

# Soft on “Soft Power”

*Christopher A. Ford*

*“Soft power” challenged the coercion aspects of foreign policy, and professed attraction instead. In the last three years, the United States seems to have unconditionally accepted this as the centerpiece of its foreign policy. As a result, its inability to make tough choices implies fear of “Market-Leninists,” Islamist theocrats, and authoritarian despots. China, on the other hand, effectively uses soft power as a means to an end—and only when it works. What America must realize is that soft power is one of the tools of exerting foreign policy, and the Obama administration should be open to employing other tools depending on their effectiveness to resolve the situation at hand.*

In the last three years, U.S. officials have rushed to associate themselves with the idea of “soft power,” believing that it had received insufficient emphasis, and urging that it become a more prominent part of Washington’s efforts to influence global events. A new prioritization of “soft” approaches, it was said, would complement residual “hard” capabilities and produce a hybrid, smugly termed “smart power” that would transform American foreign policy and give the United States new clout and stature on the world stage.

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This essay examines some of the conceptual and practical foundations of this “soft power” focus and considers how large a competitive advantage it is likely to offer for

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advancing U.S. interests and policy objectives in international affairs. It is particularly in the context of Sino-American relations—the most important bilateral dyad of the mid-twenty-first century global security environment. As we will see, “soft power” stands up less well than its prominent U.S. advocates would have one believe. “Softness,” it turns out, is not always what it is cracked up to be.

While it has some value both as an analytical construct and a guide to policymaking, soft power is frequently confused with mere *impact* on the world, ignoring how effectively national leaders can *manipulate* a state’s “soft” interactions with others in support of policy ends. When “soft power” is misconceived and reified as a sort of magical balm for all sorts of policy problems, reliance upon “softness” can become a maladaptive recipe for evading difficult choices, and neglecting the “hard” capabilities that remain important to security and policy success in a complicated world. When properly understood through the prism of “usability,” soft power can indeed be a valuable component of national policymaking. A comparison of U.S. and Chinese approaches to using soft power, however, suggests that modern Washington’s evangelists for “soft” approaches may be greatly overselling its advantages.

### **The Ideal of “Soft Power”**

When the Obama administration came to power in 2009, Washington moved to associate itself with the idea of “soft power.” A phrase apparently first coined by Harvard Professor Joseph Nye decades ago,<sup>1</sup> “soft power” is often used to refer to the collective influence of a country’s combined weight in the realms of economic, cultural, and political affairs—indeed, in effect, *all* facets of its national strength *except* the “hard power” associated with military coercion. “Soft power,” it was said, did not involve *forcing* desired outcomes on others, but rather relying upon a dense network of interdependent economic and socio-cultural interactions to help bring about psychologically-driven political change, resulting, in effect, with other governments wanting to do things that serve one’s own interests.

This concept was the intellectual product of unquestioned U.S. global dominance as the hyperpower in the immediate post-Cold War era, a time in which Americans imagined history to have all but “ended” with the triumph of democratic and free-market norms everywhere. Growing out of American dominance and United States’ status as what Secretary of State Madeleine Albright called “the indispensable nation”<sup>2</sup> (a position that was, ironically, the result of America’s good fortune in *combining* “hard” and “soft” preeminence after the collapse of the Soviet Empire), one might have expected “soft power” to be a dated concept, one which would fade in time with deference to the hyperpower’s preference.

“Soft power” did not fade, instead acquiring more adherents than ever in an era in which Americans fret over their economic future, their relative decline, and the difficulties of maintaining a strong military and a global network of alliances. Nye himself helped return this idea to the foreground of U.S. foreign policy discourse in 2007, arguing the importance

of deemphasizing "hard" power (which he caricatured as "exporting fear") in favor of the "soft power" approach of "inspiring optimism and hope."<sup>3</sup> This is precisely what Hendrik Herzberg rhapsodized in the *New Yorker* just after President Obama's election. Herzberg extolled the "soft" components of what incoming Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called "smart power," and contrasted it with the "blood and guts" "hard" power that had been "fetishized by the outgoing Bush crowd, especially [Vice President Dick] Cheney." In Herzberg's description, "soft power" is about "movies, books, and songs; ideals, diplomacy, and moral authority—all about hearts and minds."<sup>4</sup>

Through this prism, critical aspects of a nation's power could be found, for instance, in the appeal of its "values," the benevolence of its foreign aid programs, the attraction of economic relationships, the seductiveness of its cultural products, the lure of its educational system, and the compelling nature of its social, economic, or political system. In the most elementary sense, the notion of "soft power" was not controversial, for no one can plausibly maintain in the modern era that national power can be found exclusively in military muscle. (The existence of a supposedly dominant paradigm of "hard power" is something of a straw man set up for the rhetorical and political convenience of "soft power" advocates.)

"Soft power" proponents, however, clearly felt that more emphasis was needed on the softer components of U.S. power, and that in an era of globalized economic relationships and America's ubiquitous cultural presence, this was an arena of American advantage in which our national leaders would be foolish not to place a greater, and perhaps principal reliance.

Not surprisingly, the notion of "hard" and "soft" as competing paradigms of emphasis in U.S. foreign policy has also become tightly wrapped in domestic politics. "Soft power" forms a key intellectual plank of what might otherwise have been an unmanageably vague and sentimental liberal political critique of U.S. policy in the era of the global war on terror, and conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The "soft power" narrative was particularly useful not only because it offered a way to distinguish oneself both morally and substantively from conservative political opponents, but also a storyline in which pursuing the left's *domestic* political agenda could be depicted, albeit counter-intuitively, as an answer to *international* security concerns. Accordingly, "soft power" became a critical plank in then-candidate Barack Obama's discourse of differentiation from the administration of George W. Bush: "softness" in foreign policy was virtuous and sophisticated, while "hardness" was simply vicious and crude. According to Daniel Benjamin, counterterrorism coordinator in the Obama State Department, it was *finally* time for the United States in its struggle against international terrorism, to "[navigate] by its values," addressing security challenges by bringing social justice and *access to healthcare* (emphasis added) to deprived populations worldwide.<sup>5</sup> Even security challenges such as nuclear weapons proliferation were expected to be dealt with using "softer" policies like disarmament,<sup>6</sup> predicated upon assumptions about the emerging irrelevance of "hard power" tools such as nuclear weapons.

In this spirit, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton grandly commissioned a “Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review” (QDDR), styled rather explicitly after the Pentagon’s longstanding Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), to make the symbolic point that “soft power” was at least as good as the “hard” variety. As she put it, the QDDR reflects the Obama Administration’s ambition to:

build up our civilian power to [direct] and [coordinate] the resources of all America’s civilian agencies to prevent and resolve conflicts; help countries lift themselves out of poverty into prosperous, stable, and democratic states; and build global coalitions to address global problems.<sup>7</sup>

According to the QDDR, America’s “civilian power” reaches across almost the entire breadth of the human endeavor:

We help prevent fragile states from descending into chaos, spur economic growth abroad, secure investments for American business, open new markets for American goods, promote trade overseas, and create jobs here at home. We help other countries build integrated, sustainable public health systems that serve their people and prevent the spread of disease. We help prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. We support civil society groups in countries around the world in their work to choose their governments and hold those governments accountable. We support women’s efforts to become financially independent, educate their children, improve their communities, and help make peace in their countries. This is an affirmative American agenda—a global agenda—that is uncompromising in its defense of our security but equally committed to advancing our prosperity and standing up for our values.<sup>8</sup>

The Obama Administration’s message was, in effect, that America’s stature and role in the world would *increase* as we learned to use our “soft power” more skillfully, leveraging our strengths in the cultural and economic realms, striking a self-abasingly apologetic tone about past sins in order to lead by moral example, and avoiding the divisive tools of “hard power” that had—we were told—turned the international community against us under George W. Bush.

It did not matter so much that the Obama team’s actual practice was sometimes starkly (if quietly) at odds with its rhetoric,<sup>9</sup> and that two years after this alleged “transformation,” progress in meeting global security challenges would remain as elusive as ever and America’s standing in the Arab world would have fallen under Barack Obama to a point lower than it was under George W. Bush.<sup>10</sup> The real point was in posture; the objective was more political than substantive: to establish a narrative of moral hierarchy in which the progressive forces of goodness and light had led Washington out of the moral swamp of “hard-headed” neoconservative bellicosity, and instead vindicate America’s interests through “soft power.”

It is worth looking more closely at the concepts behind this purported revolution in U.S. foreign and security policymaking. The concept of “soft power” itself deserves more scrutiny than it has usually been given. To observers of the U.S. policy community, “soft power” is by now a very comfortable concept, but it is necessary to complicate that familiarity. In particular,

the competitive advantage of U.S. "soft power" may be more open to question than one might assume from the tone of American pronouncements.

### Softness and Its Discontents

I have no particular quarrel with Nye's original notion of "soft power" as an analytical construct, for it is indeed useful in helping one understand the aggregate effect that a nation has on others and the international environment. I urge caution, however, lest one get too carried away, in overselling how *usable* "soft power" might be in international policymaking.

The problem here is twofold, and does not necessarily entail any criticism of the idea that in some meaningful sense, a nation's aggregate impact in the world is significantly dependent upon economic, cultural, moral, and political factors. Rather, the problem lies with the assumptions that "soft power" *per se* can be relied upon by U.S. policymakers to advance their agenda and that the United States enjoys a "soft power" advantage in perhaps the world's most important bilateral relationship, that with the People's Republic of China. Given Washington's finite political capital, high-level attention, budget dollars, and the degree to which either assumption proves faulty, the current U.S. focus on "soft power" approaches, may be a mistaken priority.

The concept of "soft power" as a sort of aggregate measurement of a country's overall socio-political clout in the world retains some utility as an analytical tool. Billions of people worldwide recognize iconic American brands such as McDonald's and Coca-Cola, watch movies made in Hollywood, and the United States remains the world's largest economy in an age of profound globalization. Such pervasive contact with the non-American world surely counts for something in assessing the United States' impact in global affairs.

It is less clear, however, what to make of "soft power" from the perspective of a U.S. policymaker, whose natural inclination will presumably be to ask what he or she can do with all this "power." It is one thing, after all, to posit that the appeal of American values, the model offered by its political system, the broad presence of its brands overseas, and its pop cultural exports help in some vague and very general way predispose foreign publics toward things of which U.S. policymakers approve (e.g., consumerist democracy) and ultimately lead to a greater convergence of interests in world affairs. It is quite another to hold out reliance upon "soft power" as a means by which an American policymaker can accomplish any specific policy objective.

In this sense, it is far from clear that "soft power" always deserves to be spoken of in the same breath as "hard power" when discussing forms of power that can actually be used for articulated ends. Diplomatic engagement, of course, can be so used, as influence and persuasion is its express purpose. Foreign aid is frequently and more or less plausibly alleged to form a critical element of the United States' "ability to influence the world," and an essential component of its "soft power."<sup>11</sup> Just how effective these tools are can of course be debated, but there is little doubt that they are tools that

can be purposefully used by policymakers. Yet, not all supposed aspects of “soft power” can be so directed.

This problem has received too little attention. To what extent is “soft power” actually something that our national leadership can use to influence other countries or shape the international environment? This question is, central to distinguishing “soft power” from mere impact. If one considers “soft power” analogous to and at least partially substitutable for the “hard power” of military force, its ability to be used is inescapably important. Many things about the United States may have great impact on others, but unless our national leadership can shape or steer that impact, it is difficult to describe it as a tool of national power.

The distinction is important because when viewed through this prism of usability, much of what is considered the United States’ “soft power” fails the test. Indeed, in a developed democracy such as our own, some of the most important and dynamic aspects of society frequently associated with

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This, of course, is not a

bad thing. In fact, we have gone to some trouble over the years to prevent our government from accruing that kind of totalizing authority; there, we have understood since the founding of our republic, lies tyranny. From a “soft power” perspective, however, this is a notable handicap. Yet this is the price of our freedom: insisting upon sharp constraints on the central government’s direction of society limits our leaders’ ability to translate “soft” impact into “soft power.” When Secretary Clinton talks of the army of “civilian power” officials deployable for the grand aims outlined in her QDDR, she can speak only for a small number of U.S. officials on overseas assignment from the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), funded by relatively modest budget lines. Neither she nor anyone else in the Obama Administration has authority to control more than a small sliver of the full spectrum of America’s myriad interactions with the rest of the world.

As indicated above, I do not mean to suggest that no aspects of “soft power” can be employed for national policymaking, merely that, for a democracy, many of them can be used incompletely at best. American values

like freedom of expression and democratic self-rule, for instance, presumably have some potential to influence other countries. This potential translates most directly into consequence only if such values are actually promoted. In this respect, how have we been doing?

The history of U.S. attempts to leverage the "bully pulpit," including freedom-promotion efforts such as the National Endowment for Democracy and other Cold War-era efforts to promote civil society and broadcast behind the Iron Curtain, all suggest that there is some real potential here. But these are tools with sharp limits, and generally offer only slow, indistinct, and indirect effects.

Additionally, the "soft power-obsessed" Obama Administration has been remarkably reluctant to employ even limited values-promotion tools at its disposal. Though President Obama spoke favorably about democracy in his much-publicized June 2009 speech to a Muslim audience in Cairo, he defined democracy merely as having "governments that reflect the will of the people" and seemed curiously ambivalent about promoting more specifically American ideas like the right periodically to change their government through free and fair elections, and that no branch of government—nor indeed the government itself—should be permitted to accrue unchallengeable power.

In fact, Obama went out of his way to specify that "[each] nation gives life to this principle [of reflecting the will of the people] in its own way," and pointedly excluded mention of voting or checks upon unbridled government power in his list of the things for which "all people yearn." (The closest the president came to describing democratic political choice was to observe that governments "must maintain . . . power through consent, not coercion," though this is a standard that could presumably be met, at least initially, by a popular despot or an authoritarian oligarchy which takes public opinion into account when making decrees.) This careful neglect of political rights was perhaps incongruous in a speech that began with a lament that "colonialism [had] denied rights and opportunities to many Muslims,"<sup>12</sup> particularly for an administration so taken with the supposed virtues of "soft" power projection.

The Obama Administration then approached Iran's "Green Revolution" with painful rhetorical reticence in 2009–2010, sacrificed candor about Russia's retreat into autocracy on the altar of an expedient nuclear disarmament-focused "reset" of relations with Moscow, and explicitly promised not to let human rights concerns "interfere" with America's economic relationship with Beijing.<sup>13</sup> The American role in promoting democracy in Egypt in 2011 was also for a time decidedly ambivalent, with U.S. officials still calling for President Hosni Mubarak to stay in office until just before his resignation.<sup>14</sup> After a long period of embarrassing silence in which U.S. officials bizarrely quoted assessments describing Syrian dictator Bashar al-Asad as a "reformer,"<sup>15</sup> the Obama Administration finally spoke out against his bloody efforts to repress Syria's pro-democracy movement, ultimately calling on Assad to step down.<sup>16</sup> But the contribution of U.S. pronouncements to effecting change in Syria is, at the time of writing, unclear at best. So far, the Obama Administration's most conspicuous democracy-promo-

tion effort was a very “hard power” affair: the war that led to the overthrow and execution of Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi.

The Obama Administration sought credit as a promoter of democratic values in mid-2011, as leaked stories appeared about State Department-funded efforts to outfit pro-democracy activists in various countries with portable internet and cell phone equipment capable of circumventing government censorship.<sup>17</sup> While such efforts seemed to have real potential, a cyber security expert of my acquaintance describes this program as still being depressingly amateurish from a technical perspective. (A colleague of mine at Hudson Institute, Michael Horowitz, also points out that existing web-censorship circumvention services promoted by the U.S. tend to lack the surge capacity needed to deal with user demand during political crises, when access to such capabilities is likely to be most important.<sup>18</sup>)

Meanwhile, even as the authorities in Beijing cracked down hard to preclude any possibility of a Chinese “Oolong Revolution” to parallel the “Jasmine Revolution” of democratization in the Arab world,<sup>19</sup> the Obama Administration announced plans to terminate the Voice of America’s Mandarin-language radio and television service in China.<sup>20</sup> Given the evident terror of China’s Communist leadership at the idea of its citizens becoming enamored with multiparty democracy and political freedom—a fear evident, for instance, in PRC Politburo members’ warnings that “[enemy] forces” are always trying to “undermine and divide China,” and that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) needs a “line of defense to resist Western two-party and multi-party systems, a bi-cameral legislature, the separation of power and other kinds of erroneous ideological interferences”<sup>21</sup>—this seems to be quite a remarkable recusal from the field of “soft power” competition.

Despite the rhetoric about “navigating by our values,” therefore, the Obama Administration has been notably ambivalent about actually promoting them—with President Obama himself apparently seeing nothing exceptional about the American system’s embodiment of the very “values” by which we are expected to “navigate.” On one level, this is not surprising, for the president has said that he believes in American exceptionalism only in the sense that people from any country might believe in the special character of their own country.<sup>22</sup> Still, such politically-correct relativism is a strange refuge for someone supposedly committed to making “our values” a key component of the “soft power” with which he was supposed to revolutionize U.S. foreign policy.

In terms of potential economic “soft power,” our free market economy obviously imposes significant constraints upon the degree to which the still-vibrant U.S. business and financial sectors can be used in support of broader national objectives. Nevertheless, the use of economic and financial sanctions has long been an aspect of “soft power” projection available to U.S. officials. (Indeed, as I have noted elsewhere, U.S. leaders seem always to have had great faith in their ability to use trade and other economic incentives to accomplish foreign policy goals.<sup>23</sup>) In the 1990s, the U.S. Congress passed a number of laws requiring the imposition of sanctions on foreign entities involved in the proliferation of ballistic missile or weapons of mass



destruction (WMD). The late Senator Jesse Helms, author of much of this legislation, is not usually regarded as a hero by the proponents of “soft power,” but perhaps a re-think is in order.

The Clinton Administration generally opposed the use of “soft power” in the form of nonproliferation sanctions. In the first administration of George W. Bush, however, when such approaches were championed by then-Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton as an “essential tool,”<sup>24</sup> American authorities showed considerable enthusiasm for using sanctions to force foreign companies to make a choice between facilitating proliferation and trading with the world’s largest economy. In the most dramatic example of such sanctions, the Bush Administration sanctioned the Chinese company NORINCO in early 2003 for assisting Iran’s ballistic missile program; this move was said to have cost NORINCO something on the order of \$100 million in sales in the United States.<sup>25</sup>

The Bush Administration also used the prospect of relaxing sanctions, albeit combined with the conspicuously “hard power” anti-WMD message sent by the invasion of Iraq, to draw Libya’s Muammar Qaddafi into the internationally-supervised elimination of his WMD programs in 2003–2004. Except for imposing further sanctions against Iran over its nuclear program, (an arena in which some progress has been made, though more as a result of the outrageousness of Iran’s continuing provocations than anything Washington has actually managed to do),<sup>26</sup> the Obama Administration has been remarkably uninterested in nonproliferation sanctions.

On the whole, it is certainly true that precisely because we are a free and democratic society, there are sharp limits upon what a president can do to leverage America’s “soft power.” Nevertheless, today’s White House has been curiously diffident about even trying to use the tools it has. It seems to prefer passive approaches even to the “soft power” it has itself rhetorically championed, and is, to all appearances, simply embarrassed about anything that smacks of affirmative global leadership, preferring to “lead from behind”<sup>27</sup> in ways that avoid seeming too pushy or “Bush-like” for contemporary sensibilities.

As suggested above, however, taking a passive approach to “soft power” isn’t really exerting power at all: it is just sitting back and hoping for the best. Such an approach may sometimes work, but it does not deserve much credit as a national strategy, and it is not clear what precisely is so “smart” about the use of “soft power.”

#### *A Counter-Example: the China’s “Soft” Teeth*

Not everyone, however, has such a passive approach to “soft power.” Indeed, one can perhaps see in contemporary China the opposite of the Obama Administration’s lassitude. Moreover, because the CCP can, when it wants to, exert considerable control over business, financial, media and cultural institutions (many of which are still run or supervised by the state), modern China is conspicuous in combining the capacity to control elements of “soft power” and the willingness to do so.

The myriad activities of Chinese entities engaged with the outside world are not managed in the way that the Soviet Union aspired to do with its rigid and stifling command economy. “Socialism with Chinese characteristics,” as Chinese officials have termed their approach to capitalist development steered only in general ways by Party and state authorities, is largely about the pursuit of markets, profits, resources, and maximal economic development. That does not mean China cannot flex the muscles of its still basically Leninist system of party cell organization and centralized political supervision—it can.

To be sure, the explosion of Chinese economic development since the country’s post-Maoist opening to the outside world has seen the Party increasingly embrace market-based economics. Nevertheless, the economic role of the CCP remains formidable, as it works to maintain at least the *potential* to flex its Leninist muscles where it thinks such flexing is needed. In fact, the percentage of private business in China with Communist Party cells inside them has reportedly actually *risen* dramatically in recent years, from a mere three percent in 1999 to nearly 13 percent today.<sup>28</sup>

That might not seem to be a staggering proportion, but one must remember that this figure is for *private* businesses, and that the party-state still *directly* controls an enormous chunk of the Chinese economy. Indeed, state companies make up 80 percent of the value of the Chinese stock market, and still contribute about a third of China’s GDP.<sup>29</sup> China’s state owned enterprises (SOEs) are enormously powerful, and their top executives are, in the words of *The Economist*, “cadres first and company men second. They care more about pleasing their party bosses than about the global market.”<sup>30</sup>

Even with respect to *private* businesses, moreover, the CCP carefully maintains cells in “most” companies of any significant size. And this is no casual relationship. Party cells within business entities often come “complete with their own offices and files on employees.” They “control the appointment of captains of industry,” and “hold meetings that shadow formal board meetings and often trump their decisions, particularly on staff appointments.” The Party also “often gets involved in business planning and works with management to control workers’ pay.”<sup>31</sup>

As Richard McGregor has detailed in his fascinating recent book,<sup>32</sup> CCP leaders thus retain a potent role in controlling high-level personnel decisions in all state-affiliated Chinese corporations and banks, as well as the ability to pressure private institutions into conformity with Party directives by controlling the spigot of their connections to the enormous state-managed sector of the economy. Today, though the Chinese economy is vastly more market-oriented than it used to be, the party-state still controls the “commanding heights” of the economy even as CCP officials reportedly continue to step up efforts to set up party cells within private firms to help preserve CCP’s guiding hand in Chinese society.<sup>33</sup>

Modern China’s media, especially Internet outlets, are freer today to report on problems such as corruption and mismanagement at lower levels of government, for the CCP has shrewdly come to regard some such report-

age as providing a useful vent for frustrations that might otherwise boil over to threaten CCP rule. The party-state, in fact, uses local media coverage and Internet feedback (known in CCP circles as "online democracy"<sup>34</sup>) to help make party leaders better informed in their own decision-making. Nonetheless, this only means so much. The model here is the ancient imperial practice of presenting petitions to the Emperor for the redress of grievances: it may be a way to resolve low-level problems, but it ultimately reinforces the position of those being petitioned, and should not be mistaken for genuine democracy.<sup>35</sup>

The hand of the party-state system remains a heavy one in controlling or "shaping" media content in order to conform with approved CCP narratives and impede the promulgation of disapproved ones. While this task is clearly much more challenging than it used to be,<sup>36</sup> the party-state remains able to suppress content it deems truly subversive. Media institutions receive regular directives, through various means including text messaging, about what subjects are forbidden as well as the general "line" that should be when covering specific events and issues. In general, as Frank Pieke has observed, although "the government no longer aspires to control all thoughts and actions of the population . . . there are still certain boundaries that cannot be transgressed and, if that happens, the reaction has often been extremely harsh."<sup>37</sup>

The Party also plays a very active, directing role in shaping message content conveyed by Chinese media outlets to the outside world by sponsoring platforms specifically designed to reach foreigners both in China and overseas. Much effort is expended to ensure that media contacts with the non-Chinese world remain carefully under the control of the party-state. Such media institutions are not functionally distinguishable from the Chinese government, and in fact it has been widely reported that Xinhua News Agency journalists frequently fulfill two roles: preparing reports for publication (i.e., acting like real journalists, albeit while having to remain within the parameters set by propaganda authorities) and preparing "internal" reports that travel up the chain for the eyes of senior leaders only (i.e., functioning more like open-source intelligence collectors). It may not have been a coincidence, therefore, that when two U.S. bombs accidentally hit what was reported to have been the intelligence operations center of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade during the Kosovo campaign of 1999, they killed two Chinese intelligence officers operating under journalistic cover.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, in the CCP's China even professional organizations, religious institutions, and non-governmental organizations are subject to forms of party or state supervision and management. (The most memorable example, if perhaps an unrepresentatively audacious one, came in 2007, when a 14-part regulation issued by the China's State Administration for Religious Affairs declared the state to be the final authority over the cycles of karmic rebirth in Vajrayana Buddhism, placing the reincarnation of Tibetan lamas under the control of party authorities. Any "reincarnation of [a] living Buddha" occurring without government approval, it was declared, "is illegal and invalid."<sup>39</sup> Even the handful of tame "democratic" parties that China permits

to exist—though not genuinely to compete for political power—are subject to close supervision and regulation. As Pieke has documented, cadres from such ostensibly independent are required to participate in some of the same training and indoctrination programs as are CCP members.<sup>40</sup>

As the example of Soviet economic collapse suggests, it is quite literally unprofitable to exert such influence with great regularity or to a great

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extent in the Chinese economy, and indeed authorities in Beijing seem to show some circumspection. Party leaders seem content to exert an overall “steering” role, leaving the management of day-to-day affairs to government technocrats, military of-

ficers, and corporate leaders. Nonetheless, the leaders of the party-state have options that are simply unimaginable to the leaders of free societies, and the system permits the use of a wide range of “soft power” tools, whenever deemed necessary.

And indeed, behavior and positions in general conformity with CCP policy are expected of those seeking to engage or continue in profitable relationships with the modern Chinese economic colossus. Accordingly, the general expectation of “harmonious” self-policing sometimes requires that interlocutors be pushed around a bit *pour encourager les autres*. In one example offered in Peter Hays Gries’ fascinating 2004 study of modern Chinese nationalism, after purchasing Hong Kong’s Star TV in the 1990s, Rupert Murdoch expressed the view that satellite television might serve as a tool of democratization to undermine dictators around the world. This, however, resulted in Chinese government moves to restrict or even prohibit satellite television dishes in the very Chinese market Murdoch hoped to penetrate. Getting the message, Murdoch subsequently pulled the BBC off Star TV’s program list and canceled one of his companies’ planned publications of the memoirs of Hong Kong’s last British governor, Chris Patten. Thereafter, Murdoch’s son obligingly described the Falun Gong movement (feared and loathed by officials in Beijing for having the temerity to engage in religious practice without permission and its flair for new media-facilitated social mobilization) as a “dangerous . . . cult,” and the Murdoch empire today does more and more business in China.<sup>41</sup> Last year, in fact, Murdoch’s News Corporation entered into a major joint venture to develop media projects in China,<sup>42</sup> partnering with a Chinese fund established with the backing of the National Development and Reform Commission, a body which reports to China’s State Council. Such episodes are apparently common enough that many international businessmen are painfully attuned to the importance of not upsetting China’s political authorities—even to the point, for instance, that it is reportedly sometimes difficult for exiled Chinese dissidents to find employment in firms that have business connections with the PRC.<sup>43</sup>

Similarly, observers of relations across the Taiwan straits have suggested that Taiwanese media outlets such as the *China Times* have softened their treatment of PRC issues as their parent companies have become deeply engaged in profitable business dealings on the Chinese mainland. In the late 1990s, the Chinese government ordered a temporary halt to business dealings with Walt Disney Studios, Sony Pictures, and MGM after these studios' movies *Kundun*, *Seven Years in Tibet*, and *Red Corner* had painted the communist government in an unflattering light. Today, with China constituting their fifth-largest overseas box office market—a market producing \$1.5 billion in annual revenue—Hollywood executives seem to have learned their lesson. As the *Los Angeles Times* has reported, MGM has now adopted a self-censorship policy that extends as far as digitally altering footage shot for a remake of the cheesy 1984 film *Red Dawn* to retroactively transform its hypothesized Chinese invaders into North Koreans.<sup>44</sup>

Nor is the stereotypically unscrupulous arms market unaffected. Major Western defense contractors such as Boeing, Airbus, Rockwell Collins, Dassault, and Textron, for instance, no longer participate in defense expositions in Taiwan for fear of upsetting officials in Beijing. Boeing and Airbus, in particular, are said to expect that China will penalize them for public association with Taiwan by cutting back their lucrative commercial aircraft contracts in China. Other contractors similarly fear jeopardizing their Beijing connections too. (Rockwell Collins provides systems for two models of a Chinese-made business jet, while Dassault and Textron-owned Cessna are currently competing to build business jets in China in partnership with a state-owned defense company.)<sup>45</sup> Beijing previously shifted commercial aircraft sales from Boeing to its archrival Airbus because of its subsidiary, McDonnell Douglas' involvement in a Taiwanese arms agreement. Having already felt the sting of an aggrieved China's “soft power,” Boeing closed its Taipei office in 2006, moving the branch to Singapore to avoid antagonizing Beijing while pursuing lucrative civil aviation contracts on the mainland.<sup>46</sup> Taking a different tack, but apparently agreeing that Beijing's threats of full-spectrum blacklisting as punishment for Taiwanese sales were making it difficult to do business with both Taiwan and mainland China, Raytheon, a supplier of radar and air-traffic management technology to China's growing civil aviation sector, simply shut its Beijing office.<sup>47</sup>

The U.S. announcement of an arms package for Taiwan in 2010 gave China another chance to drive home the commercial imperative of not displeasing the party-state. In response to the sale, Beijing announced that it would apply economic sanctions against any American firms involved. Boeing and United Technologies—the owner of Sikorsky, a civil and military helicopter manufacturer greatly interested in China's civilian market—were said to face the possibility of such sanctions, as well as the U.S. defense contracting giants Raytheon and Lockheed-Martin.<sup>48</sup> (United Technologies is reported to have a very considerable presence in China and fulfilled a majority of the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning contracts awarded for the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing.<sup>49</sup>)

Indeed, China's ability and willingness to penalize commercial entities that displease it elsewhere has apparently also helped deter foreign companies from giving evidence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) about unfair Chinese trade practices. According to a former U.S. trade negotiator, it is more common for American officials to challenge Chinese trade practices in their own, more discreet bilateral talks with Chinese interlocutors than to pursue more formal proceedings at the WTO in Geneva, in part because U.S. companies fear retribution from Beijing if they go public by giving evidence to that organization.<sup>50</sup>

China's "soft power" projection has other dimensions as well. As Anne-Marie Brady detailed in her studies of the institutions and practices of Chinese propaganda, "thought work,"<sup>51</sup> and China's system for managing its external image,<sup>52</sup> in keeping with longstanding approaches pioneered by the Soviet Union, Chinese authorities cultivate relationships with foreign "friends of China" who take congenial positions in international media and scholarly journals. I have been told elsewhere in East Asia, for instance, that this includes efforts to entice more sympathetic positions out of visiting scholars through the provision of generous hospitality, prestigious lecture tours, and hefty honoraria to discourage saying things that might jeopardize official goodwill. While crude "exclusion" tactics are said to be used less frequently than in Maoist days, visa denial remains available, making it particularly difficult for those whose job it is to study China. Still, it seems that Chinese officials recognize that blacklists can generate more unwanted attention, and that honey catches more flies than vinegar.

Nor are influence tactics limited to private sector targets. After a meeting between French President Nicolas Sarkozy and His Holiness the XIV<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama in 2008, for instance, officials in Beijing cancelled a planned summit with European Union officials<sup>53</sup> and threatened China's airliner contracts with Airbus,<sup>54</sup> prompting France to issue a hasty public declaration in support of Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. Moreover, after disputes with Japan over territorial claims in the East China Sea in 2010, Chinese customs officials restricted Japan's supply of rare earth elements critical to Japan's production of high-technology electronics.<sup>55</sup> This quiet embargo was also subsequently extended to the United States and Europe for a time, allegedly as an expression of Beijing's ire over Western complaints about Chinese trade practices.<sup>56</sup>

As the last example suggests, American authorities have also felt the same pressure. After U.S. President George W. Bush had the temerity to state in 2005 that Beijing should allow more political and religious freedom, China reduced its order of commercial airliners from Boeing. Boeing signed a substantial deal with China shortly before President Bush's visit in November of that year. Chinese officials talked of the likelihood of ordering additional aircrafts, but after the president's remarks on human rights, signed a much larger deal with Airbus.<sup>57</sup> Boeing itself was not permitted to catch up until April 2006, when another aircraft deal brought Boeing's total up to the same number purchased from Airbus since 2005.<sup>58</sup> Significantly, this April 2006 Boeing purchase was announced at the time

of President Hu Jintao’s visit to the United States,<sup>59</sup> where he presumably wanted as congenial a reception as possible. The timing of this succession of deals, and the equal numbers of aircraft ordered from Western rivals in this period, strongly suggest Beijing’s keen awareness of the utility of government-steered commercial engagement as both a “stick” and a “carrot” in its relationship with Washington.

Similarly, leaked State Department cables published by WikiLeaks recount that Chinese authorities threatened in October 2008 to cut back their purchases of U.S. securities unless Washington reconsidered a proposed arms sale to Taiwan, though the Chinese apparently never carried through on this threat. Notwithstanding the now-common joke that the United States is a debtor “too big to fail,” China appears to have some ability to modulate its U.S. Treasury holdings as Sino-American tensions rise and fall. As reported by *Reuters*, amidst hard feelings in the spring of 2009, China’s holdings fell from nearly \$900 billion to around \$764 billion. By July, however, as feelings calmed, Beijing’s holdings climbed again to a record \$940 billion. Perhaps this helps explain another anecdote recounted in other cables publicized by WikiLeaks: in June 2009, the head of China’s sovereign wealth fund asked U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner to pressure regulators at the U.S. Federal Reserve to speed up their approval of the fund’s investment in Morgan Stanley. Whether by coincidence or otherwise, the deal was announced the very next day.<sup>60</sup>

It would appear that access to the fabled riches of the Chinese market and China’s rapidly-expanding modern economy, or the possibility of exclusion, are levers of influence that officials in Beijing are not shy about using. It is such dynamics that have led some Taiwan observers, for instance, to wonder whether the explosion of cross-straits economic engagement in recent years will render Taiwan’s government simply unable to cross Beijing. By some accounts, even the relatively pro-integration *Kuomintang* government of Ma Ying-Jeou in Taiwan is increasingly interested in diversifying its range of economic interactions. In what amounts to an existential competition in the employment of “soft power,” Taiwanese authorities like to say that mainlanders’ increasing exposure to Taiwan’s vibrant democracy will encourage change in China. Officials in Beijing, however, are simply betting the other way, that is, on the age-old capacity of their enormous country to absorb and co-opt anything they cannot directly control. It is unclear who will win this “soft” battle.

So far, at least, “soft” PRC muscle-flexing has been most commonly exerted on “hot button” issues tied to particular areas of neuralgia in Beijing—questions related, for instance, to Taiwan, Tibet, or the Falun Gong—and does not seem to be in any way an everyday practice. If done shrewdly, however, such power doesn’t *have* to be routinely exerted. The whole point is to establish a quiet system of normative expectations whereby those who wish to engage with the Chinese police themselves, leaving no need for heavy-handed official interference. This is far preferable to routine meddling, and not just because it is easier. An effective system of self-policing has two main benefits: it not only produces substantive positions congenial

to Beijing, but also permits CCP officials to indulge quasi-Confucian pretensions of benevolent virtue that are important to the party's domestic legitimacy. In a system that relies on self-policing, it is easier to pretend that the outside world is not *coerced* into conformity, but rather arrives at this point by recognizing and validating the correctness of CCP views.

### Conclusion

From a U.S. perspective, it seems that the romanticized conception of “soft power” entails considerable opportunity costs. At an extreme, enthusiasm about the virtues and possibilities of “softness” can lead to atrophy of the policymaking process. After all, if one assumes that one's values or modes of political or economic organization are so powerful that they will in time triumph all of their own, there is little reason to pay attention to policymaking. Assuming that “soft power” works without having to manipulate anything in a deliberate fashion is akin to assuming that some socio-cultural *deus ex machina* will intervene to make everything right without having actually to develop, articulate, and implement real policy.

One can perhaps see “soft power” theory as being a contributor to the Obama Administration's distaste for having to make difficult moral choices and face challenging trade-offs in foreign and national security policy. If simply relying upon the attraction of our “values” will produce a better world all by itself, for example, why go to the trouble of assuring allies of the strength of U.S. security guarantees, reducing the role nuclear weapons play in American security strategy, and slashing conventional military budgets? Through a prism that claims to rely on “soft power” as a quasi-substitute for reliance upon other types of power, such security trade-offs do not have to be made or can be dismissed as unreal, or false choices. The “soft power” of American values, moral authority, and overseas socio-cultural ubiquity will assure triumph in the end either way.

Perhaps in part because of President Obama's seeming faith that all manner of policy issues would magically sort themselves out after, or simply *because*, he had arrived in the White House to model “change,” the rhetorical device of the “false choice” quickly became one of the signature tropes of his presidency. As Ruth Marcus has pointed out, the president's use of this phrase—in discussing issues as diverse as financial reform, environmental regulation, defense contracting, civil liberties, crime policy, health care, Iraq, Native Americans, the space program, and Libya—seemed designed to encourage listeners to confuse facing *hard* choices with not having to make them at all.<sup>61</sup> This line of thinking is manifested in contemporary U.S. foreign policy perhaps more than anywhere else: by being “soft,” we could achieve our interests without having to face the expense, anxieties, and tough decisions involved in maintaining and exercising more traditional aspects of national power.

Such passivity can be costly in a complicated and unpredictable world, however, especially given the considerable historical dependence of statecraft upon “hard” capabilities. It would no doubt be wonderful to believe that freedom and prosperity were enough to ensure their own survival and per-



petuation, but what if this is not always so? If faith in the all-vanquishing power of "soft power" leads one to neglect the maintenance of "hard power" as the world sometimes require, that faith must be regarded as maladaptive.

It is not enough, moreover, simply to assume that "soft power" will triumph in the end. Even if one were right about the eventual triumph of our values and socio-economic model, there would remain the vexing question of how long this victory will take, and what might happen before that point is reached. This is by no means a trivial observation. Simply comparing snapshot pictures of the beginning and end of the twentieth century, for example, might lead an observer from another planet to conclude that humanity had been on an uninterrupted march of upward progress. Comparing the century's end to its beginning, it could be said that more humans had come to live healthier and longer lives than ever before, and that a greater proportion of the species than ever had come to enjoy democratic rights and freedoms.

This hypothetical alien observer might be right in pointing to an *aggregate* trend of salutary human development over the course of the century, but it seems deeply inadequate to conclude that all was well simply because it seemed to have ended so. The alien's perspective would miss, for instance, the enormous volatility and misery that occurred between those snapshots. (Among other things, he would remain ignorant of two global wars causing scores of millions of casualties, several campaigns of genocide in which millions more were killed, a pandemic that killed still further millions, the emergence of the specter of nuclear holocaust and new chemical and biological weapons threats, the chaos and inhumanity of civil wars and spasms of inter-communal violence, and the bellicose and homicidal tyrannies of the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and Maoist China.) His perspective would also miss the vital role played, both in bringing about the seeming triumph of democracy and economic opportunity by century's end and in creating those great pendulum swings of catastrophe and opportunity along the way, by decision-makers who faced daunting dilemmas, and who struggled with an enormous range of challenges over the course of the century with varying degrees of competence, wisdom, and success.

A mere snapshot view of progress from the beginning to the end of the twentieth century, in other words, would tell us almost as little about that century as would an assessment of a single human life that began and ended with comparing vital statistics at birth and on the deathbed. Much as an individual life is lived between those bookends, and might be meaningful or meaningless, successful or unsuccessful, and happy or miserable according to what choices are made. Similarly, public policymaking occurs along a country's way toward what the future. The responsibilities of confronting challenges and making choices during this trajectory cannot be bypassed or ignored.

Even if one's values really will triumph in the end, therefore, that end may not come for a long time, and there will be innumerable policy problems along the way. To put trust in "soft power," to make things come out fine *without* making hard choices seems folly indeed. Depending upon how things actually turn out, which, of course, cannot really be known, such an

approach might make one a prophet, but it does not make a responsible policymaker.

What, then, should we make of “soft power” as we have examined its potential and limitations in U.S. and Chinese practice? First, one is struck by the degree to which Obama Administration officials—their analysis having perhaps been outrun by their enthusiasm in differentiating themselves from the Bush Administration—oversold the potential of “soft power” to fuel a “smart power” revolution in U.S. foreign affairs. The modern gospel of American “soft power,” however, has tended to mistake impact for utility, confusing the United States’ enormous global presence and visibility for the ability of U.S. leaders to leverage that presence toward policy ends.

Just how different these two concepts actually are can be seen by how few points of influence the leaders of free-market democracies actually have in shaping the myriad of interactions in a globalized world. Possessing only a few such tools to begin with, and being surprisingly ambivalent about using the presidential “bully pulpit” to promote American political values, the Obama Administration has ended with both a weak theory of power and a disappointing record of practice.

Considered through the prism of usability, there is reason to question whether making “soft power” the centerpiece of the United States’ semi-

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competitive relationship with China. To be sure, the United States still has vastly more impact in the world than does China, and indeed still a much greater ability to control the terms of debate in international politics. This is a cause of great frustration to CCP officials, who resent and envy America’s influence, and who speak of the need for Beijing to do better at “grabbing discursive power and

[drawing] eyes and ears” in “setting the terms of the agenda” for global affairs.<sup>62</sup>

It is not clear, however, that aggregate impact, if not usable in some way, is “power” in any meaningful sense at all. U.S. leaders command enormous influence in the world, but it remains open to question whether this owes more to “soft power” or “harder” factors such as Washington’s pos-

session of the most powerful military machine in human history, its global network of security alliances, and its central role in global political and financial institutions after the second world war.

Even if its evangelists are right that "soft power" represents the wave of the future, one might still wonder whether the United States has a comparative advantage in its use as the twenty-first century progresses. Our examination of Chinese soft power suggests that market economies organized on a Leninist political basis, which Nicholas Kristof wittily termed "Market-Leninism,"<sup>63</sup> enjoy some advantages in turning "soft power" into a tool of national power. Unlike the leaders of a free country, the CCP's leadership has real ability shape almost *every* aspect of China's engagement with the world when they believe necessary.

This is not to say that China's "soft power" has no limits, of course. CCP officials are right that China lags almost immeasurably far behind the United States and the West in many aspects of global socio-cultural clout. We will know when Beijing has *really* arrived in the big leagues of "soft" influence when

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In its enthusiasm for the romantically unmilitarist potential of "soft power," therefore, the Obama Administration seems to have picked a fight on troublesome terrain. If "soft power" is conceived as a form of power usable by national leaders, it is not clear that this terrain is one that favors a free democracy in dealing with an economically vibrant Leninist autocracy. In such circumstances, "soft power" competition may actually be an asymmetric conflict in which the advantage, at least in the short run, lies with the unfree.

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Chinese who find Western ones difficult to pronounce, throngs of young musicians in the West strive for international fame and fortune playing *Chinese* instruments in recitals of traditional *Chinese* music, and citizens in the world's democracies have to be watched carefully by the police in order to keep them from demanding a Leninist political system. Today, of course, these things occur only in reverse. If soft power is, as Joseph Nye has argued, about the power of "attraction" rather than "coercion,"<sup>64</sup> it is hard to avoid the conclusion that despite Beijing's ongoing efforts to promote Chinese culture as a form of "soft power," the rest of the world is not much interested, and indeed finds itself repelled by Chinese politics.

With all of China's modern insecurities, and its history of civilizational preeminence, such indicia of an inversion of the traditional Sinic cultural hierarchy must be discomfiting, to say the least. (In a system in which, since ancient times, political authority was felt to flow from a type of moral virtue bound up not only with leaders' actual behavior but also with concepts of civilizational hierarchy, such an inversion might be felt to have implications for the CCP's political legitimacy as well.) Remembering how very far Beijing is from the kind of deep influence in the world that it would like to have, we should thus be careful to avoid simple China-bashing by assuming the world to lie helplessly at the feet of a rapacious Sinic "soft power" juggernaut.

That said, we should also not underestimate what China can accomplish with its existing "soft power." Coupled with China's newfound wealth, the CCP's capacity to exert considerable control over actors and institutions across the breadth of Chinese society—and its willingness to do so—makes Beijing an important player in the world of "soft power" competition. A case could even be made that notwithstanding its allure as the foreign policy tool most beloved of the Western liberal intelligentsia, "soft power" is in some respects at least as potent a weapon in the hands of Beijing's modern experiment in "capitalism with Leninist characteristics" as it is for countries in which citizens enjoy genuine political and economic freedoms.

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We should be wary of modern Washington's politically-correct idealization of "soft power" as a panacea for our country's foreign policy and national security chal-

lenges, or as a rationalization for the relinquishment of "hard power" capabilities. "Soft power" approaches are surely worth something, but they are being oversold in contemporary Washington.

If there is anything to the idea of a genuinely "smart" approach to wielding power, it surely involves emphasizing areas in which one possesses a relative advantage and de-emphasizing others. "Soft power" does not provide the leaders of free countries with as powerful a toolkit as its advocates would

have one believe, and it is not obvious that in a “soft power” rivalry with a Leninist market economy the advantage always lies with the West. Modern American foreign policy would stand on firmer ground if it overcame both its fashionable distaste for “hard power” and its inexplicable skittishness about using those “soft power” tools that really do seem to be feared by Market-Leninists, Islamist theocrats, and authoritarian despots alike: genuinely “navigating by our values,” promoting the distinctively American ideals of multiparty democracy, checks and balances, constitutional rule of law, and a political freedom for an informed and empowered citizenry.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> Madeleine Albright, remarks in Nashville, Tennessee, February 19, 1998, [http://www.fas.org/news/iraq/1998/02/19/98021907\\_tpo.html](http://www.fas.org/news/iraq/1998/02/19/98021907_tpo.html).

<sup>3</sup> Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “The War on Soft Power,” *Foreign Policy*, April 12, 2011, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/04/12/the\\_war\\_on\\_soft\\_power](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/04/12/the_war_on_soft_power)

<sup>4</sup> Hendrik Herzberg, “Smart Power,” *The New Yorker*, January 26, 2009, [http://www.newyorker.com/talk/2009/01/26/090126ta\\_talk\\_hertzberg](http://www.newyorker.com/talk/2009/01/26/090126ta_talk_hertzberg).

<sup>5</sup> Daniel Benjamin, “The Obama Administration’s Counterterrorism Policy at One Year,” remarks at the CATO Institute, January 13, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rm/2010/135171.htm>.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Rose Gottemoeller, “Opening Statement at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference,” May 5, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/t/avc/rls/122672.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of State, “The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR): Leading Through Civilian Power” (undated), <http://www.state.gov/s/dmr/qddr/>.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Leading Through Civilian Power: The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (2010), at 2–3, available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/153635.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Christopher A. Ford, “Counter-Terrorism and the Obama Administration,” *New Paradigms Forum* website, (December 13, 2010), available at <http://www.newparadigmsforum.com/NPFtestsite/?p=596>.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Jim Lobe, “U.S. standing plunges across Arab world,” *Al Jazeera*, (July 14, 2011), available at <http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/features/2011/07/2011714104413787827.html>.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Steven Lee Myers, “Foreign Aid Set to Take a Hit in U.S. Budget Crisis,” *New York Times*, (October 3, 2011), available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/04/us/politics/foreign-aid-set-to-take-hit-in-united-states-budget-crisis.html?pagewanted=all>.

<sup>12</sup> Barack Obama, remarks in Cairo, June 4, 2011, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/04/AR2009060401117.html>.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Richard Spencer, “Hillary Clinton: Chinese human rights secondary to economic survival,” *The Telegraph*, February 20, 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/asia/china/4735087/Hillary-Clinton-Chinese-human-rights-secondary-to-economic-survival.html>.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, “Egypt: President Mubarak must stay for now, U.S. envoy says,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 5, 2011, available at <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/babylonbeyond/2011/02/egypt-president-mubarak-must-stay-us-envoy-says.html>.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, Nicole Gaouette & Gopal Ratnam, “Clinton Says U.S. Won’t Intervene in Syria, Sees Progress in Libya Fight,” *Bloomberg.com*, March 28, 2011, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-03-27/u-s-won-t-intervene-in-syria-unrest-clinton-says-on-cbs.html>.

<sup>16</sup> Scott Wilson & Joby Warrick, “Syria’s Assad must go, Obama says,” *Washington Post*, August 18, 2011, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/assad-must-go-obama-says/2011/08/18/gIQAelheOJ\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/assad-must-go-obama-says/2011/08/18/gIQAelheOJ_story.html).

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Background briefing by Senior State Department Officials on Internet Freedom Program, June 15 2011, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/rm/2011/166295.htm>.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Horowitz quote in Mark Landler and Brian Knowlton, “U.S. Policy to Address Internet Freedom,” *New York Times*, February 14, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/15/world/15clinton.html>.

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, Austin Ramzy, “State Stamps Out Small ‘Jasmine’ Protests in China,” *Time*, February 21, 2011, <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2052860,00.html>.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, William Lowther, “US to cut VOA broadcasts in Chinese,” *Taipei Times*, February 16, 2011, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2011/02/16/2003495998>.

<sup>21</sup> Jia Qinglin and Luo Gan quote in Richard McGregor, *The Party: The Secret World of China’s Communist Rulers*, New York: HarperCollins, 2010, 25.

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Barack H. Obama, news conference in Strasbourg, April 4, 2009, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=85959&st=american+exceptionalism&st1=#axcz1V2ZvSorg>.

<sup>23</sup> Christopher A. Ford, “On Sanctions . . . And Iran,” *New Paradigms Forum* website, February 14, 2011, <http://www.newparadigmsforum.com/NPFtestsite/?p=662>.

<sup>24</sup> John R. Bolton, remarks at American Enterprise Institute, June 25, 2004, <http://www.iwar.org.uk/news-archive/2004/06-25-5.htm>.

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, “U.S. punishes firms in Iran and China,” *BBC News*, May 23, 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/2931154.stm>. NORINCO was also subjected to U.S. sanctions twice in 2004, and again in 2005. See U.S.-China Commission, “List of U.S. Sanctions Imposed on Chinese Entities from June 2004 to October 2008,” *Annual Report 2008*, Appendix V, [http://www.uscc.gov/annual\\_report/2008/appendix\\_5.pdf](http://www.uscc.gov/annual_report/2008/appendix_5.pdf).

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, Christopher A. Ford, “The NPT Review Process and Nuclear Weapons Proliferation,” *New Paradigms Forum* website, December 1, 2011, <http://www.newparadigmsforum.com/NPFtestsite/?p=1160>.

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, remarks made by Obama adviser in Charles Krauthammer, “The Obama doctrine: leading from behind,” *Washington Post*, April 28, 2011, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-obama-doctrine-leading-from-behind/2011/04/28/AFBCy18E\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-obama-doctrine-leading-from-behind/2011/04/28/AFBCy18E_story.html).

<sup>28</sup> “Where’s the party?” *Economist*, January 28, 2012), 43.

<sup>29</sup> “Theme and variations,” *Economist*, January 21, 2012, at 9; “New masters of the universe,” *Economist*, January 21, 2012, 6.

<sup>30</sup> “The visible hand,” *Economist*, January 21, 2012), pp. 3–4.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* p. 4.

<sup>32</sup> McGregor, *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> “No change,” *The Economist*, December 10, 2011, 46–47.

<sup>34</sup> David Bandursky, “China hails ‘online democracy’ as Wen goes live on the Web,” *China Media Project* website, March 2, 2009, <http://cmp.hku.hk/2009/03/02/1502/>.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, Christopher A. Ford, “When Censor Meets Spin Doctor,” *New Paradigms Forum* website, November 10, 2011, (“By helping provide [central leadership] officials . . . with information about the state of affairs in their dominions, encouraging the myth of a benevolent Center to which one can appeal in the face of local mistreatment, allowing citizens some ability to ‘vent’ dissatisfaction in a system otherwise notoriously neuralgic to criticism, and providing a means by which independent-minded lower-level authorities can often be brought to heel, such new-media-facilitated processes are to some extent tools of Central power, not symptoms of its collapse. . . . These concepts are not meant to suggest what we in the West would understand as real democracy, but rather reinforce the authority of top power-holders as they remain in their current positions indefinitely.”), <http://www.newparadigmsforum.com/NPFtestsite/?p=1084>.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, “Blind Man’s Bluff,” *The Economist*, November 5, 2011, (recounting Chinese citizens’ use of Internet for political mobilization), <http://www.economist.com/node/21536639>.

<sup>37</sup> Frank N. Pieke, *The Good Communist: Elite Training and State Building in Today’s China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 189.

<sup>38</sup> See Eric Schmitt, “Two Victims in U.S. Raid Reportedly Were Spies,” *New York Times*, June 25, 1999, <http://www.taiwandc.org/nyt-9907.htm>.

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- <sup>42</sup> “China Media Capital and News Corporation Enter Acquisition Agreement for STAR China’s TV Business,” News Corporation press release, August 9, 2010, [http://www.newscorp.com/news/news\\_456.html](http://www.newscorp.com/news/news_456.html).
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- <sup>44</sup> Ben Fritz & John Horn, “Reel China: Hollywood tries to stay on China’s good side,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 16, 2011, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/mar/16/entertainment/la-et-china-red-dawn-20110316>.
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- <sup>46</sup> Wendell Minnick, “Taiwan Apache Deal Moving Forward,” web posting, April 12, 2010 <http://minnickarticles.blogspot.com/2010/04/taiwan-apache-deal-moving-forward.html>.
- <sup>47</sup> Aaron Back & Ting-I Tsai, “China Vows Sanctions Over U.S. Defense Sales to Taiwan,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 3, 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703338504575041172542117834.html>.
- <sup>48</sup> Gertz, “Arms sales to Taiwan provoke Beijing’s ire,” *ibid.*
- <sup>49</sup> Back & Tsai, *ibid.*
- <sup>50</sup> “All change,” *The Economist*, December 10, 2011, 45–46.
- <sup>51</sup> Anne-Marie Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007).
- <sup>52</sup> Anne-Marie Brady, *Making the Foreign Serve China: Managing Foreigners in the People’s Republic* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).
- <sup>53</sup> Matthew Day, “Defiant Sarkozy meets Dalai Lama despite China’s trade threat,” *The Telegraph*, December 6, 2008, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/3629865/Defiant-Nicolas-Sarkozy-meets-Dalai-Lama-despite-Chinas-trade-threat.html>.
- <sup>54</sup> “China postpones talks with Airbus: spokesman,” *AFP*, December 27, 2008, available at [http://www.spacemart.com/reports/China\\_postpones\\_talks\\_with\\_Airbus\\_spokesman\\_999.html](http://www.spacemart.com/reports/China_postpones_talks_with_Airbus_spokesman_999.html).
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