**Title: Soft Power Internationalism**

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he existing literature on soft power provides a great deal of insight but it is lacking “greater conceptual refinement, theoretical development, and empirical rigor. “Soft Power and Internationalization” has tried to comprehend empirical data and various concepts of “Soft Power” developed and implemented in different countries and analysed them through various conceptual and theoretical frameworks.

The most interesting thing in the book is the selection of case study countries and the way writer has made connection with the overall concept of soft power. For example, if we observe Brazilian soft power strategy as per the case study is internal facing and domestic politics and decisions reflected externally in their foreign policy and soft power image in the world. On contrary, since 1980s Chinese soft power strategy is more external facing and focused on how world see towards Chinese development and how soft power tools are countering the narrative of “Chinese threat theories”.

Presentation of case studies from countries like Turkey and Brazil give a fresh perspective on soft power and shows how a concept largely promulgated by the West and mostly debated among China and USA has successfully upended by emerging countries like Brazil and turkey for the sake of their own postcolonial narrative.

Joseph Nye's concept of "soft power" introduced almost two decades ago, created a debate among intellectuals and policymakers to look at another source of influence, without military and economic power. This book “Soft power and internationalism” actually is a compilation of case studies from the European Union, China, Brazil, Turkey, and the United States, analysing the descent of soft power in the Euro-Atlantic and its evolution in the hands of other states particularly China trying to counter U.S. hegemony by non-military means.

Contributors from the case study countries have shown through concepts like normative vs soft power, circulating liberalism, democratizing internet how global and regional powers understand soft power and applied its various tools to create new ways of diplomacy, trading relationships, buying collaborations and partners, and develop regional cooperation. Offering a critical history of soft power as an intellectual project as well as a diplomatic practice.

In the introductory chapter of the book it is suggested that the global internet is one of the defining features of soft power internationalism. As growing world powers have turned to cultural resources to exert influence in foreign affairs, the internet at the same time has become the “terrain” of huge public and private investment and essential source of communicating diplomatic messages for example imagine a power of a tweet (Prime Minister Moodi tweet on Imran Khan’s health) or video on social media sowing seed of revolution as we have seen in Arab Spring. With the historical perspective writer has also highlighted internet’s role in geopolitics, defining national policies (data rights and free speech policy) and by coining term 5G proliferation also highlighted the fear of an internet/technological arms race between US and China.

In Chapter two Dilek Barlas and Lerna Yanık have evaluated Turkey’s understanding of soft particularly in case of its trading policies and changes in its laws. Turkey is amending its human rights policies and domestic laws to adjust to EU standards. Here it is interesting to explore the basis of these amendments whether it is to enhance economic benefits and market access or is it just because of attractiveness of EU economic and political system? As per Joseph Nye these amendments are prime example of European Union successful execution policy of soft power to influence positive change. But at the same writers also refer to Turkey’s own “transformative power” by giving a historical context since 1980s. Since 2002, not only neo- ottomanism and “Turkish model of transformation” made a comeback but the term soft power itself became one of the most frequently referred terms by Turkish leadership and has wielded soft power as the condition for being or becoming a global power – a goal being pursued by Turkish leadership.

In the third chapter, Oliver Stuenkel and Fernando have presented the concept of soft power in relation to domestic political transitions and political decisions reflecting on the soft power image of Brazil and its foreign policy. In the last decade, Former Brazilian President Lula da Silva’s efforts to make his diplomatic actions more visible has repositioned Brazil itself globally during the last decade. Brazil intensified its investments in South America which increased its assertiveness, and surfaced to create new regional cooperation institutions like the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the South American Defence Council (CDS). At the Global level, Brazil played a crucial role in the Doha Round negotiations of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and has been a leading country to lead discussions and respond to the issues of climate change and nuclear proliferation. But in the present era of President Bolsonara, Brazil is no longer interested and ready to contribute to climate change initiatives and lead south economic cooperation initiatives. The change of regime has altogether negatively transformed the soft power image of Brazil as a lead South South cooperation country, climate change lead country and humanitarian support and donor country. This shows the crucial role of leadership in developing soft power image of the country and how much the domestic dynamics of the country and politics reflect the image of the country globally.

In Chapter four Martina Bassan, Zhongying Pang and Anastas Vangeli talks about the histrocial perspective of soft power in China and how China is exercising soft power tools in Africa with the partner countries under economic cooperation projects like BRI. The rise of China, its impact on world affairs, and its apparent impact on the world peace is a matter of great concern, not just among foreign intellectuals and policy makers but also in Chinese intellectual circles and think tanks. Beijing has progressively applied the concept of soft power, in diplomatic language, such as in the “ good neighbour diplomacy” (the 1980s and early 1990s), “great power diplomacy”(late 1990s), “energy diplomacy”, “soft power diplomacy”, “public diplomacy”(2000s) as well as “peaceful rise” and “peaceful development” and “harmonious world”. Confucius Institutes—nodes of Chinese culture and language—the number in the hundreds and are present on six continents are one of the prime examples of Chinese soft power at work. Chinese scholars like Bassan have highlighted other sources of soft power, including China's traditional culture, the network of 70 million overseas Chinese, Chinese development models to eradicate poverty makes it attractive to developing countries, China's positive role as mediator in the North Korean nuclear stand-off and most importantly its five principles of mutual respect and non-interference in domestic politics of other countries presents itself as peaceful rising power

***Reviewed by Talha Chishti, student of MPhil at IR Department, NDU.***