

Soft Power of Russia and China

A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract—This article is focused on understanding the Soft power strategy in Russia and China. This article dwells upon the concept of “soft power” and its tools and common features, gives some examples of its implementation both in Russia and China. The authors of the article also analyze the impact of humanitarian cooperation on the economic relations between two the countries and implementation of the project “One Belt and one Road”.

Keywords—“Soft” power; humanitarian cooperation; economic cooperation; state administration; national relations; strategy; security; Russia; China

I. THEORY OF “SOFT” POWER

For years international relations of the countries were based on informal relations between the heads of the states, on voluntary participation in international humanitarian projects, cultural connections, on friendly diplomatic relations between the nations, on partnership between large transnational corporations and on close ethnic and cultural ties. In the last decade the opposite tendency has been observed, leading to the destruction of the peaceful existence of neighboring countries, where the states have their own interests in different parts of the world, trying to pursue each other by means of “soft” or “hard” power strategies.

Political scientists have been increasingly debating on how returning to the humanitarian cooperation between countries - as it used to be - encompasses cultural relations, intercivilized dialogue, dialogue between civil societies, as well as relations with compatriots abroad, and is a basis for carrying out both internal and external “soft power” strategy.

For more than two decades the concept of “soft power” has been highly debatable all over the world. This concept was introduced by the American political scientist Joseph

Hiring Jr. (Joseph Nye, Jr.) and seems to be quite diverse in its definition.

On the one hand, there might be different ways of translating this concept into other languages, and on the other hand, there might be different understanding of how “soft power” correlates with the other concepts among which are:

- The image of the country and its formation;
- Cultural factors affecting the domestic and foreign policies of the country;
- Humanitarian cooperation of the state;
- Features and tools of “soft power” strategy (for example: public administration, developing cultural communication, education, political values, promoting state on the international level, increasing attractiveness of the economic markets, moving to the modernization and democratization of society, extending trade markets , developing theme parks and leisure centers etc.)

The most effective way of implementing “soft power” is through cultural and humanitarian cooperation, whereas for “hard power” policy the most effective ways are military force of the states, political pressure, and economic enforcement.

In our opinion, state administration should be able to combine the elements of both of these strategies to conduct skillful foreign policy. Following only one strategy might lead to a breakdown of relations between states. It's necessary to set appropriate goals and understand why certain strategies are implemented at the time being.

Since the United States became to dominate force on the global arena, China and Russia began to form their common strategy on combination of “soft” and “hard” power, where both strategies are interconnected.

II. THE TOOLS OF THE “SOFT” POWER

From our point of view, Russian and Chinese models of development, where it refers to “national soft power”, have many elements in common. Next, we found the similarities using soft power tools in two countries, which are presented in the “Table I”.

TABLE I. USE OF THE TOOLS OF SOFT POWER IN CHINA AND RUSSIA.

Tools	Examples of implementation in China	Examples of implementation in Russia
<i>cultural communication and political values</i>	These are based on the philosophy of Confucianism, where the thought is directed to the inside of the State	An introduction to the spiritual culture, the implementation of the government programs to promote tolerance among young people, introduction to religious holidays and others.
<i>education</i>	High student academic mobility (about 20,000 Chinese are currently studying in Russia, of which 70-80 per cent are taught in linguistics departments)	High student academic mobility (more than 37,000 Russians are currently studying abroad)
<i>increasing the attractiveness of economic markets</i>	Implemented by the International Forum Beijing International Economic Forum, International Investment Forum, “Global Qatar-China” and others. Researches and Grants	Implemented by the International Forum: St. Petersburg International Forum, Investment Forum in Sochi and others. Researches and Grants
<i>Expanding trade markets</i>	Creating and expanding international economic organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the new Silk Road, and others.	Creating and expanding economic international organizations, such as the Customs Union, the BRICS and others.
<i>State promotion of the brand to an international level</i>	This promotion is carried out by raising the level of touristic activity to Russia, holding international sports events such as the World Games of extreme sports, World Cup athletics IAAF, Olympic Games and other.	This promotion is carried out by raising the level of touristic activity to Russia, holding international sports events such as the championship of Russia on the run for 100 km race walking, Olympic Games, Formula 1, Army and other international games.
<i>public administration</i>	Centralization of power, development of the economic relations of production, the establishment of transport links between the regions of the country, the use of “public diplomacy” through community organizations	Regional cooperation, decentralization of power, the development of public diplomacy and paradiplomacy.
<i>interaction with the media</i>	Strict regulation of pornographic media, the closure of access to the numerous “harmful” sites and other Internet GIS.	Tighter rules citation, the regulation of copyright law on advertising, the closure of sites and the Internet sources

Based on the examples given in the “Table I”, we can conclude that both countries use the same tools, but to a variable extent.. The only difference is that historically these states were formed within different cultural environments which have affected a lot their political and cultural values.

The bilateral humanitarian cooperation is actively developing the language exchange policy being one of the most promising initiatives. Currently, the study of Russian language and Russian culture is taught in 300 high schools in China. At the same time Russian people can study Chinese culture and language, under the Association of Confucius Institutes. (In Russia, currently there are 17 of them, which are located in Vladivostok, Moscow, Blagoveshchensk, Saint-Petersburg, Novosibirsk, Kazan, Irkutsk, Ulan-Ude, Volgograd, Yekaterinburg, Ryazan, Perm and Tomsk.). But in the central areas, very few people are interested in studying the Chinese language and understanding Chinese civilization. Chinese people are much more involved in studying Russian language and culture. Currently seven centers are open in different cities due to the assistance of the Foundation “Russian world”. “We have constantly received requests to intensify its activities to open more centers and offices, to create new programs for studying Russian language and culture,” the Consul General of China in St. Petersburg Chi Yan Chi noted, “We need to broad humanitarian cooperation between the two countries also in the spheres of art and literature. It’s obvious that Soviet literature is well-known in China, but if we intensify the dialogue between the two countries, it will help us to better and deeper understand all the peculiarities of the contemporary literary process. ”

Realizing the benefits of “soft power” strategy, the Chinese government has traditionally sought to deepen relations with all regions of the world, especially with developing countries in Africa, South America, Middle East and Southeast Asia. An example of this “soft power” approach is creating new economic alliances of states, such as the New Silk Road initiative.

Among the tools of “soft power” strategy, China is using diplomacy, economic assistance, including investment and trade preferences, humanitarian, scientific and educational exchange programs, moral values and promotion of spiritual and material culture of the ancient and modern China. The most important and effective tool of “soft” Chinese influence is constantly growing investment. Moreover, Chinese investment is particularly attractive for developing countries, because they do not have to follow all the requirements of human rights, the principles of western-oriented society, environmental quality standards, which are inherent in case of raising western capital. Adapting to the needs of “soft power” strategy, Chinese diplomacy has changed. So, China has increased the number of summits, improved the skills of the diplomats, who are currently getting education in prestigious and highly reputable universities abroad. Creating a strong image of a peace-loving China - Beijing ranks second after France by number of peacekeepers sent under the UN flag to the “hot spots” of

the planet. Health services play a significant role in the humanitarian aid provided by China.

Russia has a lot to learn from China. Recent years have seen the rapprochement between Russia and China, which meets the interests of both countries, both in terms of economic recovery and strengthening of good-neighborly relations and in building a new multi-polar world. One is inseparable from the other - the Russian-Chinese cooperation makes our countries stronger both individually and together, and most importantly - allows us to achieve favorable changes on the world arena. Russia and China are interested in eliminating the hegemony of the US and the West, which should result in finishing the era of a unipolar world, in building a system of international relations that would enable our countries to protect their national interests from expansion of Euro-Atlantic globalization. Therefore, the fact that the two presidents have recorded in a joint Shanghai statement, "a new phase of the comprehensive strategic partnership of cooperation," is of great geopolitical importance.

Due to their similar approaches to state management, heads of the two states have an easier time on agreeing on strengthening not only cultural cooperation, but also consolidating the alliance, so that it should become a powerful center for Russia and China to establish a multi-polar world. Its principles are very similar to those on which the Russian-Chinese cooperation is currently based on. Before visiting China Vladimir Putin, in an interview with Chinese mass media claimed, "Together we have built a truly effective cooperation, which should be a model for the major powers. We respect fundamental interests of each other and do our best for the wealth and prosperity of the two nations". In addition, in our opinion, the possibility of "soft" power strategy can serve as a basis for the use of "hard" power strategy in foreign policy.

III. ECONOMIC COOPERATION AS A RESULT

Creating a "new Silk Road", called "One Way and One Belt" project leads to rapprochement, where the Chinese coming as an initiator, were the authorities will be a leading factor in the economic development of Eurasia in the coming decades. In particular, the project aims to optimize the allocation of resources in the Asian and Euro-African space, free and easy movement of the elements of economic integration and deepening markets. Strengthening transport and financial cooperation between adjacent countries will promote joint development of countries, which is crucial for recovery, stability and prosperity of the global economy.

Summing up the results, it should be noted, that China has a favorable framework for economic and trade cooperation with neighboring countries and is the largest trading partner for many of them. In 2014, turnover of China and adjacent countries exceeded \$ 1.1 trillion. It makes up 26 percent of the total turnover of China. Direct non-financial investment to neighboring countries exceeded \$ 12 billion. It makes up 2 percent of the total amount of direct non-financial foreign investment. The amount of contracted projects in these countries reached \$64.4 billion.

We have created 16 economic zones of cross-border cooperation, including the one with Kazakhstan - International Center for cross-border cooperation between China and Kazakhstan "Khorgos". China has set up 23 centers of adjacent countries, a lot of the foreign trade and economic cooperation, which have become an important component of cooperation within the "Belts and the Path" program. China has made the strategy of creating a free trade area, the aim of which is the active development of free trade relations with adjacent countries improving regional economic integration, trade and investment liberalization and open markets.

IV. CONCLUSION

To sum it up, we can make the following conclusions:

- Russia and China use the tools of "soft" power strategy in very similar fashion and design.
- The differences in the use of "soft power" is in the fact that China's policy is more oriented towards the inside of the state - its philosophy and values are different from that of Russia.
- A tendency for enhancing cooperation between the partners is clearly seen not only in culture but also in the economic sphere. New economic spaces are emerging.
- More and more countries are joining efforts to resist the US hegemony.

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