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## The Application and Revelation of Joseph Nye's Soft Power Theory

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### Abstract

Since the theory of the Soft Power proposed by Joseph Nye came into being, this theory attracted lots of attention. However, the research on the source of the theory is limited. This paper introduces the Soft Power Theory, the source of the Soft Power Theory, Joseph Nye of soft power theory under Different Countries application analysis and its revelation.

**Key words:** The Soft Power Theory; The source of the theory; Application analysis; Revelation

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### INTRODUCTION

Soft power has already become one significant concept which enjoys attention from all over the world. Joseph, Nye summarizes the soft power into several aspects, "soft power is a kind of ability, which can realize the goal through the attraction instead of the violence or

the temptation. This attraction stems from the culture, political value and international policy. When the policy in one nation is logical and right in the eyes of others, the soft power has already enhanced dramatically".

Nye treats the culture, political value and international policy as the key features of the soft power. Culture is the superstructure, which will have profound significance in a nation. Political value represents the political ideal of one nation and has the international recognition and legality. International policy includes the world ideal advocated by the nation and concrete measures, which is also the major component of the soft power.

### 1. THE SOURCE OF THE SOFT POWER THEORY

The Soft Power Theory has become one of the key words in recent years, its idea is a kind of creation in international politics, and however, it's not an absolutely new concept. Nearly half a century ago, the Italian thinker Gramsci Antonio's opinion of "culture hegemony" analyzes one of the most important components - culture. Nowadays, the classical realism leader Hans J. Morgenthau also think, "the most meaningful ideas in cultural imperialism lie in conquering and controlling the heart of the common people (Morgenthau, 2005)" and emphasize the effects of the national character, national morale and international policy quality on national power. The American scholar Huntington Samuel thinks that the source of the future international collision and division of the human beings lies in the culture, neither the ideology nor the economy.

#### 1.1 Gramsci's Culture Hegemony Idea

Culture hegemony is the concept firstly proposed by Gramsci in the philosophy of the social theory. His idea of culture hegemony mainly emphasizes the possibility of cultural practical politics and explanation of the

ideology, introduce the discussion about the country, the society and the culture and ideology. Gramsci rethought the society based on the political structure of the western capitalist countries. He thinks that the country is the combination of both the political society and the citizen society and introduces the theory: the country consists of the political society and the citizen society. Gramsci obviously put the citizen society in the superstructure. He points that: currently we can determine the two classes of the superstructure: one is the citizen society, namely the total of the private organization, the other is the political society or the country (Gramsci, 2000).

Gramsci realizes that the most effective tool to control the whole country is not the force to control the political and economy or the army, but the ideology and the culture. Meanwhile, he thinks that the ideology is not the false ideas forced by the leaders towards to the average people. Gramsci fully realizes that the importance of controlling the ideology and emphasizes the function of the culture, he thinks that the leaders should shape the ideas of the average towards the world and then the common people can obey the current politics and the social orders (JING, 2004).

Gramsci's idea of the Culture Hegemony emphasizes the ideology and the culture, is one of the cornerstones during the development of the soft power. Then it attracts more and more attention of the importance of the culture in the soft power.

### 1.2 Morgenthau's Idea on Power

Morgenthau is the founder of the realism who is the famous professor in the international relations. Morgenthau thinks that the realism emphasizes the power, every country has its special character. His famous literature, *The international politics—the war seeking for the power and peace* proposes the famous and chief idea of national interest: use the power to determine the national interest.

Morgenthau thinks that national power consists of the visible power and the invisible power, they come from 9 different parts: the geographic factors, the natural resources, the population, the national character, the national morale, the industrial ability, the military equipments, the international policy quality and the government quality. They not only emphasize the visible power but also the invisible power, namely, the national morale and the national morale and the international policy quality which also have direct effects on the country.

Morgenthau thinks that “the national morale and the national character are hard to predict, they also think these two aspects will have permanent and decisive effects on the international policies (Morgenthau, 1995).” Meanwhile, he thinks that the international policy quality is another important component of the national power. If the international policy of one nation is attractive to its citizens, the government can obtain the unpredicted advantages and power. The invisible power can enhance the

national morale and the national power, can also destroy the national morale. Thus, Morgenthau treat the effects from the invisible power as the same important as the visible power, such as the military power, he is strongly opposed to opinion that the national power is identified with the military power.

### 1.3 Huntington's Clash of Civilizations

The American scholar Huntington Samuel is the founder of the Clash of Civilizations. He thinks that the source of the future international collision and division of the human beings lies in the culture, neither the ideology nor the economy. The major collision will occur between different countries or the group, the collision in the civilization will dominate the global politics. Huntington thinks that the civilization collision will be the major threat to the international peace, the world order based on the civilization will be the best guarantee to avoid the world war, the respect and recognition towards difference under different civilization is quite important.

The western culture is unique and not universal, but the Islamic civilization and the Confucian culture can be a threat or can challenge the western civilization. Just as Huntington says, the success in materialize make the culture and ideology more attractive, the failure in economy and military can lead to the self suspicion or the crisis of the recognition.

Today, the order of the world is really complicated which is shaped by the boundaries between the culture and the civilization. In history, multi-polarity and multi-civilization come into the political condition, the relative leadership under different civilizations and the core national power are changing dramatically, which can make the estrangement and cold between different countries under different cultures, to make matters worse, the relation can be hostile relationship, while the civilization can be the cold war or the cold peace. Once the culture and the civilization divide the people, the similarity of the culture can bring people together, boost the belief and cooperation or decrease the isolation.

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## 2. THE SOFT POWER THEORY

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Soft Power was initially proposed by Joseph Nye, the objective is to retort the cult theory of American Decomposition. Since Soft Power proposes, Joseph Nye extended and improved it. Nye summarized Soft Power: “Soft Power is a kind of ability, and it can gain its ends by attraction rather than alternating intimidation and bribery. This kind of attraction comes from midland culture, political value and foreign policy”.

Soft Power comes from resources and its utilization. Soft power has to provide the use of resources. Joseph Nye said in his article “soft power” think that ideology, international mechanism and other elements is formed of the soft power carrier. In the later papers and books,

Nye regarded culture, political value and foreign policy as the main factors of Soft Power. As the superstructure, culture has significant impact on a nation. Political value represents the political ideal of a nation and has the international recognition and legality. International policy, another major component of the soft power, includes the world ideal advocated by a nation and its concrete measures. The three elements are closely related and interacted, where the political value is the core, culture the support and the international policy the measures to take.

The hard power and the soft power are different but have some relationship to some extent, the soft power and the hard power can supplement and depend on each other. The soft power must base on the hard power. Only the support of the hard power has been set up, the function of the soft power can work well. The culture, sense of value and the policies must be based on the hard power. Conversely, the soft power can affect the hard power. The culture, sense of value and the systems are the premises of the development of the hard power. The soft power can boost the hard power. The soft power is the major component of the comprehensive power and supplement, depend on the hard power.

### 3. JOSEPH NYE OF SOFT POWER THEORY UNDER DIFFERENT COUNTRIES APPLICATION ANALYSIS

In the international contacts, a country's prosperity depends not only on the level of the hard power, but also on the soft power.

#### 3.1 The Powerful Soft Power of the US

Joseph Nye thinks that, the elegant culture of the US make the soft power for the nation after the cold war. Compared with the political significance obtained through the popular culture, the elegant culture's effects on the politics is obvious. The US culture contains the vanity, sex, force, boredom and materialism, which is not the total. Meanwhile, he also describes the vanity, individualism, opposition towards following the old, pluralism, freedom and sense of worth based on the democratic politics and freedom. They are more effective than the politics and the economy. The attraction of the popular culture can help the US reach the important international goal. No matter how good the military and the political commitment had laid solid foundation on the success of the US during the cold war, the attraction of the culture and the economy has obtained the hearts of the common people. The communication on the academic and science can enhance the level of the soft power. The culture relation can produce the attraction and the soft power which can contribute a lot to the American goal.

The US uses the acts and words to realize its sense of worth. In the sense of worth, federalism, the democracy

and the open markets are the core of sense of worth for the US. The democracy and the human rights are the special attraction in the political value. The way the US performs can enhance the figure and the legality, inversely, it can be helpful for the international policy of the US. The attraction of the US largely depends on the sense of worth through the international policy essence. The soft power will seek for the cooperation with other countries through the attraction instead of the force or the trade. If the important sense of worth achieved by the policy is shared by many people, the policy will be very attractive. Every country will seek for the national interests in the international policies. The big countries like the US, can obtain the double interests through the improvement on the public interests, both on the basic interests and the improvements on the soft power.

#### 3.2 The Decrease of the Soviet Union Soft Power

Nye thinks that during the cold war the major opponent in the soft power field is the Soviet Union. But Due to the faults of the Soviet Union in the international policies and the national affairs, the comprehensive national strength decreased, which can be the major reason for the disorganization of the Soviet Union. the closure of the structure and repellency towards the western capitalism culture make it lose in the field of the pop culture battle, it never challenges the status in the fields of the movie, the TV and the pop music in the US. The American pop culture leaves deep impression on the Soviet Union market, while the Soviet Union has no its place. So the amount of the soft power created by the Soviet Union is very few, which leads the decrease in the culture competition and the decrease in the soft power.

The Soviet Union not only has the strong hard power, but also has the strong soft power. The Soviet Union makes other countries believe the Communist Party through various activities. But the fact came out after the advocate on non Stalin culture which made much negative effects, and the central structure didn't catch up with the flexible market in the advanced information age which also made the economy poor. In the international policies. The closed structure, unattractive culture and high-pressure international policies make the soft power in the Soviet Union decrease gradually. Just like the survey showed, the pace for the development of the soft power was too slow and the effects of the struggle for the better attraction are not obvious.

#### 3.3 The Rise of the Chinese Soft Power

Nye thinks that, Chinese ancient culture, art and cooking have left profound effects in the whole world. During the last 20 years in the 20st century, China enjoyed the 7%-9% increase which made the GNP tripled, meanwhile, the fame and the soft power of China increased. The extension of the soft power in China has appeared obviously. In 2000, the Chinese Frenchman obtained the first Nobel

Prize in Literature. The Chinese movie *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* became the best non-English movie which enjoyed the highest ticket office. The Chinese player Yao Ming in the NBA Houston Rockets may become another Michael Jordan. The inhabited spacecraft help China improve the fame and the attraction.

The rise of a country can be mainly summed up as the comprehensive rise in the national power. According to the idea of the Harvard professor Joseph Nye: the comprehensive national power contains the hard power including the economy, the technology and the military and the soft power containing the culture, the ideology and their attraction. The development of China needs the soft power theory, since the reform and opening-up of our country, the economy of our country develops fast and the comprehensive national power improves continuously. This rise is not only a process of the improvement of the economy, the technology and the military, but also the boost of the attraction of the culture and the ideology, the accumulation of the development of the soft power.

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#### 4. REVELATION

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Firstly, the soft power can strengthen the legality and the recognition of the existence of the state power.

The foundation of a state power requires the identification of the people and the recognition of other countries. If the foundation of the country can't receive the identification of the people, it can't carry out the political ideas, the survival of the nation can't be guaranteed; if the recognition of other countries, the survival and development of the country will have to suffer the large prevention, the state power won't exist. The legality and the recognition of the state power is the basis of obtaining and applying the power. To obtain the state power needs the force, the force can obtain the power, but maintenance of the state power can't rely on the force. The force can't enhance the legality. The foundation of the state power must rely on the acceptance of the common people and the recognition of other countries. Only in this way can the legality be guaranteed.

The soft power is to get the understanding, the recognition and the support through the communication, the attraction and the persuasive methods. As the leaders of the state power, they will use the application of the soft power to put the national sense of worth, the idea to manage the government into the national political structure and the international rules. Then they will use the rule and the structure to lead and construct the recognition of the people, reduce and avoid the negative aspects, improve the recognition towards the structure and the rule and enhance the legality of the state power.

Thus, the soft power emphasizes that it's important to improve the recognition of the people towards the national

structure and the rule and the legality through the soft manners.

Secondly, the soft power can strengthen the cohesion and the attraction.

The cohesion is a kind of strong spiritual power. The culture is the soul of a nation, the ethos is the reflection of the national culture, the value represented by the ethos have the strong cohesion for the ethnic group. The cohesion also lies in the attraction and the influence towards other countries.

The attraction and the influence of a nation towards other countries is important for the maintenance of the national interests. The goal of the attraction lies in the obtaining of the recognition and the support from other countries. In the informational society, the relationship between different countries is becoming closer. If a nation can't obtain the recognition and the support from that country, the development will have to suffer from big challenges. The attraction of one country towards another is the national culture, the political sense of worth and the international policies. The attraction of one country towards another country is the result of the application of the soft power and is the major reflection of the national soft power.

Thirdly, the Soft Power can help a Nation to set up the Image.

The national image will reflect during the process of the interactive procedures of the national and international activities and this will represent the status of a country in the whole world to some extent. The national image will reflect the citizens' and international society's recognition towards the state power, the culture, the sense of worth and the power. If the level is very high, the country can receive more support, the attraction of the country can be stronger and the realization of the national policies will be easier which will be beneficial to maintain the national interests.

The application of the soft power can help the country know more about the status and the role in the whole world. The soft power is to function well during the communication, the persuasion and the attraction and to recognize the image in the eyes of each other. Adjust the image in time, set up the policies which go well with the national reality and reduce the differences between the world societies.

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#### CONCLUSION

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The soft power has already become the key component of the comprehensive power of a nation, and plays an utmost role. The soft power can both strengthen the cohesion and the willpower of the people in a nation and the ability to deal with the international affairs of a nation, furthermore, it can have effect on other nations and people through the



policy, rule, mentality and the action which can be made full use by the politician to struggle for the thoughts of the common people. Emphasize and develop the soft power of a nation is beneficial for enhancing the comprehensive power, the international competitive strength and the effect of a nation. Therefore, taking advantage of the soft power will be helpful to realize the interests of a nation and targets of the international policy. Improve the understanding of the soft power is beneficial to protect other countries to use the soft power to carry out peaceful evolution.

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