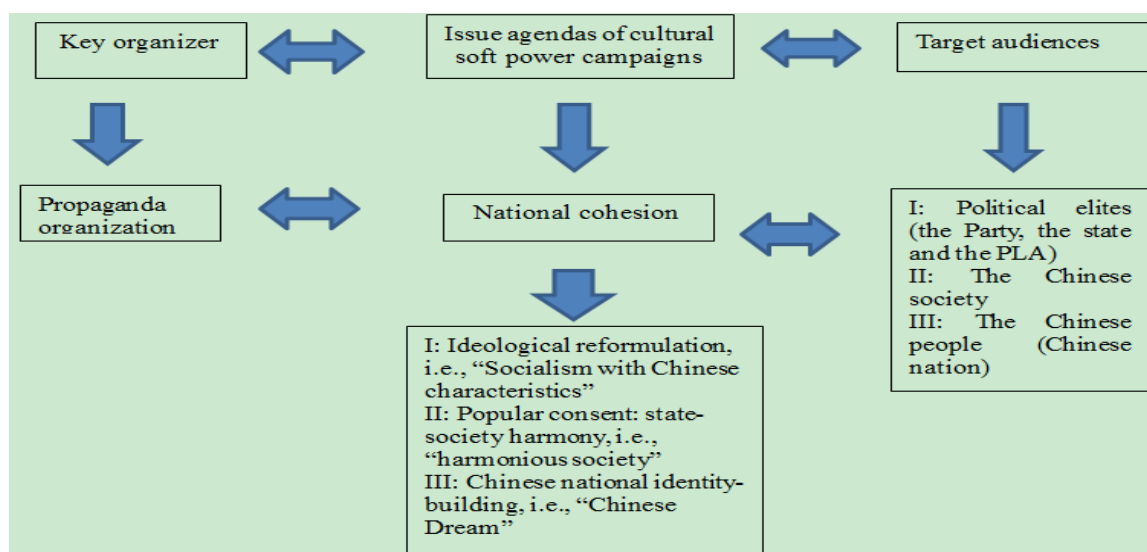
[67] Guo, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity under Reform*, 125.

Notes: " ↓ "   means a direct reference, and "↔" refers to the two-way interactions: One way for the key organizer to organize and oversee the specific campaigns towards the target audiences, and another way refers to the feedback from the target audiences.

Source: made by the author

National Cohesion, the Propaganda System and Cultural Soft Power

As previously noted, China's cultural soft power campaigns are supposed to enhance the building of national cohesion. The crucial role of Chinese culture in the building of national cohesion is closely linked to the micro-aspects of culture mainly in reference to (1) art and literature; (2) philosophical and social science studies including the Sinicization of Marxism—the adaptation of Marxism into a Chinese context; (3) mass media and publications; and (4) public cultural facilities (such as museums, libraries, art galleries, and memorial halls) and popular entertainment. Although culture in this vein is not necessarily subject to the guiding ideology of Marxism in practice, it is integral to the CCP's ideological reformulation. As Sun Yan observes:

> "The Chinese concern for ideological and conceptual adaption is related to the national search for identity and resurrection that has faced the nation since its confrontation with the West in the last century [the 19th century]. Not incidentally, the reconception of socialism is frequently linked with the question of 'cultural reconstruction'—the reconstruction of Chinese cultural values—in academic and political discussion."[68]

Due to the significant role of culture in the ideological reformulation of Marxism, it is treated seriously by the propaganda authorities. The emphasis placed on "culture" by the party-state for China's soft power campaigns, therefore, signifies the "visible hand" of the propaganda system. Research findings confirm that the propaganda authority plays a leading role in conducting and overseeing China's soft power campaigns domestically and internationally. Therefore, the question of how the Chinese

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[68] Yan Sun, *The Chinese Reassessment of Socialism, 1976-1992* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 18.

government has capitalized on cultural soft power to promote national cohesion should start with a brief introduction of China's propaganda system.

The role, features and power of China's propaganda system

Early studies have documented the central role of propaganda authorities in the broader CCP "control system" that seeks to win the hearts and minds of the Chinese people.[69] The party-state's utilization of propaganda embodies both a general feature of propaganda as it is commonly understood, and its uniqueness in the Chinese political and historical context. In general, CCP's propaganda theories and practices do not only draw on external experiences and lessons from other regimes—either authoritarian regimes (such as the Soviet Union) or Western democratic regimes—but also adopt instructive experiences from the imperial and the Nationalist Chinese government.[70] As a result, China's propaganda system acts as a common form of constitutive power, similar to other propaganda system in different countries and various periods, exerted to "transmit social and political values in the hope of affecting people's thinking, emotions and thereby behavior".[71] However, the CCP's propaganda system has had Chinese characteristics throughout its evolution. That is, China's propaganda system in the first three decades of PRC was heavily influenced, albeit not always, by Mao's ideological preference of uninterrupted revolution and his paramount power. Relentless "thought reform" (*sixiang gaizao*) aiming for shaping the people's revolutionary consciousness was driven by continuous political mass movement that were commanded by Mao.[72] China's propaganda system in post-Mao era has been struggling to adapt to, and even control, the rising commercialization of mass media due to the globalization of Information and Communications Technology (CIT).[73] The evolution of Chinese

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[69] Shambaugh, "China's Propaganda System: Institutions, Processes and Efficacy," 26-7.

[70] Ibid., 26; Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*, chapter 3.

[71] Peter Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917-1925* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 4.

[72] Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966); Edney, *The Globalization of Chinese Propaganda*, 23-4.

[73] Daniel C. Lynch, *Media, Politics, and 'Thought Work' in Reformed China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); Ashley Esarey, "Cornering the Market: State Strategies for Controlling China's Commerical Media," *Asian Perspective* 29, no. 4 (2005): 37-83.

propaganda system in post-Mao era, to some extent, epitomizes the broader processes of CCP's "atrophy" on one hand, and "adaption" on the other, as Shambaugh correctly points out.[74]

Apart from the role and features of China's propaganda system, its status within the political system deserves further attention. The power of propaganda system within the Chinese political system is by no means fixed. However, analysts observe that the propaganda system has increasingly gained ascendancy thanks to its bureaucratic expansion during the reform period, when most of bureaucratic apparatus were relatively streamlined.[75] Its power has been further consolidated in the post-1989 Tiananmen Square Incident period, since propaganda and thought work were highlighted by the central leadership as the lifeblood of the CCP, and supposed to be used to reclaim its political legitimacy and hold on power.[76] Nowadays, the powerful influence of the propaganda system manifests in its sprawling bureaucratic establishment extending into almost all areas related to the production, dissemination and the consumption of information (see Figure 6-2). According to one CCP publication, the extensive scope monitored by the propaganda authorities includes:

> "newspaper offices, radio stations, television stations, publishing house, magazines, and other news and media organs; universities, secondary schools, elementary schools, and other vocational education, specialized education, cadre training, and other educational organizations; musical troupes, theatrical troupes, film production studios, cinemas, drama theatres, clubs, and other cultural organs, literature and art troupes, and cultural amusement parks; cultural palaces, libraries, memorial halls, exhibition halls, museums, and other cultural facilities and commemoration exhibition facilities." [77] [Author translation]

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[74] Shambaugh, *China's Communist Party: Atrophy and Adaptation*.
[75] Zhao, *Communication in China: Political Economy, Power and Conflict*, 22-3.
[76] Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*, 1.
[77] *Zhongguo Gongchandang Jianshe Dazidian 1921–1991 [A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of the CCP]* (Chengdu: Sichuan Renmin Chubanshe [Sichuan People's Publishing House], 1992), 676.

Above all, everything about culture, education, information, communication and thought work is officially under the purview of propaganda authorities in China. According to Zhao, China's propaganda system is a "pervasive regime of coercive, regulatory, bureaucratic, technological, and normative power that penetrate every facet of Chinese public communication."[78] The propaganda authorities, without exception, control China's current cultural soft power campaigns.

With such an extensive area of responsibility, this propaganda system, of which the CPD is the core, is also empowered to directly lead and indirectly guide a large segment of bureaucratic organs across the Party, the state and PLA. Significantly, the propaganda system sits on the top level of political hierarchy. That is, the overall propaganda system is directly under the leadership of a senior leader who is generally a member of the PSC and a key member of the CCP Propaganda and Thought Work Leading Group and the Foreign Propaganda Leading Group. To sum up, CPD is a key part of "control cartel" that constitutes the "linchpin of party power".[79] Therefore, the following sections will examine the role of the propaganda system in translating cultural soft power campaigns to the national cohesion-building.

The building of national cohesion is a key concern of China's propaganda system for the current domestic soft power campaigns. Ideological reformulation, the maintenance of popular consent and national identity-building are three major agendas of national cohesion-building, which targets different audiences including political elites, the Chinese society and the Chinese people. The following sections will detail the link between the propaganda system, national cohesion-building and China's cultural soft power campaigns, particularly in reference to the aforementioned agendas.

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[78] Zhao, *Communication in China: Political Economy, Power and Conflict*, 20.
[79] Susan L. Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower*, 83-4.

Figure 6–2: China's Domestic Propaganda System
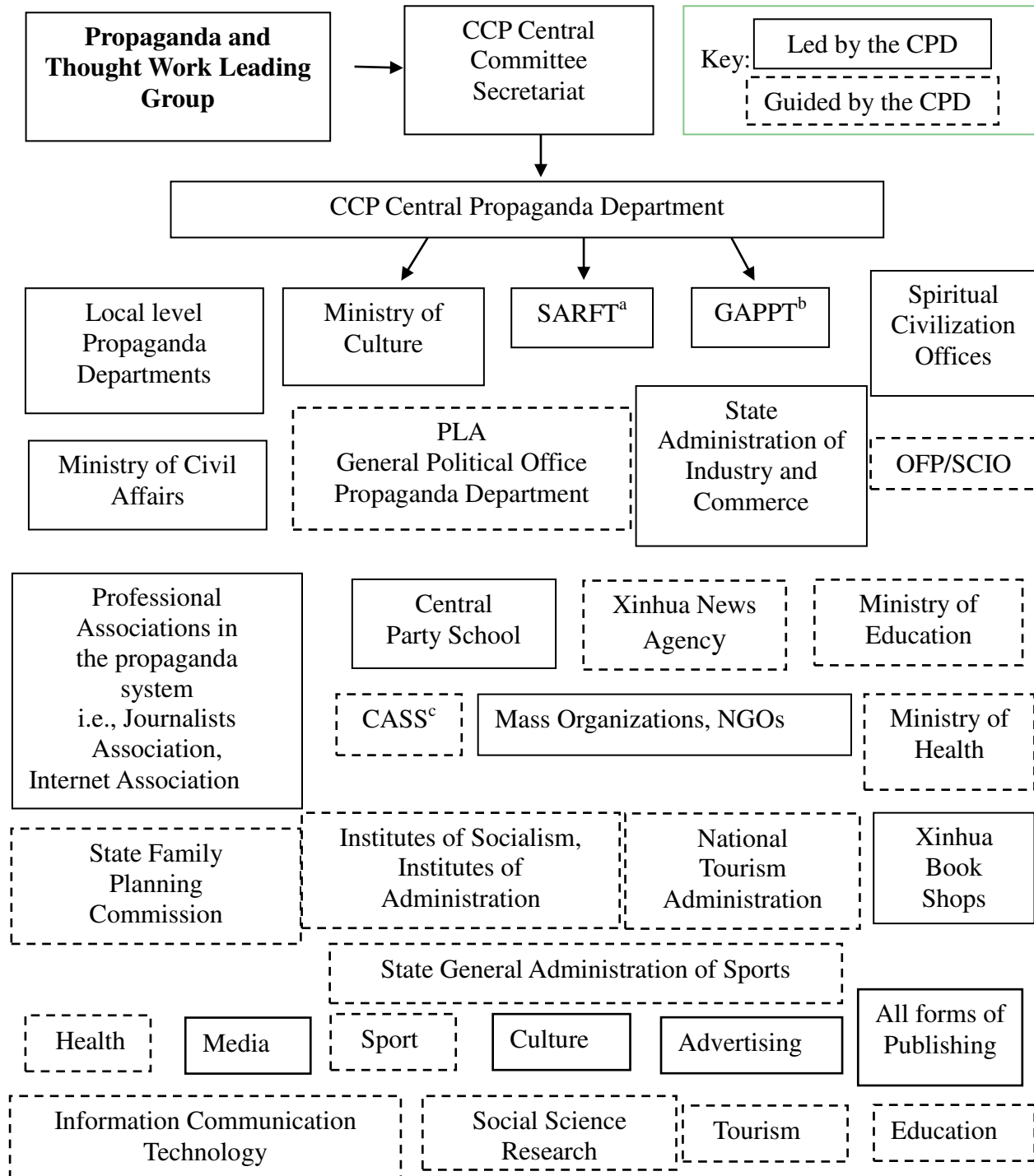
The third tier of this chart consists of the sectors of Chinese society that are regarded as being engaged in propaganda and thought work.

[a b] In March 2013, the State Council announced that SARTF and GAPP emerged into a new body called the General Administration of Press and Publication, Radio, Film, and Television (SAPPRFT).

[c] Provincial Academies of Social Science are under the direct leadership of provincial propaganda departments.

Sources: Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*, 11.

Ideological reformulation falling into the orbit of the party-state's leadership plays a crucial role in coalescing ideological consensus among political elites across the Party, the state and the PLA.[80] Ideology in this sense is considered as a dynamic rather than a static and rigid system in producing meaning and values for the justification of dominant power.[81] Therefore, the Marxist ideology logically need *not* to be a monistic and immutable whole that resists ideological reform in the face of ever-changing situations and challenges in the real world, *nor* completely changed as the demise of socialism in Soviet Union and East European countries seems to make us believe.[82] Ideological reformulation does not naturally and necessarily lead to the cohesion-building among the political elites. For example, as the ups and downs of "three represents" theory since its first introduction by Jiang in 2001 clearly demonstrates, the official ideological reformulation may be sophisticatedly manipulated for strengthening the authority of a top leader, and it may worsen factional politics and the intra-party conflicts.[83] However, the formal ideological reformulation concerning the redefinition of Marxism or socialism, which is supposed to build consensus between reform-minded leaders and less-reformed minded ones, should not be discredited. In short, the capacity for reformulating ideology demonstrates the CCP's institutive power in defining and redefining ideas, discourse, concepts and rhetoric for the justification of policy changes, in accordance with the new situations without compromising the unity and legitimacy of the CCP.[84]

The central leadership in post-Mao China has been learning to develop a "middle path"

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[80] Wenli Yu, "Gaige Kaifang Yu Shehui Zhuyi Hexie Shehui Yishi Xingtai De Goujian [Reform, Openning-up and the Ideological Reconstruction in the Socialist Harmonious Society]," *Beijing Daxue Xeubao [Journal of Peking University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)]* 46, no. 1 (2009): 77-84; Gunter Schubert, "One-Party Rule and the Question of Legitimacy in Contemporary China: Preliminary Thoughts on Setting up a New Research Agenda," *Journal of Contemporary China* 17, no. 54 (2008): 195-6.

[81] Kang Liu, *Globalization and Cultural Trends in China*, 53-4.

[82] Sun Yan, "Ideology and the Demise or Maintenance of Soviet-Type Regimes Perspectives on the Chinese Case," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 28, no. 3 (1995): 319-38.

[83] Bruce J. Dickson, "Whom Does the Party Represent? From 'Three Revolutionary Classes' to 'Three Represents'," *American Asian Review* 21, no. 1 (2003): 1-24; Jinghan Zeng, *The Chinese Communist Party's Capacity to Rule: Ideology, Legitimacy and Party Cohesion* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), chapter 5.

[84] Li Xing, "Why Is the Chinese Communist Party Able to Sustain Its Hegemony in Era of Great Transformation," in *The Rise of China and the Capitalist World Order*, ed. Li Xing (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2010), 197.

of ideological reformulation to balance different political factions within the Party in order to maximize the unity of political elites. On one hand, the Marxist ideology has been gradually reformed in confronting the resistance of the Marxist old guard, by producing a persuasive reinterpretation of historical and dialectical materialism, particularly in reference to the ideological justification for the substantial economic reform. Yet on the other hand, the central leadership actively repressed the political and ideological reforms advocated by liberal forces, and drew a "red line" according to the canonization of "Four Cardinal Principles" (FCPs). The FCPs include keeping to the socialist road, upholding the dictatorship of the proletariat, the leadership of the CCP and the Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.[85] This pragmatic mode of ideological reformulation is epitomized under the banner of "socialism with Chinese characteristics", and specifically encoded in a series of innovative ideological discourses, including the "socialist market economy", "primary stage of socialism", "three presents", "harmonious society" and "scientific concept of development" and the "Chinese Dream". The dual function of ideological reformulation is further reinforced and indoctrinated through the training of mid-career cadres according to the party school system that is directly led by the propaganda system.[86] More importantly, the so-called "politburo collective study sessions" regularly convened since 2002 provides a first pulpit to strengthen ideological consensus among the central leadership.[87]

During the process of ideological reformulation, the party-state is inclined to utilize propaganda system to actively disseminate the official discourses to shape opinion and set agendas on one hand, and suppress unwanted and challenging discourses at odds with the discursive hegemony and political legitimacy of the CCP on the other. This two-pronged strategy of propaganda is also applied to the current cultural soft power campaigns, particularly in regard to the revival of traditional culture and the rediscovery of Confucianism. It approximates what Pang describes as the "two lines control model".

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[85] Sun, *The Chinese Reassessment of Socialism, 1976-1992*.

[86] David Shambaugh, "Training China's Political Elite: The Party School System," *The China Quarterly* 196(2008): 827-44; Frank N. Pieke, *The Good Communist: Elite Training and State Building in Today's China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[87] Yiyi Lu, "The Collective Study Sessions of the Politburo: A Multipurpose Tool of China's Central Leadership" (Nottingham: China Policy Institute, the University of Nottingham, 2007).

That is, the party-state issued two general "guiding lines"—substituting the account of Confucianism with ambiguous traditional culture discourse and incorporating Confucian elements into the official ideology—for lower education authorities. Yet it maintained a strict "bottom line" to prevent the revival of Confucianism from challenging the official ideology and the CCP leadership in any event.[88]

The propaganda system accords considerable attention to the role of Chinese traditional culture in renewing the guiding ideology in order to enhance the cohesion-building among the political elites. On one hand, Chinese traditional culture has assumed greater importance in the current wave of ideological reformulation in relation to the socialism with Chinese characteristics. The former president Hu, in a speech to cadres training at the Central Party School, stressed the significance of "renewing traditional Marxist thought and reviving ancient Chinese culture, including Confucianism".[89] In this sense, both Socialism and the Chinese traditional culture are complementary to each other, since they may potentially enhance the national cohesion-building among the political elites in the 21st century. As a result, some specific measures had been developed. For example, the Chinese leadership's facilitating of research in philosophy and the social sciences as a key part of China's cultural soft power campaigns, has been effectively implemented by the propaganda system. The illustrative example is the growing trend in the past decade of state-backed research projects in favor of cultural nationalism, particularly regarding history rewriting, cultural politics and communication. These research projects are approved and sponsored by the National Planning Office for Philosophy and Social Science (NPOPSS), directly under the leadership of CPD.[90] Another good example is the growing institutionalization of Chinese traditional cultural education (neo-Confucianism in particular) for political elites within the party school system.[91]

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[88] Qin Pang, "The 'Two Lines Control Model' in China's State and Society Relations: Central State's Management of Confucian Revival in the New Century," *International Journal of China Studies* 5, no. 3 (2014): 627-55.

[89] Quotation from Janette Ai, *Politics and Traditional Culture: The Political Use of Traditions by the Party-State in Contemporary China* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2015), 108.

[90] Holbig, "Shifting Ideologics of Research Funding: The CPC's National Planning Office for Philosophy and Social Sciences," 13-32.

[91] Sébastien Billioud and JoËl Thoraval, *The Sage and the People: The Confucian Revival in China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), chapter 2.

On the other hand, Confucian conservatism has been suppressed according to the guidance of CPD, since its circulation may undermine the authority of Marxist ideology. The party-state has cast doubts on, and warned against, ideological Confucianism since the 1980s because of its potential risk in breaking the ideological continuity of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, when the Confucianism discourse has gradually extended itself from an academic articulation to a focus of political debate. For example, The party-state and its spokesperson strongly criticized and even condemned some radical proposals of ideological Confucianism, such as "establishing a Confucian authoritarian regime", "Confucianizing the CCP" and "peacefully transforming the CCP through Confucianism", as strongly advocated by leading scholars such as Jiang Qing and Kang Xiaoguang.[92] The abrupt disappearance of Confucius' statue three months after its prominent display at the northeast corner of Tiananmen Square adds another footnote to the CCP's two-pronged strategy of tapping neo-Confucianism to serve its current ideological reformulation on one hand, but restricting its preeminence on the other if being seen as a threat to the official ideology of Marxism.[93] Therefore, despite continuous efforts from the party-state to synthesize Marxism and Confucianism in reality, it is not surprising that the discourse of Confucianism (in reference to the Chinese character "儒") was not mentioned in the key official document such as *Outline of Cultural Development during the 11th (2006-10)* and *the 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-15)*.[94]

Overall, the fine traditions of Chinese culture, neo-Confucianism in particular, have been carefully incorporated by the propaganda authorities into the current tide of ideological reformulation in conjunction with the surge of cultural nationalism.[95] After all, the fine traditions of Chinese culture show a comparatively high level of cohesion

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[92] Jiawen Ai, "Two Sides of One Coin: The Party's Attitude toward Confucianism in Contemporary China," *Journal of Contemporary China* 18, no. 61 (2009): 698-701.

[93] Andrew Jacobs, "Confucius Statue Vanishes near Tiananmen Square," *The New York Times*, April 22, 2011.

[94] Pang, "The 'Two Lines Control Model' in China's State and Society Relations: Central State's Management of Confucian Revival in the New Century," 637-8; Billioud, "Confucianism, 'Cultural Tradition', and Official Discourse in China at the Start of the New Century," 60-1.

[95] Elizabeth J. Perry, *Cultural Governance in Contemporary China: 'Re-Orienting' Party Propaganda*.

and low degree of contestation and uncertainty.[96] Therefore, the synthesis of Marxism and the eminent Chinese traditional culture has become a defining feature of China's cultural soft power campaigns. However, the inherent tension between the orthodox Marxists and the Confucian conservative complicates the current ideological reformulation and the building of cohesion among the political elites. That is why the propaganda system exerts its institutional power to promote the revival of fine traditions of Chinese culture on one hand, and repress the Confucian conservatism on the other. This two-pronged strategy may continue to function in the foreseeable future.

National cohesion, harmonious society and soft power campaigns

Apart from the ideological reformulation, maintaining popular consent is another key agenda of national cohesion-building and soft power campaigns from the perspective of the party-state. Therefore, it is important for the party-state to devote special efforts to establish a harmonious relationship between the state and the Chinese society. That is why the political agenda of building a harmonious society gained ascendancy during the Hu-Wen administration.

The political agenda of harmonious society does not claim the absence of social conflicts and tensions as a result of the party-state's strategic focus on economic development. Rather, it is the rising social conflicts and challenges that motivated Hu to put forward this political agenda.[97] The political agenda of a harmonious society focuses on a specific field of social development related to the state-society relationship, and this field is associated with three other key fields including economic, political and cultural development. In this sense, building a harmonious society is not only a long-term socialist strategic blueprint, but is also a key step to achieve the all-out construction of a well-off society that is expected to fulfill in 2020.[98] Therefore, an

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[96] Edney, *The Globalization of Chinese Propaganda*, 116-21.

[97] The CCP Central Committee, "Zhonggong Zhongyang Guanyu Goujian Shehui Zhuyi Hexie Shehui Ruogan Zhongda Wenti De Jueding [Decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on Several Important Issues for Building a Harmonious Socialist Society]," accessed October 31, 2016. http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2006-10/18/content_5218639.htm.

[98] Chinese Academy of Social Science Research Team, "Nuli Goujian Shehui Zhuyi Hexie Shehui [Striving to Build a

exhaustive list of policy proposals, such as rural development, regional development, employment, education, public health, environmental protection, the legal and administrative system reform, taxation, fiscal policies, and the improvement of social security system, the consolidation of party leadership and the further development of cultural industry, were announced in the Decision of the Central Committee of CCP in 2006.

These policy proposals are summarized by another influential discourse—the "scientific outlook of development"—that was also advocated by Hu. The scientific outlook of development was broken down into "five pairs of coordination" (*wuge tongchou*) in an attempt to address social disparities found in present day China. These pairs include rural versus urban, coastal region versus central and western region, economic versus social development, human versus nature, and domestic development versus openness to the world.[99] The first three pairs of coordination are directly related to the national cohesion-building.

The political agenda of building a harmonious society thus seeks to pursue a more sustainable and comprehensive modernization without changing the status quo of one-party rule. Society in this sense is subject to, rather than independent from, the state. In other words, a socialist harmonious society is not a Western civil society.[100] Huang and Ding even argue that the underlying rationale of developing a harmonious society fundamentally contradicts a pluralist thought of civil society where different interest groups are contending. They also assert that the political agenda of harmonious society reflects the contradiction between Confucian values and the prevailing Western political values of liberal democracy and rule of law.[101]

Harmonious Socialist Society]," *Zhongguo Shehui Kexue [Social Sciences in China]*, no. 3 (2005): 7.

[99] The CCP Central Committee, "Zhonggong Zhongyang Guanyu Wanshan Shehui Zhuyi Shichang Jingji Tizhi Ruogan Wenti De Jueyi [Decision of the CCP Central Committee on Several Issues in Perfecting the Socialist Market Econom]," Accessed 31 October, 2016.
http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/64168/64569/65411/4429165.html.

[100] Kin-Man Chan, "Harmonious Society," in *International Encyclopedia of Civil Society*, ed. Helmut K. Anheier and Stefan Toepler (Berlin and Arlington: Springer Science & Business Media, 2009), 821-5.

[101] Yanzhong Huang and Sheng Ding, "Dragon's Underbelly: An Analysis of China's Soft Power," *East Asia* 23, no. 4 (2006): 31-2.

The boundary between a socialist harmonious society and civil society is relatively sharp and clear since the former is state-centered and may even require harmonizing the society by the propaganda authorities in the form of maintaining social stability. Social stability from the perspective of the party-state mainly refers to the absence of challenges for the CCP's leadership, and a favorable environment where the state-led economic reform can continue without making too much political changes.[102] Given the building of a harmonious society requires the media, art and literature, social science studies to shape a positive and favorable public opinion for the social stability, the propaganda machine was set in motion accordingly.[103] In so doing, the propaganda authorities actively promulgated the official narratives of harmonious society and social stability on one hand, and quickly harmonized the unwanted and dangerous rhetoric against the top-down building of harmonious society on the other. As a result, The famous homonymic transformation of "harmony" (*hexié* 和谐) into "river crab" (*hexiè* 河蟹) offers a vivid illustration of cynical attitudes against the dual functions of propaganda system in this regard.[104]

Despite the coercive harmonization of Chinese society by the propaganda system when social stability is threatened on the party-state's part, it is important to point out that the party-state also took into a serious account of the popular consent without compromising the one-party rule. A series of policy proposals may demonstrate the CCP's concern of maintaining the state-society coherence through the sustainable economic development and gradual political-social reform to shore up its legitimacy among the Chinese people.[105] In this sense, building a harmonious society was

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[102] Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, 226.

[103] The CCP Central Committee, "Zhonggong Zhongyang Guanyu Goujian Shehui Zhuyi Hexie Shehui Ruogan Zhongda Wenti De Jueding [Decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on Several Important Issues for Building a Harmonious Socialist Society]".

[104] Astrid Nordin and Lisa Richaud, "Subverting Official Language and Discourse in China? Type River Crab for Harmony," *China Information* 28, no. 1 (2014): 47-67.

[105] For example, see Schubert, "One-Party Rule and the Question of Legitimacy in Contemporary China: Preliminary Thoughts on Setting up a New Research Agenda," 191-204; Andrew J. Nathan, "Authoritarian Resilience," *Journal of democracy* 14, no. 1 (2003): 6-17; Yongnian Zheng and Liang Fook Lye, "Political Legitimacy in Reform China: Between Economic Performance and Democratization," *in Legitimacy: Ambiguities of Political Success or Failure in East and Southeast Asia*, 183-214.

supposed to add credibility to the state's soft power. Compared to the Chinese Dream, the political agenda of harmonious society seems to be relatively specific and operational as it was substantiated by a wide range of policy proposals. Furthermore, while the Chinese Dream is inherently abstract and its political implications are difficult to examine, the political implications of harmonious society are relatively clear and can be judged according to the objective evaluation of Hu's policy effectiveness. Suffice it to say that, Hu's political legacy may be undermined if such a concrete initiative of harmonious society finally cannot be fully realized.[106]

Overall, the political agenda of harmonious society manifests the Hu-Wen administration's pragmatism to address the state-society relationship in a relatively soft way.[107] It is right to point out that the socialist harmonious society is different from the Western model of civil society in that the status-quo of one-party rule remains unchallenged. However, it also demonstrates that the CCP has continuously facilitated a series of economic and social-political reform to co-opt the Chinese people, even in face of heavy criticism from the ideological old guard. Although the propaganda system used its institutional power to harmonize society, it cannot discredit the party-state's attempt to strengthen the cohesion between the state and society through the utilization of its soft power. Arguably, soft power is supposed to play an increasing role in the state-led building of national cohesion when the party-state has increasingly transformed its coercive state apparatus into a systemic regulatory body of governance since the 1990s. There is no reason to suggest that this trend will be reversed. After all, the longstanding political legitimacy is essentially based on the rightness of the state that is heavily reliant on the exercise of soft power, rather than on the abuse of coercive power.

National cohesion, PEM and soft power campaigns

Having examined the role of ideological reformulation and popular consent in the state-led building of national cohesion along with soft power campaigns, I will turn to

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[106] Cheng Li and Eve Cary, "The Last Year of Hu's Leadership: Hu's to Blame? " *China Brief* 14, no. 23 (2011): 7-10.
[107] Yongnian Zheng and Sow Keat Tok, "'Harmonious Society' and "Harmonious Word': China's Policy Discourse under Hu Jintao" (Nottingham: China Policy Institute, 2007), 12.

the role of PEM in this regard. Simply put, the PEM bridges the recent cultural soft power campaigns and the national cohesion-building. On one hand, the PEM since the 1990s has sought to strengthen cohesion, unity and the rejuvenation of the Chinese people according to the CCP's leadership. This political agenda remains a key concern of the party-state in the 21st century. On the other, various instruments and resources have been fully utilized to serve the state-led PEM. There are including national patriotic education, mass entertainment (patriotic movies, songs even video games), arts and literature, media and the internet, patriotic education bases (museums, memorial halls and protected historic relics), and patriotic "red" tourism regarding the heritage sites of the Chinese communist revolution.[108] Given these instruments and resources have also been utilized by the propaganda authorities to promote Chinese cultural soft power since the start of new century, the domestic soft power campaigns are inextricably linked to the PEM. Both of them seek to enhance national cohesion and unity led by the party-state. As usual, the propaganda system significantly matters in this regard.

Historically, patriotism—"the degree of love for and pride in one's nation"[109]—was not a top concern of the CCP before the 1990s. In the first three decades of the PRC, the CCP's political legitimacy was grounded on the revolutionary legacy and Marxism rather than patriotism. The term "patriotism" was loosely used with incoherent connotations in the *People's Daily* during the 1950-1979, which seemed to mean nothing more than a political slogan. During the Cultural Revolution, patriotism was even discarded as "bourgeois ideology".[110] The importance of patriotism was rediscovered by the party-state during the 1980s in order to renew the socialist ideology

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[108] For example, see Yiping Li, Zhi Yi Hu, and Chao Zhi Zhang, "Red Tourism: Sustaining Communist Identity in a Rapidly Changing China," *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 8, no. 1-2 (2010): 101-19; Edward Vickers, "Museums and Nationalism in Contemporary China," *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 37, no. 3 (2007): 365-82; Simon Shen and Shaun Breslin, eds., *Online Chinese Nationalism and China's Bilateral Relations* (Lanham and Boulder: Lexington Books, 2010); Hongping Annie Nie, "Gaming, Nationalism, and Ideological Work in Contemporary China," *Journal of Contemporary China* 22, no. 81 (2013): 499-517; Zhihong Gao, "When Nationalism Goes to the Market: The Case of Chinese Patriotic Songs," *Journal of Macromarketing* 35, no. 4 (2015): 473-88.

[109] Rick Kosterman and Seymour Feshbach, "Toward a Measure of Patriotic and Nationalistic Attitudes," *Political Psychology* 10, no. 2 (1989): 271.

[110] Xueliang Ding, *The Decline of Communism in China: Legitimacy Crisis 1977-1989* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 164.

for the justification of pushing forward economic reform. However, the patriotic education was not systematically institutionalized mainly because the party-state overvalued the economic performance legitimacy, and overlooked its simmering ideological crisis during that period.[111] The further institutionalization of PEM was launched in full swing after the 1989 as the central leadership realized that the political indoctrination of the *younger* generation is crucial for the CCP to reclaim its political legitimacy.[112] Accordingly, the PEM has become a cornerstone of spiritual civilization work, and been required to be pursued unswervingly and tirelessly, according to *The Outline for Conducting Patriotic Education* that was issued by the CPD in 1994.[113]

The state-led PEM centers on two dominant themes in reference to China's unique national conditions and its century of humiliation. The defining aspects of Chinese national conditions generally involves following "facts". First, "China is a beautiful and resource-rich but overpopulated country". Second, the Chinese nation has "the long history, flourishing culture, and glorious tradition". Third, "the Chinese people have made the right choice of socialism". Fourth, "China is still at the primary stage of socialism". Finally yet importantly, "socialist China strives to follow the road to reform and opening up.[114] Although the official accounts of national conditions may vary in different contexts, their implications are consistent: liberal democracy is not applicable to China.

Meanwhile, the party-state replaced the official Maoist "victor narrative" with a new "victimization narrative" through the rewriting of Chinese history.[115] Consequently, the century of humiliation has become a master narrative of Chinese modern history so far.[116] The emphasis on China's century of humiliation raises the awareness of the

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[111] Luyang Zhou, "Renmin Ribao 'Aiguo Zhuyi' De Lishi Bianqian [The Historical Changing Meanings of 'Patriotism' in *People's Daily*]," *Ershiyi Shiji [The Twenty-First Century]* 141, no. 1 (2014): 45-56.

[112] Suisheng Zhao, "A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31, no. 3 (1998): 289.

[113] The original text in Chinese sees the following website: http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2005-03/16/content_2705546.htm, Accessed 11 September, 2013.

[114] Quotations from Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, 223-5.

[115] Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy*, chapter 5.

[116] William A. Callahan, "National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism," *Alternatives* 29, no. 2 (2004): 199-218.

Chinese people to cherish and safeguard territorial integrity, national unity and cohesion. Therefore, ethnic nationalism, which either calls for Han chauvinism or self-determination and independence of Chinese ethnic minorities, has been officially denounced. The party-state's official standing is that patriotism is by no means parochial nationalism.[117] As a result, the party-state's request for the loyalty to the Chinese state and Chinese nation has been widely propagated.[118] The effectiveness of PEM comes down to its systematic institutionalization according to the institutional and constitutive power of propaganda system: mass mobilization across the nation, institutional mobilization and the long-term socialization of patriotic content and discourse penetrating every facet of people's daily lives.[119] Overall, the CCP's rewriting history of China's century of humiliation seeks to glorify the party, strengthen the identification with the Chinese nation, and justify the CCP's one-party rule.[120]

The official narrative of the century of humiliation is integral to the making of China's negative soft power as mentioned above. However, there is a rising trend that China's positive soft power also influences the undertaking of PEM and the building of national cohesion, particularly in the period of the Xi-Li administration. Simply put, the party-state has positively defined China in terms of Chinese path, Chinese theory and Chinese political system, in order to boost national confidence, pride and cohesion among the Chinese people, without necessarily followed by the negative definition of the others.

As previously described, the PEM has been driven to strengthen patriotism by providing major patriotic contents of national conditions and China's century of humiliation. The historical content regarding China's century of humiliation through the negative depictions of Western and Japanese imperialists significantly consolidates the national

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[117] For example, see Jiang Zemin, "Patriotism and the Mission of Chinese Intellectuals." Accessed November 4, 2016. http://www.reformdata.org/content/19900503/5558.html

[118] Ane Bislev and Xing Li, "Conceptualizing the Cultural and Political Facets of 'Chinese Nationalism' in an Era of China's Global Rise," *International Communication of Chinese Culture* 1, no. 1-2 (2014): 21-33.

[119] Zheng Wang, "National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China," 797-9.

[120] Ibid., 784.

cohesion, as it was evidenced by a series of protest against the Japanese or Western government(s). However, this kind of anti-foreign nationalism derived from the PEM has risked producing a belligerent attitude of China's self-claimed righteousness against other countries, and challenges CCP's capability to control its outburst or to further China's easy engagement with the international society.[121] The PEM in this sense is indeed a double-edged sword for the Chinese government as it can stoke a bottom-up populist nationalism—particularly in reference to the sensitive historical issues such as Chinese sovereignty and territory integrity—beyond the control of the party-state.

The rediscovery of fine traditions of Chinese culture and values, the Chinese way of thinking and the Chinese model along with the cultural soft power campaigns, has elevated the positive side of Chinese "self" for national cohesion-building. It is in this context that we can see a more positive attitude of seeking more power, prosperity and international influence underlying the current narrative of Chinese Dream, in comparison to the past highlights on the grievance and humiliation.[122] The domestic propaganda of Beijing Consensus, as investigated in chapter 4, adds relevance to China's positive soft power and its implications for the national cohesion-building. Although the negative account of Washington Consensus is unavoidable, the positive implications of Beijing Consensus for the national pride and confidence for China's future development under the leadership of CCP ought to be given greater attention. Additionally, the warning against Western "peaceful evolution" goes hand-in-hand with the proactive propaganda of national confidence in the Chinese path, Chinese theory and Chinese political system. Above all, the party-state has intended to reduce the overreliance on the negative account of others for the national cohesion-building through PEM, and started to emphasize on the positive definition of China by evoking the national confidence, spirit and pride for the Chinese path, Chinese theory and Chinese political system.

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[121] Gerrit W. Gong, *Memory and History in East and Southeast Asia* (Washington DC: The CSIS Press, 2001), 42.
[122] Zheng Wang, "The Chinese Dream: Concept and Context," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 19, no. 1 (2014): 11.

Conclusion

The building of national cohesion is a key concern of domestic soft power campaigns as it is integrated with national identity-building, state strength, regime security, and the political legitimacy of the CCP leadership. As the ideological reformulation, the policy initiative of harmonious society, and the PEM are key agendas of national cohesion-building, it is hardly surprising that the state-led soft power campaigns have attached significance to these agendas. A number of key conclusions flow from the foregoing analyses.

First, the propaganda system plays a significant role in driving China's domestic soft power campaigns for the national cohesion-building in light of its institutional and constitutive power. On one hand, the propaganda system propagates official articulations in order to shape public opinion, set agenda and control the construction of national identity. On the other, it makes efforts to suppress unwanted discourses that are considered a threat to the CCP's discursive hegemony and its political legitimacy. Second, the party-state pragmatically appropriates some elements of cultural nationalism to reemphasize the *Chineseness* as a solid foundation for the nation-building, while keeping alert to the Confucian conservatism that has potential risk in undermining the official ideology of Marxism. The synthesis of fine traditions of Chinese culture and Marxism embodies the party-state's efforts at the ideological reformulation, and becomes a defining feature of China's cultural soft power campaigns. Third, the policy agenda of harmonious society was proposed to strengthen the cohesion-building between the state and society. Although the propaganda system used its institutional power to harmonize society, it cannot discredit the party-state's efforts to exert soft power to strengthen the cohesion-building in this regard. Last, the instruments and resources for the PEM and cultural soft power campaigns are highly overlapping. Both of them are mobilized by the propaganda system to enhance the state-centered construction of national identity and the building of national cohesion for the Chinese people. Overall, China's domestic soft power campaigns are intended to enhance its

nation-building and state-making in the 21st century.

Conclusion

This thesis examined why and how Chinese policy-makers have utilized soft power since the beginning of the 21st century. Current scholarship sheds light on various motivations behind China's state-led soft power campaigns and the specific way of its utilization. However, much of the existing analyses have applied the Western conceptualization of soft power and its general experience of political utilization to explore China's soft power campaigns. The principal intention of this thesis was to understand how China conceptualizes and applies soft power. As a result, this thesis initially developed four hypotheses and sought to see whether they can be appropriately applied to the continuing evolution of ideas and practices associated with soft power in China, particularly its impact at the domestic level.

I developed four hypotheses, namely, Hypothesis 1 (H1): soft power mainly serves national interests. Hypothesis 2 (H2): soft power is primarily operational in the international arena. Hypothesis 3 (H3): non-state actors are tactically the primary drivers of national soft power campaigns. Hypothesis 4 (H4): the application of soft power, like power in general, is contingent on a specific scope and domain. The scope of power describes who is involved in the power relationship, and the domain of power clarifies which topics or issue-agendas are involved. In so doing, this thesis sought to further clarify the connection between power, soft power and the national interest in order to illuminate the development of four hypotheses mentioned above, and proceed into the empirical testing of these hypotheses via the specific case study of China's soft power campaigns. Therefore, the examination of the driving force behind China's soft power campaigns was supposed to shed light on the utility of the first two hypotheses. Meanwhile, the exploration of China's political application of soft power as a national project was intended to verify the utility of the final two hypotheses.

The verification of these hypotheses by delving into the motivations behind China's soft power campaigns and its political application requires an operational conceptualization

of soft power. Drawing on intellectual insights from the scholarly community in this field of soft power studies, this thesis refined Nye's original conceptual framework and initially developed a three-level conceptualization of soft power: the "power of positive attraction", "institutional power" and "constitutive power". The first level of soft power refers to the positive attraction of culture, values, regimes, and policies directly seen from the outsiders. The power of attraction is positive in a sense that it results in emulation rather than opposition from others. It emerges from either the inherent attractiveness taken for granted by outsiders or its proactive promotion by the actors through persuasion in the form of public diplomacy. The second level of soft power, institutional power, involves the capacity for agenda-setting and institution-building. It enables some players to influence, and even shape the behaviors or circumstances of "socially distant others" through indirect interactions. Constitutive power, the third level of soft power, is generally considered to produce effects on the making of subjectivities or identities through either direct or diffuse constitutive relations. In this sense, the production and reproduction of meaning within social relations through the discourse and knowledge system becomes a key concern of constitutive power. Overall, this conceptual framework is significant because it can help to identify a country's actual use of soft power either through its public verbalization, or via extrapolation and inference based on its actual policy and behavior.

By using this conceptual framework of soft power, this thesis depicted a comprehensive picture of China's soft power campaigns since the beginning of the 21st century. Specifically, the globalization of Confucius Institutes (CIs) and the China Cultural Centers (CCCs) were seen to have been officially promulgated by the Chinese government as a key pillar of its soft power campaigns. The struggle for discursive power via the going-global project of state media was also announced by the Chinese government in a high profile, serving a key component of Chinese soft power. In addition, as this thesis explained and demonstrated, the Chinese government considers cultural exchanges and trade, and the promotion of cultural/creative industries as a significant part of its cultural soft power campaigns. By contrast, China's increasing

role in the agenda-setting and institution-building as a manifestation of its soft power can be only extrapolated and inferred, since the Chinese government has been reluctant to draw attention to this aspect of its overall influence and soft power. The example of the so-called "Beijing Consensus" demonstrated the nuances and multi-dimensional nature of China's soft power campaigns in this regard. On one hand, the Chinese government officially denied exporting the Beijing Consensus. On the other, it has actively popularized this model domestically, and even sophisticatedly transplanted this model through the state-led program of building "Overseas Special Economic Zones" (OSEZs) mainly in the developing countries.

Based on the conceptual framework of soft power developed in this thesis, I then applied the methodological application of analytical eclecticism (the combination of IR realism, liberalism and constructivism) to test these hypotheses via an empirical examination of China's soft power campaigns. Analytical eclecticism was applied in three aspects. First, three key variables—power, institution and identity—were integrated to account for China's soft power campaigns, which further demonstrated that both high and low politics matter in relation to China's soft power campaigns. Second, the liberal international order, the uniqueness of Chinese agency (authoritarian regime) and the process of identity-making domestically and internationally helped elucidate soft power campaigns with Chinese characteristics and their consequent ramification. Third, the integration of international *and* domestic level presented a comprehensive picture of China's soft power campaigns.

This thesis consequently concluded that, first, China's soft power campaigns seek to promote Chinese cultural, economic and political interests rather than international interests or subnational interests. Second, China's soft power campaigns are a "two-level game" as they target both domestic and international audiences. It is not surprising in this sense given that the Chinese government has stressed the significance of integrating both domestic and international levels for making policies. Given the existing conceptualization of soft power focus on how it is employed to promote a

country's foreign policy, China's focus on the domestic dimension of its soft power campaigns is unique. Third, the Chinese government is the dominant driver of China's soft power campaigns. Chinese NGOs, think tanks, social groups and individuals as a whole only play a limited and marginal role during this process, partly for the reason that they cannot behave independently from the Chinese government, and partly because the Chinese government does not know how to get out of the way of civil society to allow this to happen. Finally, the Chinese government devises various schemes to deal with different scopes and domains. That is, the Chinese government differentiates various agendas and target audiences, and considers country-specific preferences and nuanced situations for its implementation. The globalization of CIs, CCCs and Chinese media is instructive, and China's recent grand initiative of "One Belt One Road" (OBOR) and the establishment of AIIB further demonstrate China harnesses the various scopes and domains of soft power. Above all, the examination of the driving force behind China's soft power campaigns confirmed the first hypothesis but proved that the second one is partially correct. In the same way, the exploration of China's political application of soft power as a national project verified the utility of the fourth hypothesis, but invalidated the third one.

Overall, China's state-led soft power campaigns are used to promote political legitimacy, in addition to promoting national interests defined by central decision-makers. The recent conceptualization of soft power with Chinese characteristics and its political application as a national project since the start of the 21st century further epitomizes the Chinese government's grand strategic shift from a passive to a proactive peaceful rise as a global power, or from "keeping a low profile" to "striving for achievement". Soft power was marginalized from the 1980s to the end of 1990s in post-Mao China. At this time, China's grand strategy of peaceful rise was basically passive given that both Deng and Jiang seemed to accommodate American hegemony in an attempt to maintain a favorable environment for China's economic development. Both of them did not demonstrate a political willingness or determination to balance America, particularly for the first post-Cold War decade. The underlying reason is that China's rising economic

power, let alone its military power, was far from capable of competing with the US or its dominance. In this sense, economic development was China's first preoccupation, and political and economic means (such as neighborhood diplomacy, great power diplomacy, regional multilateralism and strategic partnerships) were dominant vehicles in the operation of China's passive peaceful rise. Consequently, the promotion of Chinese soft power in terms of cultural influence, agenda-setting and institution-making as well as discursive power were downplayed by the Chinese government. However, China's soft power deficit captured Hu's attention when he assumed the presidency. Largely, Hu's elevation of soft power to a key political priority and the subsequent "charm offensive" indicated the Chinese government's serious reconsideration of *comprehensive* national power (CNP) and its subtle shift from a passive to a proactive peaceful rise. The significant role of soft power in China's domestic and foreign policy has been further recognized and institutionalized under Xi's leadership as we have seen.

The proactive nature of China's soft power campaigns as a two-level game deserves particular attention. Internationally, soft power has figured significantly in China's CNP, and served as a key strategic means to achieve China's core national interests of seeking wealth, power and status under the US-led international order. Specifically, soft power has been widely utilized by the Chinese government to actively promote cultural/ideological security, reduce cultural trade deficit and facilitate the development of cultural/creative industries, reshape a favorable international image on the basis of its discursive power, and institutionalize its growing economic and political influence through agenda-setting and institution-building. China's remarkable economic growth in the last three-plus decades has set a strong foundation for its proactive soft power campaigns internationally.

China's soft power campaigns also have an important *domestic* component. The analysis of how China's soft power campaigns are informed by domestic concerns is one of this thesis' distinctive contributions. Simply put, the state-led soft power campaigns were intended to enhance China's nation-building and state-making in the 21st century. Soft

power in this sense was integrated into the formation of national identity, state strength, regime security, and the CCP's political legitimacy. In so doing, the propaganda system dominates the domestic campaigns of soft power, and demonstrates its institutional and constitutive power over the Chinese society. The propaganda system has been widely observed to develop a two-pronged strategy to actively promulgate the official articulations, seeking to shape public opinions, set agendas and build national identity. It has also been used to suppress unwanted developments that are seen to risk threatening the discursive hegemony of the CCP and its political legitimacy. After all, the relations of domination carry the implication of resistance at the same time.[1]

The future role and weight of soft power in China's proactive peaceful rise, as a result, largely depends on its effectiveness in helping maintain a subtle equilibrium between what Wang describes as "two orders"—a US-led liberal international order and the CCP-led domestic order in China.[2] The Chinese government has realized that its rising material power cannot automatically translate into global influence, as many Chinese people have so long desired. Continuing American hegemony in the foreseeable future may further complicate China's proactive peaceful rise: as America's recent "pivot" to the Asia-Pacific region clearly demonstrates, the US still has the capacity to influence the speed at which China becomes a "legitimate" global power. The increasing pressure from the US and its alliances may even empower the hawks inside China, and push China towards a warlike rise that is underscored by the logic of hard balancing.

The greater risk associated with hard balancing, however, may encourage the Chinese government to continue its investment in soft power. A new Cold War between the US and China in the form of hard balance of power is not impossible, but I suggest that soft balancing between China and the US may become increasingly commonplace in the near future. To use an anonymous officer's view, China's proactive peaceful rise strategy is centered on its "rightful resistance" (*douerbupo*) against the US.[3] Along this

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[1] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 45.
[2] Wang, "The 'Two Orders' and the Future of China-U.S. Relations".
[3] An interview with a Chinese officer, February 1, 2016. The most comprehensive analyses of China's "rightful

line of thought, China's three-level soft power in terms of positive attractiveness, institutional power and constitutive power may have more to say. Specifically, China is supposed to legitimize its increasing economic and political power in global governance through agenda-setting and initiative-making, engage in international society through public diplomacy, defy American hegemonism and promote the rhetoric and practice of globalization, multilateralism and regionalism, and struggle for discursive power in order to shape its preferred identity and make its voice heard globally.[4] China's recent calling for playing an active and even a leading role in setting rules for new areas—cyberspace, outer space, the deep sea and the Polar Regions—is particularly exemplary.[5] The fundamental challenge, however, comes down to the trade-off of how China can push the envelope to gain relative strategic benefits under the US-led international order, yet prevent the Sino-US strategic contest for influence from heading down the slippery slope towards the so-called "Thucydides trap"—the inevitability of war caused by a rising power and the consequent fear of an established power.[6]

Most scholars in China dismissed this simplistic historical analogy of Thucydides trap in defining the Sino-US relationship, as this metaphor seems to represent the newest version of the longstanding "China Threat Thesis".[7] However, the widespread use of the Thucydides trap in political, academic and media circles in recent years merits particular attention, given that it takes place during the hot debate of American decline in contrast to China's recent so-called assertiveness in its security and foreign policy. Since neither China nor the US intends to be involved in a major war to achieve

resistance" strategy see Schweller and Pu, "After Unipolarity: China's Visions of International Order in an Era of U.S. Decline," 47-72.

[4] Schweller and Pu stressed the importance of these tactics noted above in China's rightful resistance against the US hegemony. However, they adopted a narrow conceptualization of soft power mainly in reference to positive attraction, while I use the broad three-level conceptualization instead. See Schweller and Pu, "After Unipolarity: China's Visions of International Order in an Era of U.S. Decline," 53.

[5] "Xi Calls for Reforms on Global Governance," *China Daily*, September 29, 2016.

[6] Suisheng Zhao, "American Reflections on the Engagement with China and Responses to President Xi's New Model of Major Power Relations," *Journal of Contemporary China* (2017), doi: 10.1080/10670564.2017.1274814; Graham Allison, "The Thucydides Trap," in *The Next Great War? : The Roots of World War I and the Risk of U.S.-China Conflict*, ed. Richard N. Rosecrance and Steven E. Miller (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2014), 73-9; "Thucydides's Trap Has Been Sprung in The Pacific," *Financial Times*, August 22, 2012; "The Thucydides Trap: Are the US and China Headed for War?" accessed March 1, 2016. https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/09/united-states-china-war-thucydides-trap/406756/.

[7] Shengkai Mo and Yue Chen, "The US-China 'Thucydides Trap': A View from Beijing", accessed July 10, 2016, http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-us-china-thucydides-trap-view-beijing-16903?page=show.

strategic advantages at the cost of each other, it is important to unravel which divergent factors and concerns may risk resulting in the Thucydides trap, rather than simply to reject this metaphor.

The dangers of Thucydides trap in Sino-US relations in the long term may lie in three aspects. In the global aspect, the battle over principal rules and key institutions in terms of security, political and economic arrangement, is the overarching strategic contest between China and the US. In the regional aspect, third parties and indirect structural conflicts are another sticking point. America's reassurance to protect its allies as a way to maintain its prestige may be at odds with China's commitment to safeguard its core national interests during conflicts with third parties that have either become America's long-standing allies (such as Japan and Philippine), or developed close partnership with the US (such as Taiwan and Vietnam). Wang has shed light on both aspects.[8] However, I argue that the third social aspect also matter considerably. That is because, the rising negative image of China in the US in the last decade,[9] and the surging proportion of Chinese people surveyed seeing US as China's greatest threat,[10] may provide fertile soil in both societies for planting further strategic distrust between China and US, and dangerously drag them into a Thucydides trap. It is thus no surprise to see that Xi stressed the importance of consolidating the public opinion foundation (*minxin xiangtong*) of China-US relationship.[11]

In general, China's soft power campaigns can either reinforce or reverse the recent rising trend of the Thucydides trap in reference to the Sino-US strategic competition for influence. On one hand, China's promotion of soft power in terms of agenda-setting and institution-making may heighten America's fear and anxiety about China's supposed *hidden* grand strategy of overthrowing American hegemony. For example, during

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[8]   Jisi Wang, "Liangge Zhixu Xia Zhongmei Ruhe Gongtong Jinhua [How Can China and US Achieve Co-Evolution under Two Orders?]," accessed March 1, 2017.
http://www.uscnpm.com/model_item.html?action=view&table=article&id=6166.

[9]   Pew Research Center, *Global Indicators Database*. http://www.pewglobal.org/database/indicator/24/survey/all/.

[10]   Richard Wike and Bruce Stokes, *Chinese Public Sees More Powerful Role in World, Names US as Top Threat* (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 2016).

[11]   Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, "Xi Jinping Meets with Executive Chairman Rupert Murdoch of News Corp", accessed March 1, 2017. http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1298836.shtml.

Obama's second term as US President, the vivid story regarding the tug-of-war between the initiative of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and that of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which is strongly backed by the US and China respectively, is a clear manifestation of Sino-US strategic contest for influence, let alone the establishment of AIIB. The progress of China's soft power campaigns in this respect, by using a Chinese proverb, is akin to "giving wings to the tiger", which may aggravate the Sino-US strategic contest for regional and even global influence as a result. On the other hand, China's soft power campaigns by dint of public diplomacy as emphasized through this thesis is supposed to improve China's positive attractiveness in US in the long term. If this is the case indeed, China could be continuously given the benefit of the doubt from the "panda-huggers" or the pro-China "red team" in US,[12] and the Thucydides trap could be subsequently avoided. However, the impact of China's soft power campaigns looks like a "half-full" or a "half-empty" glass. Both challenges and opportunities coexist in China's soft power campaigns. While observers outside China are inclined to be attentive to the half-empty side, it is interesting to see that the Chinese government focuses on the half-full side. Therefore, I foresee that the Chinese government would continue to invest heavily in its public diplomacy in the following years. Overall, China's soft power campaigns remain strategically important as it continues to serve as a pillar of China's proactive peaceful rise grand strategy: rightful resistance against the American hegemony without eliciting the Thucydides trap.

The maintenance of the CCP's leadership is also central to the sustainability of soft power as part of a Chinese grand strategy of proactive peaceful rise. The distinctiveness of China's grand strategy comes down to the central leadership's domestic concerns. As the CCP is transforming from a revolutionary party that struggles for power by means of force to a governing party that intends to exert power based on popular consent, this can only become more important. Indeed, this trend will continue unless internal disorder invites external intervention. Therefore, regime security relies on the party-state's soft power to strengthen state-making and nation-building, particularly in relation to the

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[12] Bill Gertz, *The China Threat: How the People's Republic Targets America* (Washington DC: Regnery Publishing, 2000).

ideological reformulation, the building of harmonious relationship between the state and the society, and development of national cohesion-building through the longstanding Patriotic Education Movement. Their successful application requires the involvement of soft power rather than coercion and payment, especially when seen from the perspective of the party-state. In so doing, as this thesis has demonstrated, the propaganda system continues to proactively drive China's domestic soft power campaigns for national cohesion-building through the increasingly sophisticated use of its institutional and constitutive power. Its logic is straightforward: without the leadership of the CCP, the proactive peaceful rise would not have the significance or role that it does. In short, since China is likely to pursue a grand strategy of peaceful rise rather than warlike rise in the foreseeable future, soft power is likely to remain a major part of its foreign and domestic policies.

Interestingly, the supposed resilience of American hegemony may complicate the future development of China's domestic order predicated on the Chinese authoritarian regime. Largely, the logic of American hegemonism boils down to its deep-seated political creed of liberty and democracy. As the social and cultural foundation of American domestic democracy evolved from white supremacism and the "Manifest Destiny" to the "universal values" of liberty, democracy and human rights, American hegemonism—characterized with interventions, coercion and even wars against non-democratic polities—was justified.[13] The Chinese government has long been paranoid about the US intention of orchestrating "peaceful evolution" to subvert the Chinese communist regime and agitate political turmoil in China. The growing perceived failure of US engagement policy towards China in recent years motivates strategic thinkers to suggest seeking ideological confrontation and renewing the strategy of peaceful evolution against China.[14] This strident suggestion may again alert the Chinese government.

The current post-truth politics in the West may bring about both opportunities and

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[13] Wang, "The Logic of American Hegemony," 7-29.
[14] For example, see Blumenthal and Inboden, "Toward a Free and Democratic China," 26-32.

challenges for China's soft power campaigns via public diplomacy to win external sympathy to China's CCP-led order and its position on the US-led international order. On one hand, the deficiency of liberal democracy in dealing with urgent political, economic and social challenges has facilitated the reemergence of "authoritarian populism",[15] and the reflection of which may add some credibility to the efficiency and effectiveness closely linked to the authoritarian mode of operation in tackling the aforementioned challenges.[16] As a result, the positive side of authoritarianism may be increasingly recognized and diffused, as long as it is distanced from the "strict" form of "autocracy promotion" that requires not only the external actor's intention to bolster a political regime of autocracy but also that actor's strong ideological commitment to autocracy itself.[17] On the other hand, various criticisms and warnings against authoritarian populism may heighten some target populations' suspicion of, and hostility against the authoritarian mode of thinking and its practice, especially when the authoritarian regimes' active measure of propaganda and disinformation in the democratic countries were revealed.[18] So much as that, the Western people's emotional repulsion and accentuated bias against authoritarianism may heavily undercut the Chinese government's efforts of public diplomacy to present a so-called "real" China. After all, objective facts play a less influential role in shaping public opinion than appeals to the personal emotion and belief in the period of post-truth world.[19] The conflation of propaganda and public diplomacy may become increasingly commonplace in the post-truth period. Washington's new anti-propaganda legislation—*Countering Disinformation and Propaganda Act*—is illustrative in this respect.[20] This anti-propaganda act can be easily used to target a specific country without necessarily

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[15] For example, see Priya Chacko and Kanishka Jayasuriya, "Trump, the Authoritarian Populist Revolt and the Future of the Rules-Based Order in Asia," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 71, no. 2 (2017): 121-7.

[16] Robert Stefan Foa and Yascha Mounk, "The Danger of Deconsolidation: The Democratic Disconnect," *Journal of Democracy* 27, no. 3 (2016): 5-17; Fareed Zakaria, "Populism on the March: Why the West is in Trouble," *Foreign Affairs* 95, no. 6 (2016): 9-15; "Yes, I'd Lie to You; The Post-truth World," *The Economist* 420, no. 9006 (2016): 20.

[17] Oisín Tansey, "The Problem with Autocracy Promotion," *Democratization* 23, no. 1 (2016): 141-163.

[18] Munich Security Conference, *Munich Security Report 2017: Post-Truth, Post-West, Post-Order?* (Munich: Munich Security Center, 2017).

[19] Oxford Dictionary, "World of the Year 2016 is…,"
https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/word-of-the-year/word-of-the-year-2016.

[20] http://www.portman.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2016/12/president-signs-portman-murphy-counter-propaganda-bill-into-law.

making a clear distinction between the practice of propaganda and public diplomacy.[21]

Under these circumstances, whether Chinese soft power campaigns in the post-truth era can make inroads to the established democracies and win the elites and everyday citizens' understandings of, and respect for the so-called "Chinese path" (*zhongguo daolu*) of socialism with Chinese characteristics on one hand, and "Chinese solutions" (*zhongguo fang'an*) to global governance on the other hand, is crucial in achieving the reconciliation between two orders in the end. This impediment is indeed difficult, if not impossible, to be surmounted by the Chinese government so far.[22]

In conclusion, the role and weight of soft power in China's proactive peaceful rise depends on whether it can help to achieve the equilibrium between the US-led international order and the CCP-led domestic order. The trade-off of two orders entails the re-establishment of "grand consensus" (*dagonshi*). This new grand consensus can be founded on a core principle of "two countries, one system" supposed to be shared by both US and China. That is, both countries can thrive together within the same system, but according to their own way of development. Furthermore, both countries seek to identify and promote complementary interests, while allowing for competition in a specific domain and scope.[23] This grand consensus overlaps with the entrepreneurial initiative of "co-evolution" proposed by Kissinger in an attempt to strengthen Sino-US ties in the future.[24] Whether China's rhetoric and practice of soft power become an obstacle or an enabler to the further development of Sino-US relations in the future, time will tell.

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[21] Wei Qi and Violet Law, "US Anti-propaganda Law 'May Set Stage for War of Ideas with China'," *South China Morning Post*, December 27, 2016.

[22] There is an outstanding case study demonstrating that the authoritarian regime of China has little impact on the Australian people's view of democracy at home. However, further case studies are needed to examine whether this hypothetical ineffectiveness of authoritarian diffusion in established democracies comes down to the *inherent* flaw of authoritarian regimes as opposed to the modern liberal democracy generally defined in terms of state modernity, rule of law and democratic accountability. See Mark Chou, Chengxin Pan and Avery Poole, "The Threat of Autocracy Diffusion in Consolidated Democracies? The Case of China, Singapore and Australia," *Contemporary Politics* 23, no.2 (2017): 175-94.

[23] Wei Da, "Zhongmei Haineng Chongjian 'Dagongshi' Ma [Can China and the US Re-establish the 'Grand Consensus'?]," accessed March 1, 2017. http://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_1357483_1.

[24] Henry Kissinger, *On China* (New York: Penguin, 2011).

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