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# The Hard Truth About Soft Power

By Markos Kounalakis and Ambassador Andras Simonyi

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## Introduction

The whole idea of states using influence and coercion to achieve their goals is nothing new. The combination of the two is the formula for how power works. The ability to get people and states to do what they otherwise might not do—because they might not see it in their self-interest—is an abbreviated way of looking at what has dominated the concept and elements of an analysis of soft power, formulated and developed by Professor Joseph Nye.[1] To simplify the formula further (before complicating it), soft power is made up of the influence side of the power spectrum. Hard power—often the use or threat of a state's use of its military component or economic leverage —is the coercion component of power. When you combine the two in a special mix and apply this formula to some of the world's more difficult relationships and achieve desirable outcomes, that mix of hard and soft power forms what Professor Nye calls "smart power."

The secret to—and the difficulty of—figuring out the correct ingredients for effective smart power is finding the proper mix for the appropriate situation, condition and relationship. How do we get the right combination of hard and soft power? How do we know which is which? And how do the growing number of tools available to states and policy makers ensure that the results are both effective as far as outcome is concerned, and cost effective? The authors argue that this special understanding of how to combine soft and hard power requires a much more in-depth analysis and framework, and it is this goal they hope to achieve through their development of a practical and applicable "Spectral Power" framework.

A large and expanding spectrum of policy and power options are available to the modern state, and finding the right mix requires a deeper understanding of the history of smart power. It is necessary to understanding the evolution of tools, threats and opportunities, as well as the conceptual framework within which smart power lies. To effectively pursue a smart power agenda, the tools and techniques of the power matrix must first be quantified, then analyzed. After conceptually understanding smart power, the next step is to understand its value and the expected outcomes against applied econometric models that the authors are currently developing.

The contemporary hard truth is that a strategic understanding and deployment of soft power methods and instruments has not evolved as quickly or as effectively as that of hard power. The reasons are many, and include: hewing to legacy soft power tools (fighting the next battle with the social and cultural weapons of the last war); the increasingly convoluted status and popular perception of NGOs and state deployed subcontractors and outsourced institutions and individuals; the rise and influence of non-state actors; and the lack of a framework—we argue for our spectral power framework—that includes a hard/soft matrix for policy decision-making as well as an econometric model for understanding the trade-offs, costs and return on investment of executed foreign policies. This new spectral power framework should aid in understanding the contemporary complexities of the hard/soft power mix that has grown to be understood as the combined elements of smart power.

Add to this already complex mix 1) the U.S. State Department's Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), with its emphasis on relatively untested aspects of "Civilian Power," 2) the recurring emphasis on civilian engagement and women's empowerment and 3) the directed and expected increased intergovernmental synergies and information flow in a time of instantaneous, decentralized and incessant (and seemingly

unfettered) communication, and it becomes even more critical to have an institutionalized framework for policy analysis and decision-making. In this piece, the authors attempt to explain these complexities and argue for a change in both perception and practice of the modern-day expression of soft power in unexpected and, at times, unorthodox ways.

## Smart Power in a Spectral Framework

There has been renewed interest in the concept of smart power over the past few years as state actors look to smart power to achieve their foreign policy goals. While successful smart power application has traditionally been the purview of free market democratic states, in recent years more authoritarian, closed states—as well as the new revolutionary states (e.g., Tunisia and Egypt) and states undergoing a process of transitioning to democracy—have taken to leveraging the smart power tools now generally available, and affordable. Some of these are smaller states that have the ability to marshal parts of their populations for defined purposes or policy goals (e.g., Kosovo and its campaign for recognition), but large states are also able to make top-down decisions that can mobilize a society and direct resources to the pursuit and production of smart power. The Chinese leadership, for example, has recently focused on the need to increase its investment on the soft side of smart power during a time of economic and military build-up. The United States, too, began focusing new energy on smart power applications from the first day Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton arrived at the State Department.

But it is not just political leaders who are in charge of smart power policy who have identified the mix of hard and soft power tools and delivery methods as a priority for the successful extension of power and the achievement of desired outcomes. Smart power is now a part of doctrine for militaries around the world that wish to incorporate smart power into their overall hard power competencies. Chief among those advocating for smart power is U.S. Army General

David Petraeus, who is now expected to take his field experience and advocacy of smart power to a new role heading up the Central Intelligence Agency.

NATO and its leadership are also firmly using both field weaponry and the weapons of developing ideas and infrastructure. The organization's Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, has found that tightening national defense budgets and overall constrained resources in a global recession have forced Europeans to leverage their power with an increasing reliance on a mix of smart power tools to achieve their objectives. Speaking on behalf of NATO at the annual Munich Security Conference 2011, Rasmussen introduced his broad concept of "Smart Defense."[2]

The NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Admiral James Stavridis, is often quoted from his previous job as saying "we [the Southern Command] are excellent at launching Tomahawk missiles; in this part of the world, we need to get better at launching ideas."[3] Stavridis has also made it clear in his current role at NATO that the non-lethal instruments of power projection are key to achieving states' strategic objectives.

Afghanistan, for example, underwent a change in the prosecution of the conflict when General Petraeus took charge of the effort as commanding officer of the Western allied forces in 2010. While there was no stated change in the strategic goals in Afghanistan, Petraeus brought with him a well-honed understanding of the non-military aspects of prosecuting a war—what used to be referred to as a "hearts and minds" campaign that was a combination of tough military force applied judiciously and complemented by civil society actions and community development efforts to help and hold gained ground. This combination is commonly referred to as smart power. The General has literally written the book on this type of field operation.[4]

International Security Assistance Joint Command Forces in Afghanistan (ISAF-NATO) have undertaken a full-on effort in reconstruction and humanitarian aid in that country and are involved heavily in the training and protection of Afghan civilians as they prepare the country to develop its civil society institutions.

The General's recent success in finding the right mix in Iraq is credited with allowing the U.S. and its allies to dramatically draw down their forces and leave the post-Saddam country to its own new civilian institutions and forces in the near future. The General knows, however, that what worked in a literate, more secular, dominantly desert-landscaped, oil rich land where many women had professional careers is not going to be easily grafted as a solution to Afghanistan's problems. While the often blunt instruments of hard military power are not subtle or varied in their deployment or effect, the soft power elements are near infinite. It is an understanding of the vast options available and their meritorious or deleterious effects that we will examine in order to help policy makers and military planners in their current campaigns, and to provide a framework for on-going and future strategic applications worldwide. For European allies with troops in the country, grounding in this framework will help decision-making and resource allocation for this and future actions.

Soft power and its current, more complex progeny, smart power, are key concepts in the execution of contemporary conflicts, the battle against ideological adversaries and the building of strategic relationships and alliances. Because of the growing state, military and diplomatic reliance on the principles, strategies, tactics, techniques and institutions of smart power, the authors feel compelled to dissect the concept, with an attempt at redefining its parts.

Ambassador Andras Simonyi and Markos Kounalakis have studied and purveyed smart power for more than a generation in both

Western and Eastern contexts before, during and after the Cold War. They both recognize that today's challenges are much greater and more complex than in the recent past. Just as hard power military tools must evolve rather than being developed to fight the last war, so too must smart power evolve to confront today's global, mobile, individualized and generally more informed, media-literate and skeptical societies and diverse cultures. There has been a general recognition of this contemporary reality, and many leaders and institutions are attuned to the greater and more complex demands to meet the challenge. But this rapid, dynamic, contemporary reality requires:

- Continual review and adaptation, as well as policy recommendations, to bolster successful programs and projects and to stop activities that are ineffective or counterproductive;
- Development of quantifiable metrics for activities that have often been difficult to measure; and
- A better understanding of the spectrum of options for deploying the new smart power systems through often counterintuitive, non-hierarchical and increasingly micro-targeted means that require states, alliances and institutions to adopt new approaches and competencies that should ultimately demand fewer state resources.

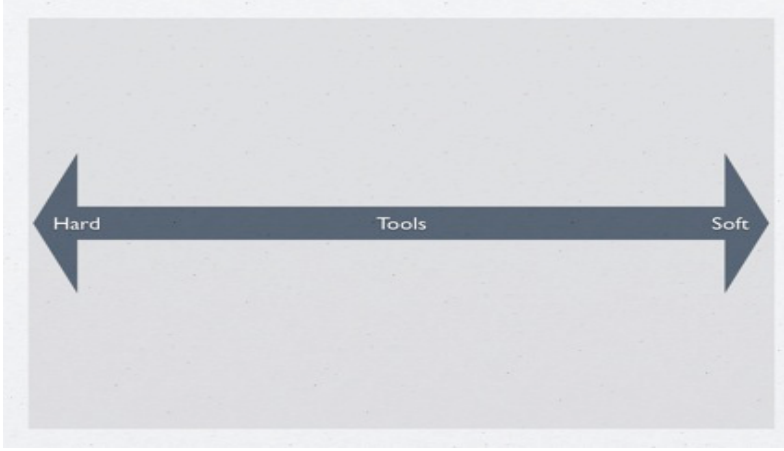
This analysis is done in a holistic framework that is critical of a division of labor between the dominant Western purveyors of smart power, primarily the U.S. and Europe, and is equally critical of both a sum-game approach and any fixed hard versus soft power formulations. The authors differentiate between hard-soft power and soft-soft power as well as the "brackish zone"[5] in-between.

Power in international relations must be seen as spectral, with hard-hard power on one end and soft-soft power on the other. The elements or "colors" of power mostly have shades just like those in the color spectrum. Strategic elements of military force or heavy military intervention, on the one end, become "softer" as we move along the spectrum toward tools such as heavy peacekeeping. Soft-hard power and hard-soft power overlap at the center of the spectrum when we use force for humanitarian relief or protection of cultural and religious sites. Our militaries will increasingly need to have a sophisticated knowledge of the soft power elements of power.

*Spectral Power*

It can be argued that power should be seen as linear, from hard to soft—red to blue—with the "brackish" zone in-between covering yellow and green. Just as color changes gradually, so does power in its means of delivery and impact.

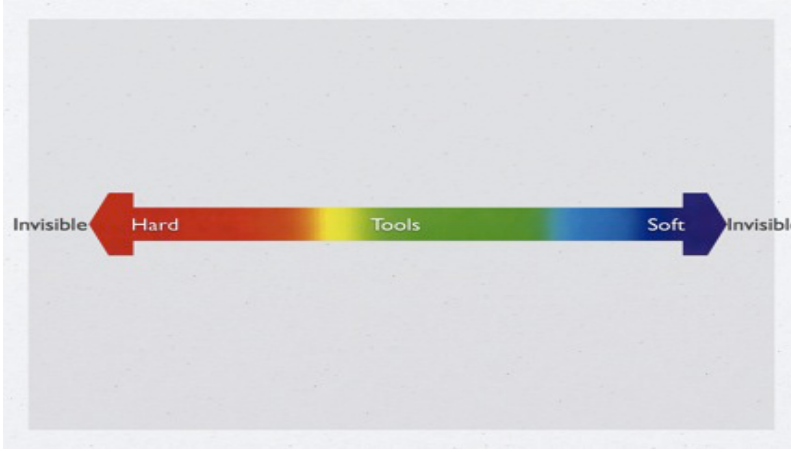
Power is represented by two specific spectra: one is the spectrum for the tools of power ranging from hard to soft:



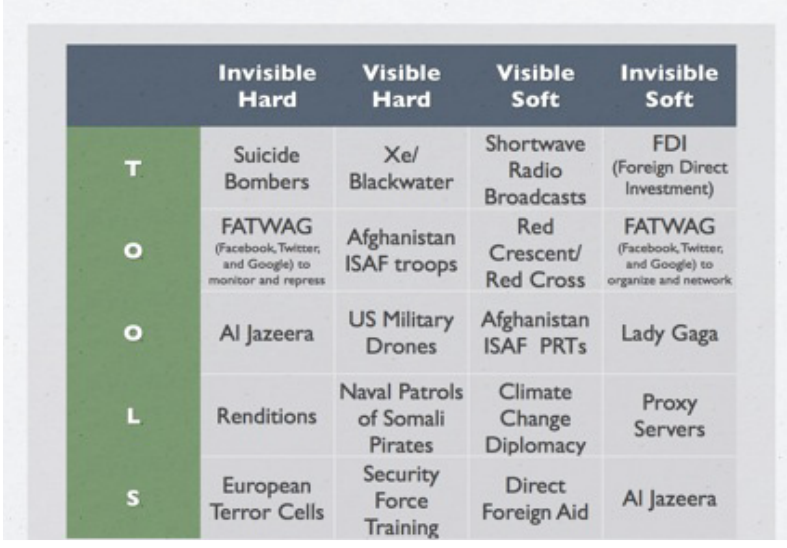
The second is the spectrum for the delivery methods for the tools of power, again ranging from hard to soft:


What fills in the spectrum are either the tools at a state's disposal or the means of delivery available to a state. If we think about the spectrum of state-delivered tools as the visible spectrum—whether because those who are delivering are wearing uniforms or the tools have flags and national identifiers on them—then we need to understand that there is a part of the spectrum that is also invisible, and both either out of the control of the state or perceived to be out of the control of the state. In either case, the tools and delivery methods are dominated by non-state actors and are beyond the visible ends of the spectrum on either the soft (blue) or the hard (red) ends:


The tools of power, too, are both visible and invisible, and are on the spectrum of hard to soft:



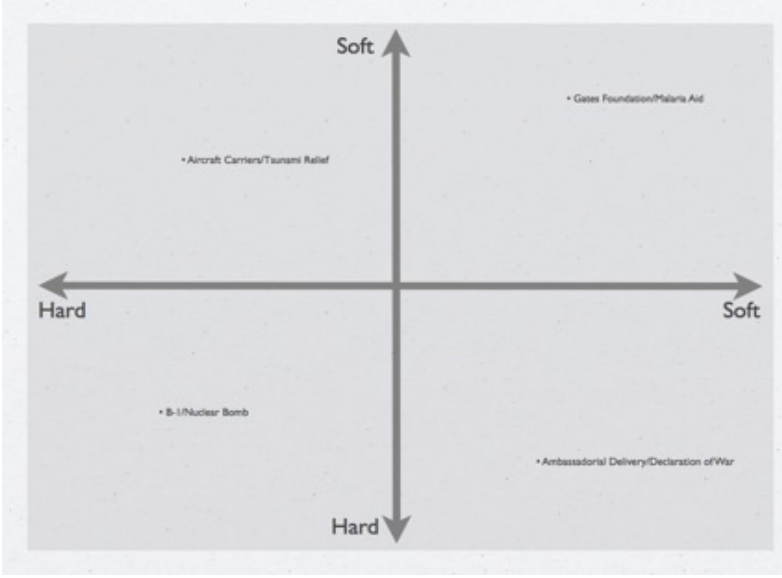
The next step is to fill in these spectra. Below is a chart for a set of tools (in some, the delivery method is implicit). They range from "invisible hard" (non-state) to "visible hard" (state), to "visible soft" (state), to "invisible soft" (non-state):



| | Invisible Hard | Visible Hard | Visible Soft | Invisible Soft |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T | Suicide Bombers | Xe/ Blackwater | Shortwave Radio Broadcasts | FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) |
| O | FATWAG (Facebook, Twitter, and Google) to monitor and repress | Afghanistan ISAF troops | Red Crescent/ Red Cross | FATWAG (Facebook, Twitter, and Google) to organize and network |
| O | Al Jazeera | US Military Drones | Afghanistan ISAF PRTs | Lady Gaga |
| L | Renditions | Naval Patrols of Somali Pirates | Climate Change Diplomacy | Proxy Servers |
| S | European Terror Cells | Security Force Training | Direct Foreign Aid | Al Jazeera |

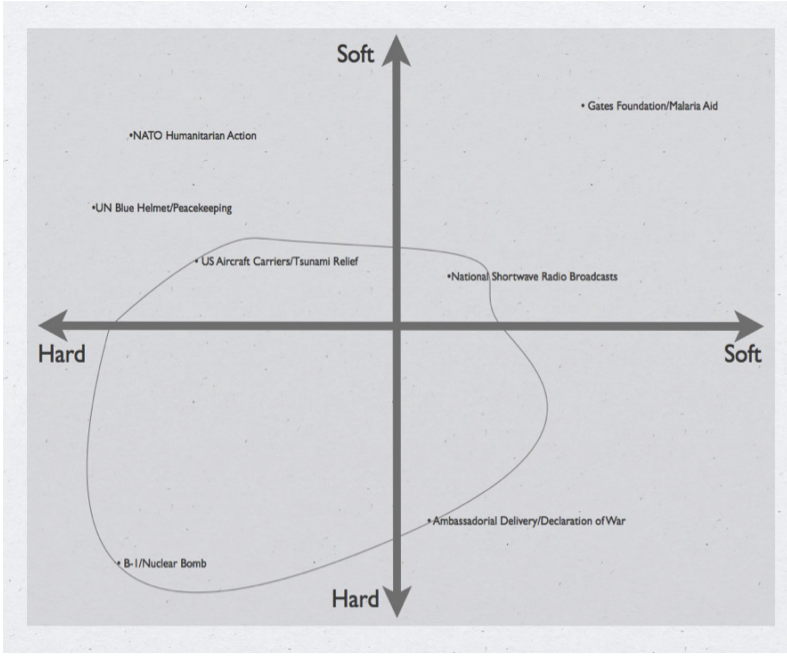
Al Jazeera[6]

If these two spectra are brought into a matrix, we are able to see how hard and soft power combine to create smart power combinations that are applicable to various situations, environments, and conditions:




The x-axis in the above graph depicts the delivery spectrum and the y-axis is the spectrum for tools. The graph quadrants separate into Soft-Soft, Soft-Hard, Hard-Hard, and Hard-Soft. Inherent in this matrix are also cost associations and algorithms, which will be addressed later in the paper. This matrix, however, also allows for an understanding of both the dominance and limits of state power when it is plotted further. What becomes apparent in the plotting is that the state dominates in the Hard-Hard quadrant and plays a diminishing role in the other three quadrants, based on the both the reality and perception of state intervention as well as the reality and perception of the independence of non-state actors, whether NGOs, corporations, foundations, regional or international institutions or individuals.

The plotting encompassed by the encircled field below represents the visible (state) power with that outside the encirclement representing the invisible (non-state):




The matrix above with an overlay of spectral visualization roughly approximates the matrix below. Red represents the hotter, harder aspects of power and blue the cooler, softer aspects:


One more thing becomes distinguishable as the quadrants are examined more closely as relates to current power policy and strategy. The U.S. has defined its three-legged stool for foreign policy as being made up of defense, diplomacy and development. Each quadrant is dominated by one of the three main U.S. foreign policy pillars:

- Development dominates Soft-Soft.
- Diplomacy dominates Soft-Hard.
- Defense dominates Hard-Hard and Hard-Soft with its monopoly of hard tools.

All quadrants have zones in which the state is inactive, ineffective or unable to control hard-soft power manifestation because the acts are deployed by non-state actors and individuals.

## Visible Spectrum Power—The State

*Soft-Soft Power*

Soft-soft power is, in comparison to the other types of power in the spectrum, more subtle in its appearance. It is in some cases not even the result of conscious planning and deployment, and while it can be "deployed" by governments, in many cases it is better conducted on its own or by NGOs, although it should be pointed out that many of the latter are not perceived as independent or wholly altruistic. While its target audience is the individual, its aim is to assist and solve major social problems, to modify perceptions, to be a source for change based on our values and represent the better angels of our societies' natures, to alter the lives of individuals and to provide them with new opportunities. Cultural diplomacy finds a home in this category. Good examples are cultural institutions such as the Cervantes Institute, classic Corps Diplomatique actions, organizations such as Medicins Sans Frontieres, NGOs providing water, Peace Corps schools in remote villages of Africa, and caring for orphans in underdeveloped parts of Eastern Europe.

Private sector organizations can also make a difference, adding to a country's soft-soft power via the promotion of transparency and the teaching of best practices in host countries. Some of these private sector efforts have been instrumental in the development of certain new democracies. In the case of IBM, for example, its corporate values and practices for entering tenders, managing and compensating employees, offering benefits and promoting tolerance have infused the societies and the marketplace in transitioning

democracies with a higher expectation of corporate behavior—often reinforced by the diplomatic mission to those countries. IBM is not unique in this regard and, while often paying on the higher end of the salary scale in other countries, it is a preferred employer in many of the countries where it has established and developed business.

*Soft-Hard and Hard-Soft Power*

Soft-hard and hard-soft power, we argue, are the sum of non-military efforts to influence a given strategic, political, social and economic environment, which challenges political authority and institutions. They are instruments of change and influence, which alter situations for the long term. They are "weapons" which require major effort from opponents to counter. In many cases soft-hard and hard-soft power involve major effort and investment from governments, civil society and the public sector. They can be attached to or combined with military efforts. They are deployed consciously and strategically, and their use or absence can have long-term impacts. They can be relatively short actions with lasting effect, or long-term commitments. Development aid by the European Union and U.S. military-backed assistance to the victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 are good examples. The absence of hard-soft power in certain instances can have devastating effects, as was the case in the aftermath of the Iraq war where a level of economic and currency chaos ensued, basic utility services diminished, and museums that once held the patrimony of Western civilization were open for looting.

The protection of cultural heritage sites in military conflict, for example, is a clearly defined and important hard-soft power tool. Protecting cultural sites demonstrates respect; it addresses identity and dignity and has a lasting and comforting effect.

*Hard-Hard Power*

While the elements of strictly military dominated hard-hard power do not fall within the purview of this article, the importance of this visible hard-hard power can be neither underestimated nor disregarded. The strength and presence of visible hard-hard power is the underlying and fundamental basis upon which other aspects of power can be built and without which soft power tools are essentially ineffective. No doubt this century will be about the realignment of the tools and means of delivery of power, reflecting the decreasing likelihood of strategic conflict between nuclear armed nations and the global battlefield increasingly being fought with soft power tools.

## Invisible Spectrum Power—Non-state Actors

Some soft power actions, however, fall into a third category, referred to as the "brackish" part of the power spectrum between hard and soft. Their "hardness" also depends on where, when and under what circumstances the means are deployed. The visit of the New York Symphony to North Korea certainly falls into the category of hard-soft power, defined not by the means of delivery, but the context and environment within which it is deployed. Officially sanctioned and diplomatically negotiated by the U.S. Department of State, the symphony made a targeted cultural exchange visit to expose North Koreans to both the cultured and civilized aspects of an America branded as otherwise war mongering by the Pyongyang leadership.

Bruce Springsteen singing "Born in the USA" in a packed stadium in Budapest today is just a concert. In 1988, singing the same song in the same place as part of the Amnesty International Freedom Tour was seen as a courageous effort—a statement—which was a harbinger of change in Central Europe. The efforts by Bill Gates to eradicate malaria in Africa fall into this category. These actions are non-state, affect the individual and function to change the perception of not only Bill Gates or and the Gates Foundation, but of the West as a whole.

For the West during the Cold War, soft power was deployable, definable and discreet; its power was that it was rooted in Western liberal democratic values and traditions and in basic legal, corporate, human and individual rights. It was also unidirectional, and the

direction was vector-like: pointing in clearly defined directions. There was little interaction globally. Today soft power functions in a vastly different, matrix-like, culturally and geographically diverse environment. Therefore, the content and means of delivery of soft power requires a different attitude, a mindset of sophistication.

Rock and roll music over the airwaves in the 1960s and '70s had an important, empowering side effect in Eastern Europe. It worked best when void of government overtones. Its power lay in its honesty, its powerful means of delivery (the electric guitar) and the freedom it projected. No wonder Communist authorities tried, in vain, to find a "remedy." But they couldn't. Imagine what the impact would have been if the Beatles had sung in Russian.

The attraction of this independent, organically developed and non-state associated musical and cultural juggernaut gained strength and power from its disassociation from the state and from its contraband status. In this and other instances, the market "pull" of rock was stronger than any sanctioned or state-developed and distributed "push" by the purveyors of propaganda.

In today's context, however, we should start to think of rock and roll as a metaphor rather than strictly as a musical or cultural phenomenon, and that each era, each generation, needs its own "rock 'n roll." It would be overly simplistic to suggest that rock and roll music itself will have the same impact on today's youth in Africa, the Middle East or Asia as it had 30-40 years ago in Eastern Europe. However, rock culture was the "social network" of the '60s and '70s for the youth of both the East and West, as well as across the divide, connecting young people across the Iron Curtain.[7] Rock and roll empowered a new generation. It was invisible, non-state soft power at its best. Today the technologies and tools of Facebook, Twitter and Google (and its subsidiary YouTube), mixed with a dose of traditional rock and roll, do the same for the youth of undemocratic

countries as rock alone once did. Social and online media is the new empowering "Rock 'n Roll," the ultimate contemporary soft power tool.

Lessons can be drawn from the past, when the West was unassailably associated in the world as the ideal of a better life and full freedom. In essence, the vision of a free society and better life for the individual was at the core of all soft power. The underlying strength of this truth has not changed. The unassailability of this truth, however, has changed dramatically. Some look to blame previous governments and administrations for their over-reliance on unilateralism, the reliance upon and condoning of torture, and the divisiveness of rhetoric regarding historic Western allies and friends of fortune. The previously dominant message of a better life and freedom through Western values has weakened. Global publics perceive the West as having diluted sacred values. A more formidable challenge to the Western values message is the combination of sophisticated and culturally targeted undermining messages as well as the ability to deliver them in a targeted fashion. In short, the message is being effectively countered, and military adventurism and a failing economy have not helped.

As a result, wielding our soft power is only possible if we consistently reaffirm and publicly reflect our core values; if we are able to manage the conflict between material growth and value-based principles. Pragmatism and national interest must not lead to the abandonment of core goals and values.

The essence of Western soft power today lies in its ability to prove that its focus is more than just the protection of and caring for its own intents and interests, that it will also help in a generous way to solve global, regional and local problems. It must be able to communicate to the rest of the world its willingness and ability to care for others. It must be convincing that its local, regional or global intents are

not a threat to diversity, whether religious or cultural identity. This is where charismatic, compassionate and communicative leadership can make a difference.

Beyond the brand of an individual leader and her or his style of politics, consumer products and brands also have traditionally had a soft power effect. In the 1970s and '80s, the lifestyle brand of Levi's jeans represented a freedom of spirit and politics, making them a coveted clothing item behind the Iron Curtain, where Western travelers would sometimes bring a pair of 501s and trade them for enough local currency to pay for their entire visit. Products such as Coca Cola were also a means to express freedom and independence in controlled societies. Although drinking Coke was not a direct form of rebellion it was a way for a younger generation to express a preference for a product from "the outside" in closed societies and markets. It was also an expression of belonging to a global community. Both Coke and Levi's, and the rock music that was linked to their identity and their marketing, were directly associated with the U.S.

However, products which were once unmistakably from (and a constant reminder of) free-market democracies are today produced everywhere and anywhere. The globalized economy and the shift of much of the manufacturing industry from the U.S. and Europe to other locations has lessened the soft power impact of these products, which can no longer be associated with the free West. It is, however, important to state that a memory stick made in China could be a remarkably important tool for a transition to freedom and democracy. Memory sticks have transformed the world of communication in closed societies where Internet access is either tightly controlled or understood to be a tool of control and surveillance. Whereas email, text and search items can be traced to individuals and IP addresses, memory sticks serve as the samizdat of the 21st century—digital

data that can be distributed face-to-face without a monitoring intermediary.

Although many nationally linked brands are now more global than strictly identifiable as national, the appeal of Western fashion or popular culture has not disappeared from the soft power toolbox. The effects of this are likely on the plus side of the Western soft power equation, since the adoption of Western values and messages in global or non-Western local products can have a palliative effect on members of closed societies. One of this paper's authors who recently visited a North African Muslim country noticed the high number of young people wearing Western brands of clothes. Nine out of ten t-shirts with a message were written in English, Spanish or French. One said: "A woman will get whatever she wants"—a pretty striking message in an Islamic country.

The answer for improvement of Western soft power lies in the creation of content that is attractive and acceptable to societies and generations that see themselves as opposing the West and Western values. When publics consider the West to be in competition with or even a threat to their society, or when non-Western societies see themselves as superior to the West, soft power can be applied creatively by leveraging the array of new technology. The successful propagation of Western values lies in the effective, non-threatening nature of Western soft power tools and delivery methods, perceived as such not by the authorities—governments and anti-Western institutions will continue to look at Western values as a direct threat either to their authority or their power structure—but by the individual.

*Delivering the Goods*

Here at the beginning of the 21st century, a transformative development in the propagation of message and values has created

great opportunities for nimble and adaptable societies that can harness new technologies. While there may have been a great deal of discussion at the start of 2011 declaring that political upheaval has come as a result of a Twitter revolution, for example, it is necessary to understand the difference between the tool, the delivery mechanism and the results.

Ultimately, however, what we are seeing is that the means for societies and their members to deliver a message have changed. The West still leads in designing and producing cutting edge, decisive technologies. Although these technologies can be a used to help or harm, technology itself is fundamentally "value neutral." A mobile phone is a mobile phone. The conversations, text messages, images, organizing and networked activities that are enabled by the mobile phone, however, can define whether the device is seen as offensive or unobtrusive—just as the shortwave radio[8], fax machine, and satellite dish became instruments of Cold War liberation because of their application. What makes any device or technology a Liberation Technology is based on the content.[9]

If liberation technology is to succeed in the 21st century, it must be ensured that policy is not made on the basis of the available means of delivery, but rather based on the belief that the underlying content values are universal and that the freedoms we stand for will provide the ultimate solution to global challenges. At the beginning of the 21st century, a great deal of this traditionally liberal democratic philosophy and the symbols of this global liberation movement was adopted by—and came to identify—a neo-conservative movement. The underpinnings of this philosophy remain unchanged, but the neo-conservative ideological usurpation and consequent pacifist liberal abandonment of this philosophy have confounded the basic universal nature of these high-minded and existentially imperative goals. When soft power becomes ideological, it emits the sense of superiority, loses its attraction and becomes threatening.

*Tools of Power*

"Tools" may be a misnomer, for there are no soft power tools, per se. These are not tools in the traditional sense of the word. We must avoid giving the sense that we can provide ready-to-use tools which are universal. The idea that we can develop a set of tools which, like a secret weapon, can be used under the most difficult and different circumstances is flawed. This must be understood by both U.S. and European policy makers. The same tools not only vary in their appearance, depending on a multiplicity of factors, but in their impact and force, each time they are implemented. What works in a certain cultural environment will not necessarily work in another. What works in the hands of one country will not work for the other. What will be attractive for one social group might not have any impact on another. Some tools will have short-term effects, others will have long-term impact. It is however possible to create a mindset which embraces the concept and the understanding that only the combination of hard and soft power can create the right mix for Western influence. The toolbox therefore will be a complex set of ideas, mechanisms and technologies which in the end will constitute a method to chose the right elements and use the available means of delivery for maximum impact.

Governments increasingly have to realize that the democratization of technology has led to the democratization of the ability to influence. More than ever, in a much larger context, this means increased competition. Influencing the public has been a challenge and a task for opposing regimes throughout the 20th century. The perseverance of Britain during World War II was partly due to the Nazi's failure to win over the hearts and minds of the British. Public perceptions have always been important to achieving foreign policy goals, but today there is an important distinction : the ability of the individual to participate has changed qualitatively.

The advancement of technology has changed the way the public can and should be approached, but it has not changed the fact that winning over the public by attraction is still one of the most important and challenging tasks for foreign policy in general and diplomacy in particular, including for the practitioners of soft power.

There is a need for combining and managing governmental and non-governmental efforts. The challenge is to find the fine line between acceptable and desirable government involvement. The possibility of government efforts being disregarded as the simple extended arms of government policy or propaganda will always be there. Government involvement, however, is unavoidable because there are elements of soft power that can only be managed by governments. Oftentimes, no NGO or individual possesses the necessary capabilities and infrastructure to conduct soft power actions. At times, it is the environment within which these efforts have to be made that requires the heavy involvement of government. Technological change and the change in public perceptions must be taken into account. Some traditional instruments of soft power are also best—if not exclusively—managed by government. Aid, disaster relief and broad or global disease control all require massive infrastructure and government support. NGO involvement in disaster relief is important, but these organizations rely heavily on the security and technical capabilities, sometimes including diplomatic efforts, by governments. In still other situations, it is the government that needs the support of NGOs. The key is to find the right tool for the right situation. The two will in many cases continue to work hand-in-hand.

It is equally a challenge to create the mindset which makes soft power part of global, regional and national Western foreign policy goals. This challenge becomes yet more complex given the change in the ability and capacity of all players, regardless of their ideological orientation or value-system, to create and distribute creative and

challenging content with a semblance of credibility: the currency of the 21st century.

The technologically empowered individual is the "new NGO." NGOs in the 1960s and '70s were the cutting edge of politics. However, they have become mainstream and at times rigid bureaucracies. Interaction between the cutting edge and traditional institutions of power is the road to renewal. It is a must for practitioners of soft power. There are greater opportunities for change and renewal in this realm, as the strictures that often bind governmental action are not as limiting for the more independent NGO.

The last twenty years have seen individualization of communication at an unprecedented pace. It can be argued that for most of the 20th century, communication has been vertical and one-way. This has suddenly changed to a different model, where vertical and horizontal communication needs and technologies exist side-by-side.

The "customer base" for soft power has also changed remarkably. During the Cold War it was relatively easy to identify the target of soft power. It was basically the U.S. targeting Western Europeans, Europeans targeting Americans, the West targeting the citizens of the Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Bloc targeting the West. The rest of the world—at times the scene of proxy wars — was hardly as important a target. Today this has changed fundamentally; the "customer base" is now global.

Fundamentally, the "East" and the "West" share many of the same historic and cultural roots, the common heritage in religion, the arts and literature. Communist "culture" was alien to the majority of Central and Eastern Europe, while Western culture was naturally embraced. This made soft power and its impact in Eastern/Central Europe relatively easy and effective. Convincing the citizens behind

the Iron Curtain of the superiority of the values of West was not t an insurmountable challenge.

All this is important because the challenge today is to formulate the new targets and tools aimed at societies and generations, which are far more diversified and different culturally. Despite the change in tone, style and action from the U.S. and the Obama administration, there are parts of the world in which the West—read: the U.S.—is still seen as the source of some of the world's great problems, and not its solutions. In a global system and within multinational institutions where Western values are not naturally embraced, we must find ways to use our soft power. In societies which do not naturally embrace our culture, which do not share our common cultural heritage or history, we must find ways to wield our soft power when it is aimed not just at the other half of the same cultural sphere, but at a completely different—and often indifferent—cultural environment. And this all has to happen in a world where one-way communication has given way to myriad possibilities, where communications are not just bidirectional, but occur multi-directionally, simultaneously and with an unprecedented diversity of input.

This effort requires unity of action and an amplification of joint efforts by Western nation-states, regional organizations and multilateral bodies, while simultaneously avoiding the often negative connotation of state support and recognizing a general lack of control. Ultimately, the challenge is how to do all this at a time when those very same societies and institutions are experiencing economic challenges and diminished resources while, simultaneously, countries dominated by illiberal regimes and governments that have incomplete institutions or lack transparency are ascendant in terms of GDP and basic infrastructure expenditure per capita, resulting in systemic economic improvement. Taking into account this contemporary economic reality, there is a need for more targeted

resources—not more resources overall. In fact, executed properly, the resources should result in net savings.

One thing that is inexpensive, if not entirely free, however, is the cost of reinvigorating and renewing relations between Europe and the United States—an imperative for Western soft power to be effective. If there is systemic disunity of action and effort, then there is systemic inability to convert hard or soft power into any effective power whatsoever. This need is identified and recognized in the U.S. and was identified as a key point by the Center for Strategic and International Studies Commission on Smart Power. Commission co-chairs Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye underscored this need, stating "the United States must reinvigorate the alliances, partnerships, and institutions that serve our interests and help us meet twenty-first century challenges."[10] This need to amplify the transatlantic relationship is as necessary in Brussels as it is in Washington, DC.

This relationship is ingrained in the DNA of the West, where there is a natural tendency to fortify the value underpinnings via increasing respect for human rights, religion, gender, race and the overall benefits of diversity. The cultural and ethnic diversity of the European Union and the richness of American culture must be at the core of the efforts to recreate the Western image in the world. The United States and Europe cannot be separated out from the Western image.

*Soft Power and Public Diplomacy*

Ultimately, the value of soft power remains high, but the greater the constitutional protections and open creative environment, the lesser the manageability of soft power resources and the ability to use soft power as targeted public diplomacy.

Public diplomacy is a tool. However, equating public diplomacy with soft power is denying the complexity of soft power. According to the authors, public diplomacy is a government effort to explain the actions of a given country in pursuit of its interests and promoting its values. Soft power, however, incorporates a complex set of instruments including everything from the economy and business to culture and education to the interaction between societies and individual relationships, Soft power is a mindset. It employs public diplomacy whenever necessary. Public diplomacy is an inevitable aspect of soft power, and its importance cannot be ignored— nor should it be exaggerated—as a magic weapon. It is a challenging tool, because it can easily backfire if it is dismissed as mere propaganda.

Public diplomacy must employ the new means of communication, yet there must be clarity about the limitations of technology. The possibilities are vast but should not be overemphasized.[11] Facebook and Twitter are technologies. They can be turned into instruments only with the right approach, the right content and a personal touch. Otherwise, these magnificent technologies will be dismissed as mere marketing tools. In the end, whatever the technology, it is the content that matters. Google, Facebook and Twitter could be overtaken by something new[12], but the imperative to use our soft power will not.

The foundation of a Western belief in the force of soft power lies in the belief in the universal values of human rights and freedoms. It is the belief that allows the West to reconcile its interests with the needs and interest of the international community. This is not blind faith in Western values; integrity does not mean rigidity. It means that the West and its institutions are able and willing to take into account the interest of others while not losing sight of its own, and the values for which it stands. This is soft power.

As the manageability of soft power diminishes, however, there is a concurrent need to increase the tools for defending and supporting

a global environment for the receptivity of the underlying Western soft power message supporting liberal democratic values and the rights of the individual.

There is a school of thought which suggests that there actually exists a distribution of labor between the two sides of the Atlantic, along the lines of hard power and soft power. This is wrong. Hard and soft power are the yin and yang of foreign policy, they are complementary and mutually reinforcing. Force (hard power) combats force; soft power wins over people, carries over individuals and their organizations. Both hard and soft power can have strategic impact. These are two distinct battlefields, serving the same purpose. It is time to move away from the "philanthropic" concept of soft power and consider "strategic" soft power.

The U.S. has formidable hard power, but it also has equally formidable reserves of soft power resources. Europe can and should wield its soft power based on its traditional economic might and vast culture. There should be no mistake, however: global strategic influence cannot be achieved by soft power alone. A better coordination and smarter cooperation is needed in order to maximize the impact of the soft power "instruments," which are able to further the goals of the transatlantic community. There are situations where Europe can wield soft power better and more effectively than the U.S., and small countries better than big ones. However, this should not turn into a beauty contest: the whole community must invest heavily in the instruments of both soft and hard power. In this non-zero sum formulation, there is a need and a call for more soft power, not less hard power. These forms of power are not formulaically counterbalancing; instead, they are mutually dependent and mutually reinforcing.

Both sides of the Atlantic have been taking each other for granted. Europe and the US. have considered the relationship to be rock solid,

as strong in peace as it was in war, hot or cold. This is wrong, as no relationship can be taken for granted unless it is nurtured and given continual support by its citizenry. If it is drifting, this is equally an issue of leadership and the neglect of public opinion. Just because the transatlantic community is considered a family—or maybe because it sees itself as a family—members still need constant reassurances and understanding of the relationship.

It is perhaps strange to advocate for soft power in this context, when we are on the other hand arguing for common transatlantic soft power globally, outside of the community — outside the context of NATO and the EU. This is no contradiction: the reestablishment of a positive and friendly view of the U.S. by today's and tomorrow's generations, who have no experience of World War II or the Cold War, is necessary for the future of Europe and the EU. It is highly unlikely that the U.S. will ever again have to cross the Atlantic to be engaged in a European war. Still, the U.S. is the backbone of European security. That, however, will not take care of perceptions. Anti-American sentiments have subsided, but could erupt again in the most unexpected time and way.

Events in the Middle East during 2011 have underscored the importance of being able to mix soft and hard power. In Egypt, invisible soft power tools had had great impact. Libya, however, has demanded a different approach. Interestingly, early and recent conflict developments have required leadership and coordination from both the Arab League and the United Nations to create an international legal framework for hard power activity and development of a no-fly zone over Libya, using human rights and humanitarian aid delivery as the justification for military action. This joint European/American operation—the West working mostly together on a mission involving allies' strategic interests that touch on energy, security and immigration issues—is a sign of reinvigorated and renewed purpose. The actions in Libya have not only underscored America's

indispensable nature, but reminded Europe and the American political class not only of Europe's relevance, but its importance and leadership.

This raises the question of recent American perceptions of Europe —the "Freedom Fries" fallacy. Legacy thinking that the U.S. can face global challenges without its closest allies is also wrong. The lack of knowledge about the European Union is already damaging to the U.S. The misunderstandings between the governments and publics of the transatlantic demonstrate the need for using the soft power machinery in the context of the Western "family." Building a closer and better informed transatlantic relationship is a complex process, without which the West might not be able to find public support when dealing with common challenges.

## Addendum

## The Future of Spectral Power

*The Economics of Spectral Power*

As discussed in the introduction to this paper, the question of rationally quantifiable measurement of the cost and benefit of the tools and delivery means of power along the spectrum requires the new application and inputs for established econometric models. It requires the application of models that are used in different contexts and which are likely to find resistance within the foreign policy framework—even if the results of econometric study should not be the sole determinant in pursuing or declining a policy. The whole rationale for this quantification exercise is to provide a more efficient means for states and non-state actors to optimize resources.

The models and their results should be just one more point of reference in the policy analyst and policy maker framework. The authors are currently in the process of further developing a number of applicable models incorporating the tools and techniques of the power matrix, quantifying and analyzing for present value and expected returns. In general, however, the economics of the spectral power concept is still uncharted water.

The authors begin with the accepted business and economic concept of Weighted Average Cost of Capital (WACC is the minimum return that an entity must earn on its existing asset base to satisfy its creditors, owners and other providers of capital, or else they will invest elsewhere). WACC is indisputably valid for investors and managers as an objective and sound methodology for creating

and maximizing shareholder wealth; this methodology should also be applicable to a nation's foreign policy.

We assume that:

1. A nation's foreign policy is constrained by limited resources.
2. These resources are available in various forms, for example from hard-hard to soft-soft options.
3. The taxpayer is an increasingly aware and informed investor in a nation's foreign policy.
4. Policy makers are charged with maximizing investors' wealth, and thus are not only interested in making appropriate binary "yes/no" decisions, but also in striving to ensure that the plethora of soft to hard policies in a nation's foreign policy portfolio are invested in a value-maximizing fashion.

The challenge of applying WACC to foreign policy will be finding and quantifying the elements of foreign policy that correspond to the financial components of the rather simple WACC formula. This is a task for economists working alongside foreign policy experts and is the focus of the authors as we continue to develop and apply the spectral power framework.

The early data and analysis done by the authors have shown a clear trend line and positive return profile where resources allotted to a mix of hard and soft power tools and distributions on our spectra are most cost-efficient.

## Endnotes

1. Professor Joseph Nye is the recognized leader in the study of smart power, having coined the phrases soft and smart power. His most recent book is "The Future of Power," a broad analysis of both grand strategy and tactical operational aspects of power and its manifestation.
2. "I want to highlight the importance of what I call Smart Defence —how NATO can help nations to build greater security with fewer resources but more coordination and coherence, so that together we can avoid the financial crisis from becoming a security crisis." Anders Fogh Rasmussen speech at 2011 Munich Security Conference.
3. See "Partnership for the Americas: Western Hemisphere Strategy and U.S. Southern Command" by Admiral James Stavridis.
4. General Petraeus and General James Mattis authored the Counterinsurgency Field Manual that incorporates appendices on Social Network Analysis and Linguistic Support, for example, as well as the expected chapters on Insurgency and Counterinsurgency. A copy of the Field Guide is available here: http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24fd.pdf.
5. Brackish water has more salinity than fresh water, but not as much as seawater. It may result from mixing of seawater with fresh water—in this case, the brackish power results from a combination of soft and hard power.
6. Al Jazeera is, indeed, seen as a state run organization similar to U.S. VOA, but only in the West. In the Middle East, where media literacy is not as broad as in the free market economies of the West and where large broadcast entities are fewer, Al Jazeera holds a position in the public mind which is closer to CNN than VOA.
7. In fact, this role is now even achieved in the West, with Al Jazeera English receiving the Columbia Journalism Award, the school's highest honor. According the Columbia press release, "Al Jazeera English has performed a great service in bringing the English speaking world in-depth coverage of the turmoil in the Middle East." said Dean Nicholas Lemann. "We salute its determination to get to the heart of a complicated story unfolding in countries where news has historically been difficult to cover."
8. For more on the rock and roll phenomenon and its influence behind the Iron Curtain, see the online available documentary "Rockin' the Beltway," about the rock band Coalition of the Willing, featuring Ambassador Andras Simonyi.

9. Co-author Markos Kounlakis began his journalism career on the international shortwaves at Radio Sweden International, broadcasting during non-jamming hours into the Soviet Union. He later produced and reported regularly for the German Deutsche Welle service and became Chairman of the Board of Internews Network.
10. Liberation Technology is a budding field of study, including a program at Stanford University. A recent look at the technology vs the message delivered by the technology was presented by Harvard's Archon Fung, titled: "Why Technology Has Not Revolutionized Politics, but How It Can Give a Little Help to Our Friends." Fung argues that information and communication technology platforms have transformed many aspects of modern life for many individuals around the world, revolutionizing the realms of commerce, sociability and even production. The realm of politics and governance, however, is more resistant to ICT revolutions.
11. 2007 study and report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies: "Commission on Smart Power: A smarter, more secure America." Available in PDF version at http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/071106_csissmartpowerreport.pdf.
12. As Evgeny Morozov argues, these tools can be more effective at control than at liberation, as the sophistication of technology allows an authoritarian state to apply greater resources to the means of control than an individual or group of individuals can to liberation. See Morozov's book, "The Net Delusion."
13. Lee Siegel writes about Morozov's book and argues that Google has been synonymous with the future, but that in the future, talking about Google will be like talking about the East India Company.

## Author Biographies

**Ambassador Andras Simonyi** is an economist by training. He has served as the first Hungarian Ambassador to NATO (1994-2001) as well as Ambassador to the United States (2002-2007). Ambassador Simonyi believes that strong ties between Europe and the United States are the bedrock of security and progress. During the Cold War, he grew up with Western rock and roll music as his passion, his "Internet" to the free world. He has incorporated soft power tools in his own work as a diplomat. While in Washington he used innovative public diplomacy and appeared on The Colbert Report and other popular shows. He still has his own rock band, Coalition of the Willing. He is married and has two children and one grandchild.

**Markos Kounalakis** is a Senior Fellow at the Center for Media and Communication Studies at the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. He also serves as a member of the USC Center on Public Diplomacy advisory board. He is President and Publisher Emeritus of the Washington Monthly. Kounalakis previously worked as a print and network broadcast journalist and author who reported the overthrow of Communism for Newsweek in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, and the outbreak of ethnic strife and war in Yugoslavia. After Newsweek, he worked as the NBC Radio and Mutual News Moscow correspondent and covered the fall of the Soviet Union as well as the war in Afghanistan. He has written three books, "Defying Gravity: The Making of Newton" (Beyond Words Publishing, 1993), "Beyond Spin: The Power of Strategic Corporate Journalism" (co-author, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999) and "Hope is a Tattered Flag: Voices of Reason and Change for the Post-Bush Era" (PoliPointPress, 2008). He is married to the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Hungary, Eleni Tsakopoulos Kounalakis. They have two children.

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