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**NON-MILITARY INSTRUMENTS OF FOREIGN POLICY IN  
CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

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**Abstract.** It is undeniable that economic sanctions have become an international relations tool of choice in the post-bipolar era. The range of nations that have become targets of this foreign policy instrument is growing month by month, as is the list of those states applying the sanctions. This rush to sanction has generated a great deal of criticism in both academic circles and among the multinational firms that are typically the bearers of a large part of the implicit taxation that economic sanctions represent. It is a reasonable generalization to characterize international economic sanctions as overused, ineffective, and unfair. Nevertheless, this characterization of sanctions is a generalization. In order to more fully understand what should be used and what should not, what is effective and what is not, and what is fair and what is not, a better understanding of what economic sanctions do is necessary. The article surveys the definitional issues of the economic sanctions in the international relations theory. It gives a review of the conceptual background of the economic sanctions through the prism of the classical methodological approaches of international relations theory and then goes on to explore the variables of the efficiency of economic sanctions as foreign policy tool. Then article scrutinizes of what soft power is and what are the origins and sources of soft power in contemporary international

relations. Then the compound elements of soft power and its implications are analyzed. The authors explain the relations between soft power and smart power, focuses on historical context in which the concept of soft power was formulated, discuss the contemporary communication strategies in international relations. In conclusion the authors advocate the idea of necessity for Ukrainian diplomacy to pay more attention on elements of soft power, sanctions strategy and stress that in contemporary world policy the soft power may become not only an effective tool to secure national interests of Ukraine but the mean to deter Russian influence.

**Key words:** foreign policy, international relations theory, economic sanctions, soft power, smart power, foreign policy of Ukraine, communication strategies.

For the past years non-military influence (economic sanctions and soft power) acquired growing prominence in foreign policy of the great powers. The US, the EU, China and Japan employ non-military tools in responding to the Iranian and North Korean nuclear crises that threaten their security. Non-military instruments these are means of great powers by which they seek to influence the behavior of target states, to demonstrate leadership, to resolve international conflict and to express common values. Above all, because economic rather than military strength is increasingly seen by states as the prime determinant of international power, non-military tools may begin to assume an even more prominent role.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the nature of non-military instruments (economic sanctions, soft power and communication strategies) of foreign policy within the international relations theory, because these tools are becoming increasingly central to shaping strategic outcomes in the XXI century.

At first, we will try to conceptualize the definition of the economic sanctions in the international relations theory. There is no generally accepted definition of economic sanctions. The term “economic sanctions” is one of the more confused and confusing to have entered the lexicon and discourse of international politics. Part of the ambiguity surrounding the term stems from the fact that the word “sanctions” in everyday usage carries multiple meanings. According to the Oxford Concise

Dictionary, the term can connote the granting of official permission or approval and, at the same time, a penalty or punishment for disobeying a law or rule [1, p. 11]. Confusion also results from the tendency of many scholars to use the term “sanctions” interchangeably with a raft of other descriptors, such as “economic statecraft”, “economic coercion”, “economic warfare”, “economic diplomacy” [2, p. X]. But in spite of different visions, two central definitional elements can be discerned in the concept of economic sanctions: the coercive measures need to be economic in nature and its aim needs to be political.

In XXI century the processes of globalization and the information revolution led to essential transformation of the international system, which is now composed of three different spheres: a military sphere, where the USA has unipolar control but there are several states with a growing military potential as China and Russia and which are ready to become rivalries to the American presence around the world; an economic sphere, where there is a multipolarity shared by the USA, the European Union and Japan; and a third transnational sphere, where a diversity of state and non-state agents coexist [4, p. 39]. The characteristics of the emerging threats also have their origins in the processes of globalization and the information revolution: their main agents are non-state entities that exist and act in the transnational sphere. If hard power resources can be effective in the military and economic spheres, only soft power can work at the transnational level and in reality of proxy war. For Ukraine which is evolved in a war conflict with Russia the soft power instruments can become effective tools to secure national interests of Kyiv. So in terms of aggravation of Ukrainian-Russian confrontation in its bilateral and multilateral dimensions, the issue of the content and consequences of the soft power mechanism, the soft power mechanism’s role in the relations among countries require an in-depth study.

Let now look at theoretical formulation of soft power. The concept of soft power that is well known throughout the world is only the definition used by professor Joseph Nye; nevertheless, it is not the only one and its various definitions are not free of contradictions among them.

Taking into considerations mentioned above, we are addressing the conceptualization of soft power given in Nye's main works.

We will begin with a brief discussion about the nature of power, admittedly one of the most disputed concepts in political science and international relations. Nye opts for a succinct definition: 'power is the ability to influence the behavior of others to get the outcomes one wants' [3, p. 25–9; 4, p. 4–5; 5, p. 1–5]. This conciseness allows him to focus on other aspects of power in international relations, as he moves on to articulate the distinction between hard and soft power. The concepts are twofold: 'The distinction between hard and soft power is one of degree, both in the nature of the behavior and in the tangibility of the resource' [3, p. 267; 4, p. 176; 5, p. 7]. This distinction between power behaviors and power resources is the crucial element in Nye's concept of soft power.

Thus, Nye defines soft power as the ability to make others want what you want. In this sense, soft power is the opposite of hard power, the ability to make others do what you want. As traditionally understood in international relations theories, hard power presupposes an active and direct engagement of the actors involved, expressed by incentives or threats, and is usually related to military force or economic resources. Soft power, which Nye also calls co-optive or indirect power, rests on the attraction a set of ideas exerts, or on the capacity to set political agendas that shape the preferences of others. Therefore, soft power is related to intangible resources like culture, ideologies and institutions [3, p. 31–35].

According to Nye, power behaviors are ways of exercising power. Different types of behavior form a spectrum ranging from command power to co-optive power. Command power is the ability to change what others do, while co-optive power is the ability to shape what others want. Therefore, command power is manifested through acts of coercion and persuasion, and co-optive power can be seen in the attraction exerted by a given agent and his capacity to define political agendas.

The second distinction between hard and soft power deals with the tangibility of power resources. However, the scientist does not apply any specific terminology at this point. Referring to tangibility, Nye uses the terms hard power resources and soft



power resources. Hard power resources are well known: population, territory, natural resources, the size of the economy, armed forces, technological development, among others. These are tangible resources. In opposition, soft power resources are characteristically intangible resources: culture, ideology, values and institutions are the most common examples.

It is also worth noting that in all works of Nye there is no discussion on the meaning of tangibility. The question of what would qualify a resource as tangible or intangible is not a simple one. Nye classifies economic resources as tangibles, but an argument could be made that most of the time they do not have a physical existence. A financial agreement lending money to a developing country could save its economy from a major crisis, but it is not easy to see the tangibility of this power resource – especially in credibility crisis, as economists well know. On the opposite side of the spectrum, Nye classifies institutions as intangible resources. It is comprehensible that he might be referring to institutional ideas and what they represent, but some institutions have physical existence, very important and present ones, running projects and programs all over the world. The fact is that Nye leaves the reader with no criteria to address the tangibility of power resources.

In any case, the distinction between hard and soft power is given by taking together the nature of the agent's behavior and the tangibility of the resources. However, a serious problem arises directly from this articulation. It has to do with the relation between power behaviors and power resources: "... soft power resources tend to be associated with co-optive power behavior, whereas hard power resources are usually associated with command behavior. But the relationship is imperfect" [3, p. 267-268; 4, p. 176; 5, p. 7-9]. The logical consequence of the terminology used by Nye is that command power is related to hard power resources, and co-optive power to soft power resources. But these relations do not always hold true: it is possible for command power behavior to utilize intangible soft power resources, in the same sense that co-optive power behavior can make use of tangible hard power resources. Actually, it is even possible that command power creates soft power resources, or that co-optive power creates hard power resources.

On the other hand, it is necessary to stress that the question that is not properly explored in Nye's first books on soft power is the dependence of soft power resources on hard power resources: would soft power resources be effective only when hard power resources exist to sustain them? This question is not answered in the first two books, but in the last one the author underlines: "... soft power does not depend on hard power" [5, p. 9]. Instead of a theoretical argument, Nye presents examples to justify his statement. First, he presents the Vatican as an unquestionable example of soft power (after recounting Stalin's disdainful question about how many divisions the Pope controls). Other examples are contemporary Norway, Canada and Poland that, according to Nye, have recently displayed a stronger influence on international politics than their hard power resources would predict, due to the use of soft power resources in their foreign policies.

Communication as an element of soft power has a significant impact on foreign policy, both in the policy-making process and at a higher level associated with the nexus of foreign policy and international relations. Communication involves the transmission or conveying of information through a system of symbols, signs, or behavior. Communication connects individuals and groups; (re)constructs the context; and defines, describes, and delineates foreign policy options. The current trends are the synthesis in many areas, with a focus on the psychological processes associated with who communicates, how, to whom, and with what effect in the realm of foreign policy; and with the structural characteristics of communication or discourse. The major areas of publications on foreign policy and communication include: (a) the making of foreign policy and the role of mass media in this process; (b) how foreign policy is understood as a communicated message by allies and adversaries in international relations; and (c) constructivism, poststructuralism, and discourse analysis. Within the scope of foreign policy and media falls work associated with the CNN effect, framing, and public opinion. Works within international relations have focused on how foreign policy signals international intent, including threat and willingness to cooperate [8; 9].

Summing up the above mentioned we admit that soft power is the use of attraction and persuasion rather than the use of coercion or force in foreign policy. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals and policies, whereas hard power develops out of a country's military or economic might. Thus, the soft power of a country rests primarily on three resources: its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad) and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority). On the other hand, the set of liberal ideas promoted by the USA and shared by other Western states, such as democracy and free markets, made soft power resources easier to implement. With other states sharing the same principles and values, the costs of maintaining the order through economic incentives or military threats were reduced. Once again, development and exercise of soft power made the position of democracy in the international system less difficult to maintain.

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