

## **A theory of soft power and Korea's soft power strategy**

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This paper suggests a new definition of soft power by making a distinction between hard resources and soft resources, rather than by differentiating between coercive power and cooptive power as Joseph Nye did. When non-material symbolic “soft resources” are employed to exert influence on others, the final outcome is regarded as soft power, while the final outcome is defined as hard power when material “hard resources” are employed. Therefore, within this definition, soft power can be both cooptive and coercive, and so can hard power. This new definition is useful for countries that are considered to be middle powers which are limited in terms of hard resources, but have the potential to develop soft resources. This paper also categorizes five different types of soft power in accordance with specific soft power goals. They are (1) soft power to improve the external security environment by projecting peaceful and attractive images of a country; (2) soft power to mobilize other countries' support for foreign and security policies; (3) soft power to manipulate other countries' styles of thinking and preferences; (4) soft power to maintain unity within a community or community of countries; and (5) soft power to increase the approval ratings of a leader or domestic support for a government. Categorization of different types of soft power is important because it enables us to think in more strategic and goal-oriented terms. The last section of the paper assesses Korea's soft power capacity and potential within this theoretical framework, followed by a few policy recommendations.

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to theorize the dynamics of soft power in international relations and to analyze Korea's soft power potential. The first section of the paper, tries to open a new horizon of soft power discourses by categorizing and theorizing various aspects of soft power. Until now, scholars and journalists have used the concept of soft power mostly in descriptive terms without suggesting concrete policy implications. If we can understand the overall mechanisms of soft power exertion through a theoretical lens, it may be possible to develop actual soft power policies, be they long-term or short-term. The second section of the paper, delves further into a discussion of Korea's soft power potential by analyzing Korea's “soft resources,” which can potentially be translated into soft power. The paper ends with a few policy recommendations.

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### Previous studies of soft power

The concept of soft power was first introduced by Joseph Nye in his book, *Bound to Lead*. He used the concept to explain and predict the persistence of U.S. hegemony during the days of American national decline in the 1980s.<sup>1</sup> In its original conception, soft power was defined as cooptive behavioral power, meaning “getting others to want what you want.”<sup>2</sup> One of the reasons why this cooptive behavioral power, namely soft power, became an important concept in the United States at the time can be attributed to the U.S. desire to maintain global leadership at a time when its coercive hard power resources were being gradually weakened. The hard power, defined as coercive power, of the United States in the 1980s was in decline because U.S. hard power capacities derived from their hegemonic positions in international markets, production capacities, and high-technologies were seriously challenged by Japan and a few European countries. Nye’s academic and policy recommendation to the United States in dealing with this mismatch of U.S. desire and its hard power capacities was to use cooptive power to attract other countries’ support for American leadership. Therefore, soft power was seen both as an alternative and a supplement to hard power. Here, one needs to be extremely careful to note the purpose and goal of Nye’s soft power. It would be common sense to say that power itself is a tool to accomplish certain goals, and in the case of Nye’s soft power, the goal to accomplish by using soft power is to maintain and strengthen American global leadership. Nye recommended that the United States become “attractive” in order to create as many supporters as possible to allow it to actively set and lead the global agenda. Therefore, Joseph Nye’s discussion of soft power was in fact a discussion of the U.S. “leadership.”

Nye’s focus on leadership became more obvious in his later works. In *The Paradox of American Power* published in 2002, Nye again emphasized the importance of soft power in maintaining American hegemony and leadership when the United States was not able to dominate “economic and transnational worlds.”<sup>3</sup> For Nye’s efforts to connect his concept of soft power and the U.S. leadership, see *Soft Power: The Means to Succeed in World Politics*. For Nye’s criticisms against the Bush administration’s global war on terrorism, see Joseph Nye, “Hard power, Soft power, and the War on Terrorism.”<sup>4</sup> The focus on leadership has become even more obvious following publication of his article on “transformational leadership” and also by the general practical leadership lessons in his most recent book, *The Powers to Lead*.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the non-American readers of Nye’s discussion of soft power need to keep in mind that the discussion of soft power in regards to the United States is highly contextual, reflecting American hegemonic position and interests, and cannot be mechanically copied by lesser powers.

Although concepts similar to Nye’s “soft power” had already been introduced in other disciplines, for example Gramsci’s hegemony, Bourdieu’s symbolic power, Weber’s authority, Foucault’s disciplinary power, and Habermas’ communicative power, mainstream international relations scholars had paid little attention to non-material aspects of power and capabilities.<sup>6</sup> Constructivists in the field of international relations recognized the power of ideas and norms, which are quite similar to soft power, but their discussion did not develop into a new concept of power with concrete policy implications.<sup>7</sup> Rather, constructivists spent too much energy fighting a battle against realists regarding the deterministic influence of

anarchical structure of international relations on state behaviors. Therefore, even though constructivist discussions of power in international relations contain many central elements of what Nye calls soft power, constructivist ideas have not developed into a systematic merge of separate constructivist discussions of ideational power that pertains to the power norms, values, ideas, or symbols. In addition, as Nye's concept of soft power gained journalistic popularity, constructivist discussion of ideational power tended to be superseded by the concept of soft power even within academia.

Although Nye's introduction of the concept of soft power opened a new horizon in understanding some hidden aspects of international relations, such as non-violent and non-coercive ways of influencing others, the concept itself was not based upon a well developed theoretical framework. The concept has been used mainly as a descriptive tool to describe the anomaly of U.S. power<sup>8</sup> or to list a country's soft power resources without revealing the power conversion mechanisms.<sup>9</sup> In other words, Nye only pointed out that there is a distinction between hard power and soft power, and did not suggest any meaningful theoretical frameworks that could be used to understand the power translation mechanism from what he calls soft power resources to soft power.<sup>10</sup> Due to this lack of theoretical development, it has been difficult to find any soft power discourses or policies of a country that go further than mere emphasis on public diplomacy, Official Development Aid (ODA), strengthening of international institutions, and cultural exchanges. Emphasis on these "soft resources" is nothing new, and is nothing more than a revival of old wisdoms without new theoretical and policy insights.<sup>11</sup>

Against this backdrop, this paper, develops a preliminary theoretical framework not only to understand the logical connections among soft resources, soft power, and the policy goals of soft power, but also to develop practical soft power solutions to some major foreign policy problems. Moreover, a preliminary theoretical discussion of soft power may trigger new debates or further development of soft power theories relating to various issues of current international relations. The next section introduces key elements of this theoretical framework.

### **A theory of soft power**

The theory of soft power put forward in this paper is based upon three steps: (1) categorization of different types of soft power in international relations; (2) distinction between Nye's conception of soft power and this paper's conception of soft power by distinguishing between soft resources and hard resources; and (3) theories of soft power conversion from soft resources. After developing this theory of soft power in these three steps, the paper will go on to analyze Korea's future soft power potential, followed by some soft power policy recommendations.

#### ***Different categories of soft power***

Soft power can be roughly divided into five categories in accordance with the policy goals to be achieved. They are: (1) soft power to improve the external security environment by projecting peaceful and attractive images of a country; (2) soft power to mobilize other countries' support for one's foreign and security policies; (3) soft power to manipulate other countries' way of thinking and preferences; (4) soft

power to maintain the unity of a community or community of countries; and (5) soft power to increase the approval ratings of a leader, or domestic support for a government.

(1) Examples of the first category of soft power are China's recent emphasis on "peaceful rising or development" and a "harmonious world,"<sup>12</sup> and Japan's post-war efforts to project a peaceful image of itself through the Peace Constitution, the Three Non-nuclear Principles, self-restraint of Self Defense Forces, and 1 percent of GDP limit on defense spending.<sup>13</sup> The soft power strategy of this category contains a combination of "soft resources," such as national slogans, policy proposals, and public diplomacies to minimize threatening images, while projecting a peace-loving image of a country when it is either entering the international community as a new or transformed member, or is rapidly rising in terms of its hard power. The case of China pertains to both these aspects as China has been rising extremely fast in terms of its hard power capabilities, while it tries to enter the international community as a normal, responsible country leaving behind the past history of communist legacies. Unless the increase of China's hard power capabilities is balanced with soft power capabilities, it is very probable that China will face a formidable antagonistic coalition of countries that may be threatened by China's increased hard power. The debate on the "Rise of China" signifies this threatening perception about China's increased hard power as perceived by other countries, particularly the United States.<sup>14</sup>

An example of a failure of soft power policy in this category is North Korea's slogan of "strong and big nation (*kangseong daekuk*)."<sup>15</sup> As the slogan conveys an intimidating image toward the outside world it accelerates the isolation of North Korea from the international society. In fact, this is an example of conflict of two different categories of soft powers, namely, the first category and the fifth category that aims to enhance domestic support for a government. If North Korea wants to avoid isolation in the international community and participate in it as a normal member, it has to change its national image into one of a more peaceful nature, accompanied by meaningful behavioral changes.

(2) The second category of soft power is necessary for effective leadership in mobilizing collective action among countries. Unless an action by a leading country is justified by reasonable rationales or causes, the leading country cannot form an effective coalition of countries for collective actions. Recent criticisms against the lack of U.S. soft power in its global war on terrorism or in its war in Iraq all pertain to this category of soft power.<sup>15</sup> A general example of the second category of soft power is the justification of economic sanctions or foreign invasions through UN procedures such as General Assembly resolutions or Security Council resolutions. "Just War Theory," or the manipulation of images of enemies by news media also belong to this second category. This category of soft power is important in saving costs of hard power because burden-sharing can be arranged among coalition partners.

(3) The third category of soft power aims at more direct consequences of changing preferences and behaviors of others by using ideational resources. Examples of the third category are spreading theories, concepts, or discourses to other countries so that they adopt specific ways of thinking. The "Washington Consensus," "Neoliberalism," and "Globalization" discourses are some of the examples of theories and discourses developed and spread by Anglo-American

powers.<sup>16</sup> Japan also employed similar soft power in the past when it developed and spread the “flying geese model,” “Toyotism,” “the Just-in-time system,” or “soft authoritarianism.”<sup>17</sup> International celebrities can play important roles in spreading theories and discourses. Books, lectures and comments by international celebrities such as Nobel laureates, famous CEOs like Bill Gates, or star politicians are very influential in exerting this category of soft power. Therefore, having internationally famous celebrities contributes greatly to the soft power potential of a country.

(4) Maintaining a large number of political economic entities such as an empire, a nation, or a community demands soft power at the center of the entities because coercive, violent suppression of defectors is too costly and short-term. Natural identification or loyalty from the members of such entities pertains to this area of soft power. Examples of the fourth category are an empire’s efforts to maintain its unity over a vast imperial territory through imperial museums, imperial rituals, common languages, invention of traditions, and common lifestyles.<sup>18</sup> The EU’s efforts to establish a common European Constitution and other institutions and symbols are another example.

(5) Examples of the fifth category are creating national heroes, invoking patriotism through international sports competition, or showing a leader’s outstanding performances at international summits or conferences in order to increase the domestic popularity of a leader or government. In most cases, the fifth category of soft power is geared toward domestic rather than international audiences. However, without an international dimension, this fifth category of soft power cannot exist.

### *A new concept of soft power*

The five above mentioned categories of soft power share one very peculiar common denominator with regard to power resources. All five categories use what are here called “soft resources” or symbolic resources to exert influence upon others. Hard resources, such as military weapons or financial resources, are not the sources of soft power, but rather soft resources such as ideas, images, theories, know-how, education, discourses, culture, traditions, national or global symbols, etc. are the sources of this power. This connection between soft resources and soft power is in fact quite important in building a theory of soft power because it is this connection which leads us to develop a “resource-based theory of soft power.” The resource-based theory of soft power solves some of the definitional problems found in Joseph Nye’s concept of soft power.

Nye’s conception of soft power focuses more on the nature of the power being exerted, rather than on the power resources, although he refers to some soft power resources such as an attractive culture, ideology and international institutions.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, within Nye’s conception of soft power, as long as the nature of the power is cooptive, attractive and non-violent, that power becomes soft power, regardless of the power resources being employed. Then, the problem is when hard resources are used to create attractiveness in others, or when soft resources are used to coerce others to change their behaviors. For example, allied powers feel attracted or secure when allies strike enemies with high-tech precision weapons. This process involves the use of hard military resources to create attractive power. Nye’s original conception of soft power may not include this process of hard resource-driven soft

power. On the other hand, one can coerce others by using soft symbolic resources. For example, credit-rating companies can change the economic policies of other countries merely by changing the ratings of the country, or by sending warning signals, even if the target countries do not want to change their policies. This is a case where soft resources are used to exert coercive power. Again, in Nye's original conception, it may not be clear whether this is a soft power or a hard power.

In order to solve this vagueness within Nye's original conception of soft power, this paper redefines soft power based specifically upon the power resources employed to exert influence upon others, by the nature of power, cooptive or coercive. In other words, when non-material symbolic "soft resources" are employed to exert influence on others, the final outcome is soft power, while the final outcome is defined as hard power when material "hard resources" are employed. Therefore, within this definition, soft power can be both cooptive and coercive, as can hard power. The difference lies only in the power resources being used.

This new distinction and definition is practically, as well as theoretically, of significance because it opens possibilities for a country with limited hard resources to project or produce power by using soft resources. For example, the European Union can take a leadership role in reforming the international financial system by suggesting alternative models to Anglo-American neoliberalism; or possibly, North Korea and Iran could improve their security environments by creating soft images of themselves when the U.S. policies toward them change in more practical directions. For countries that are regarded as middle powers, such as Canada, Australia, Japan, and Germany, this distinction of soft power could be quite relevant in developing their foreign policies and strategies, because they have the capacity and will to develop and increase soft resources, while they may not and will not spend financial resources to develop and increase hard resources to the level enjoyed by the United States.

For the purpose of theory development, the distinction between soft resources and soft power is very important. Symbols, culture, education, know-how, theories and discourses, and international celebrities themselves are just soft resources to be used to produce soft power. Presence or possession of soft resources per se, however, does not automatically mean the exertion of soft power. For example, having an attractive culture cannot represent a country's soft power unless that attractive culture is used and manipulated to move others in specific directions. Until soft resources are diverted into influence, soft power is not exerted. Being soft is not soft power!

### *A theoretical framework*

The conversion from soft resource to soft power involves three stages: (1) application of soft resources; (2) cognitive processes of the recipients; and (3) soft power production. Of course, it is important to delineate the applicants, the recipients, and the channels through which soft resources are applied, but that pertains more to the area of specific hypotheses and strategy developments with specific goals in mind, rather than a general theory. In this three-stage conversion processes the first and the third stage are self explanatory and so our task has to be to fully explain the second stage, cognitive processes.



When applying soft resources to the recipients, the applicants wish to change the recipients' preferences, calculations and interpretative frameworks or emotions such that the recipients change their behaviors in the direction which the applicants want. Therefore, it is imperative that the applied soft resources create either new ways of thinking, an attractiveness, or a fear in the minds of the recipients in the short-term. When the short-term changes are fixed as "common sense" or "habits," then the short-term soft power will have longer-term effects. Institutionalization, global or national standard setting, or the creation of social rhythms through "synchronization and orchestration," are typical examples of producing long-term soft power effects in the form of social habits.<sup>20</sup>

Short-term changes in cognitive processes take place when the recipients feel threatened or attracted by the application of soft resources, or when the recipients start to think and calculate through new theories or interpretative frameworks. When the soft resources can create comfort, respect, attractiveness, and safety then the soft resources will tend to produce "cooptive power." And when the soft resources can create "fear," it is very likely that the soft resources will be diverted into "coercive power" (or strong resistance). However, when the soft resources themselves are theories or interpretative frameworks to be accepted by the recipients, then the recipients will start to think and calculate in new and different ways.

The most cost-effective way of exerting soft power is to produce long-term cooptive power by creating "social habits" among the recipients. When the recipients tend to "feel and think, (therefore behave)" in similar patterns continuously, then no significant additional efforts are necessary on the part of the applicants to exert influence upon the recipients. Perhaps this is what Nye had in mind when he discussed changes in preferences.

In summary, the conversion process of soft power is demonstrated in Figure 1.

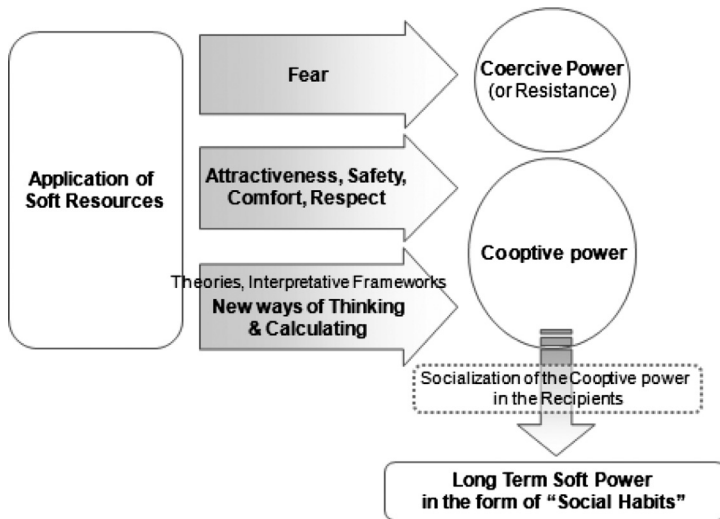


Figure 1. Conversion processes of soft power.

***Soft power strategies***

Out of the above theoretical framework, numerous soft power strategies can be contemplated. Spreading certain standards as “global” or “regional,” conveying certain messages through attractive celebrities or heroes, making national or global slogans that are attractive, or creating a sense of urgency or fear, are just a few examples. However, changing the preferences, behaviors, or way of thinking in the recipients without specific goals in mind is extremely impractical. Just becoming attractive or respectful per se cannot be the goal of soft power. Specific goals such as improving the security environment, mobilizing support for collective actions, or increasing domestic approval ratings need to be achieved. Therefore, soft power strategies ought to be “goal-specific.”

Among many soft power strategies, some practical ones that have been proven to be feasible are:<sup>21</sup>

(1) Manipulation or creation of self-images to improve the security environment: A typical example of this strategy is Germany and Japan’s post World War II efforts, respectively, to repent for their imperial atrocities and consequent institutionalization and repeated rituals relating to the repentance. The Peace Constitution and self-restraint on defense spending and remilitarization in Japan helped prevent hostile coalitions against Japan from forming in the Asian region, which were of course complemented by the presence of the U.S.-Japan alliance. Germany’s peaceful coexistence with the surrounding European countries has been made possible by sincere repentance and the attitudes shown by German leaders and politicians regarding the behavior of Nazis (which again was complemented by the presence of NATO, and other multilateral institutions in Europe). On the other hand, when images of a country reflect better capabilities and attractiveness, the individual level security (human security) of foreign residents of the country will improve as they will face less discrimination or more respect in the country of their residence.

(2) Manipulation of others’ images to mobilize support for collective actions: the United States has been particularly adroit in manipulating or creating others’ negative images to mobilize international support for collective actions under U.S. leadership. Identifying the Soviet Union as an “Evil Empire,” or pinpointing Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as the “Axis of Evil” are typical examples. Another example is the way in which the UN can create an image or theories of global warming (sense of fear and urgency) so that nations in the world collectively act under UN leadership to reduce so-called greenhouse gases.<sup>22</sup> When the leadership country has an image of representing universal values such as liberty, freedom, democracy, and poverty eradication it will be easier for them to mobilize support for collective actions.

(3) Network effect strategy: spreading certain standards, behavioral codes, and common reference points is the central element of this strategy. The goal of this strategy is to form an external environment which favors the countries, companies, or interest groups that are already accustomed to the standards, norms, rules, or institutions.<sup>23</sup> The spread of global standards, the Washington Consensus, the international language of English, certain development models such as neoliberalism or the Japanese model in the past, all created certain networks that favor particular countries, companies and other actors by changing ways of thinking in recipient countries.



(5) Accelerating situational change: this strategy is possible when the target country is going through a crisis or an unstable transition, and also when the soft resource-applying country has a reputable credibility and hard power capability. A typical example is the “verbal intervention” by the chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve Boards regarding the appreciation or depreciation of certain currencies when those currencies are already depreciating rapidly.<sup>24</sup> The strategies to escalate a crisis situation by sending hard-line signals continuously also belong to this category of strategy.

(6) Heroes and celebrities: heroes and celebrities can exert soft power in two ways. One is by their role models, and comments or charitable efforts for certain universal values, and the other is by instilling a sense of pride within their own countries. The former can set an international agenda to achieve certain national or international goals, while the latter provokes nationalistic cohesion or wide support for their governments. Here, heroes or celebrities can act independently or in cooperation (or cooptation) with their governments.

### **Korea’s soft power potential and some policy recommendations**

In order for Korea to have soft power, it is a prerequisite that it has at least some soft resources that are internationally applicable. Two notable soft resources that Korea possesses at the moment are (1) Korea’s experiences of successful modernization and democratization within a very short period of time; and (2) the so-called “Korean Waves” in many parts of East Asia. Korea’s well known human resources also have the potential to become a usable soft resource. What then can Korea achieve with the use of these soft resources? This is a fundamental question that Korea needs to answer before it develops soft power strategies.

### **Trade and economic goals and Korea’s soft power strategy**

Some of the major goals of Korea’s foreign economic policies is to expand international markets for Korea’s exports, induce more FDI, and attract more tourists to Korea. When the strong industrial polices of the past are banned in the World Trade Organization (WTO) regime, there are not many things a government can do to promote exports or strategic industries. In this environment, therefore, the need for indirect ways of creating markets for Korean goods will increase and these indirect routes can be supplied partly through soft power strategies.<sup>25</sup> One way for Korea to do so is to effectively use its consulting teams who are frequently invited to developing countries.

Korea’s soft resource of experience in successful modernization and democratization indeed attracts the attention of many developing countries. They ask for expert advice on how to develop their economies and political systems. When Korean consulting teams actually visit developing countries, they have contact with influential leaders, opinion-makers, and businessmen who are willing to listen to their advice. These Korean consulting teams could develop systematic and consistent strategies to link Korea’s economy with the economies that they are advising, and with the influence that they have on influential persons within the inviting countries, Korean teams have the opportunity to create a specific kind of international division of labor and consumer markets. The precise contents of advice and strategies can be

studied by Korea's think tanks and conveyed to the policy planning department(s) of the government.

Korea could also take advantage of the "Korean Wave" in target countries in East Asia.<sup>26</sup> In the countries where the "Korean Wave" is widely welcomed, the Korean government might try to spread Korean ways of living so that consumers living in the target countries come to habitually consume Korean culture, goods, and services. This can be done with the assistance of Korean celebrities, or by deliberate efforts of the government to spread Korean standards, culture and brands. Japan seems to have been extremely good at this kind of soft power strategy. For example creating Japan's animation markets, game software markets, and other cultural markets, though it is not certain how much the Japanese government has been involved in creating these markets. The importance of this strategy is that when a network effect is established by exporting standards and habits, the source country can have a long-term influence over the target countries, implying long-lasting market shares for the source country's companies.

Another possible soft power strategy in the era of the global economy is to increase the credibility and capacity of Korea's think tanks in terms of analyzing and predicting the trends in Asian markets and affairs. Korea's population is well educated and trained, and citizens have better access to information relating to the Asian markets. If Korean think tanks can acquire an international reputation for accuracy and timeliness in their analyses of Asian markets, they could have a huge influence in terms of international policy recommendations and changing the trends of the markets. With regard to North Korean affairs, Korean think tanks seem to have already gained such a reputation, they now need to expand these areas further to Northeast Asia or East Asia.

### **Political and security goals and Korea's soft power strategy**

Korea cannot assume a role of global leadership by mobilizing international support for collective actions toward certain global missions. However, Korea can certainly play a regional leadership or co-leadership role in relation to the North Korean nuclear crisis, the Six-Party Talks or building multilateral security frameworks in Northeast Asia. These issues obviously require collective action, and the mere existence of common interests does not guarantee collective action unless the common interests develop into common causes justified by well-accepted international norms, values and appealing slogans. With regard to the issue of the North Korean nuclear crisis, the rationale of eliminating rogue regimes is not working very effectively, and the countries involved need to come up with a more persuasive and common cause to enable collective action. Moreover, the sharing of common, agreeable theories and concepts among the involved parties hoping to resolve the "North Korea problem" might help bring a peaceful resolution to the issue, much as the United States and the Soviet Union dealt with their mutual nuclear threats by sharing deterrence theories during the Cold War.<sup>27</sup> Korea's think tanks, experts, and scholars can mobilize their ideas in more systematic ways and suggest common causes and approaches to resolving the "North Korea problem." Perhaps, Korea's own experiences of modernization, democratization, and denuclearization can be applied to North Korea as a workable model.

Korea could also lead the way in East Asian region-making by introducing innovative ideas and also by inducing multilateral agreements on East Asian standards and East Asian governance. For instance, Korea could help create an East Asian Council of Foreign Relations composed of foreign and regional policy experts from East Asian countries. Publication of authoritative journals and reports by the Council can increase the soft power of East Asia as a whole, while also promoting regional identity among the members of the Council. When members of the Council are well connected to the governments and mass media of their countries, policy coordination among East Asian countries will possibly become much more efficient.

The “Korean Wave” indeed improved the security environment for many Koreans living in foreign countries as residents as the images of Korea and Koreans are being recreated as charming, warm, and advanced. They encounter less discrimination, and many times have better chances of penetrating into the societies of their countries of residence. Here, what stands out the most, is the role of Korean stars and celebrities. They have become the symbol of Korea in the regions where the “Korean Wave” is popular, and the words and deeds of those stars indeed have a huge impact upon the minds of many “Korean Wave” fans. Therefore, these stars have become very important soft resources for Korea, and are expected to play increasingly active, though subtle, political roles representing Korea’s, as well as regional and universal, interests.<sup>28</sup>

Another possible area where Korea’s soft power could have an influence is in helping North Korea improve its international image on the condition that North Korea would sincerely embark upon various reforms, including abandonment of its nuclear programs. As mentioned earlier, North Korea’s slogan of “strong and big nation” conveys a very negative and intimidating image toward the global community, provoking hawkish reactions from surrounding countries. Therefore, North Korea ought to come up with new slogans that may appeal to both domestic and international audiences. Inter-Korean summits can deal with such problems and suggest creative new slogans via international broadcasting toward the outside world.<sup>29</sup>

## **Conclusion**

This paper suggested a new definition of soft power by making a distinction between hard resources and soft resources, rather than by making a distinction between coercive power and cooptive power as Nye did. This new definition is useful for countries considered to be middle powers that may be limited in terms of hard resources, but have the potential to develop soft resources. Application of soft resources to produce power, be it coercive or cooptive, is very cost-effective because it will not cost lives or require huge financial resources. The application of soft resources to produce soft power depends more on the intellectual and creative capacity of a given country, rather than upon its physical capacity. Therefore, improving the soft power capability of a country can complement and strengthen the knowledge economy base of the country at a time when the knowledge economy is increasingly becoming a major economic trend of the twenty-first century.

This paper categorized five different types of soft power in accordance with specific soft power goals. They are: (1) soft power to improve the external security environment by projecting peaceful and attractive images of a country; (2) soft

power to mobilize other countries' support for one's foreign and security policies; (3) soft power to manipulate other countries' thinking and preferences; (4) soft power to maintain the unity of a community or community of countries; and (5) soft power to increase the approval ratings of a leader or domestic support for a government.

The categorization of different types of soft power is important because it enables us to think more in strategic terms, and to be goal-oriented. A goal of simply "becoming attractive" is meaningless unless a country is an empire or hegemon like the United States, with its goal to maintain its preponderance or unipolarity without paying huge costs in terms of hard resources. As noted earlier, Nye's works on soft power are therefore very hegemonic, and should not be mechanically copied and imported by lesser powers. Otherwise, lesser powers will only increase soft resources, without knowing what they really want from those soft resources. It should be repeated again that "attractiveness" in international affairs always goes together with international leadership.

The theoretical framework suggested in this paper and a few exemplary strategies are still preliminary, but they provide us with a systematic way of thinking about the process of soft power conversion, and furthermore provide some clues to assess a country's own soft power resources and capabilities. The major task to be accomplished is to establish the soft power conversion processes in more scientific ways through interdisciplinary studies. The disciplines of psychology, anthropology, communication studies, and business science could all be of great help.

Korea's soft power capacity is still very limited, not because Korea does not have ample soft resources, but because Korea has not been interested in developing and applying soft resources to produce influence in the region and on the global stage. Korea's ingrained habit of following the leadership of the United States may be one of the reasons why Korea has not been sufficiently interested in soft power. This indirectly proves the strong soft power projection of the United States into the policy mindset of Korea. The long history of Korea's relatively low position in the international hierarchy of countries may be another reason why Korea has not been able to think in terms of soft power. But Korea has climbed the ladder of the international hierarchy extremely quickly during the past several decades, and now is under pressure to play a more global role in the international community. Now Korean leaders need to recognize the importance of soft resources and soft power for Korea and invest more in the development of Korea's soft power through national and systematic efforts.

## Notes

1. Joseph Nye, *Bound To Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990).
2. *Ibid.*, 188.
3. Joseph Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Super Power Can't Go it Alone* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
4. Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Succeed in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004); Joseph Nye, "Hard Power, Soft Power, and the War or Terrorism," in *American Power in the 21st Century*, ed. David Held and Mathias Koenig-Archibugi (Cambridge, UK and Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2004).
5. Joseph Nye, "Transformational Leadership and the U.S. Grand Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 4 (July/August 2006): 139–48; Joseph Nye, *The Powers to Lead* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

6. For a discussion of similar concepts in other disciplines, see Geun Lee, "A Theory of Soft Power in International Politics: A Preliminary Attempt," *Kukje Jiyeok Yongu* 13, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 1–18.
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  27. Emanuel Adler, "The Emergence of Cooperation: National Epistemic Communities and the International Evolution of the Idea of Nuclear Arms Control," *International Organization* 46, no. 1 (Winter 1992): 101–46.
  28. On this, see, Geun Lee, "Korean Wave, Korea's Soft Power, and Public Diplomacy," The Annual Report, Kyushu University Research Center for Korean Studies (March 2007): 57–68.
  29. For clues on this, see Geun Lee, "An Analysis of the 2000 inter-Korean Summit from the Constructivist Perspective: Identity Transformation and the Two-Level Game," *Kukka Jeonryak* 7, no. 4 (2002): 29–53.

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