

Chinese Soft Power: Towards a Pacifist Vision of Power

Eric Kambale Tsongo^{1,2}, Ruth Pembe Ngwey^{1,2}, Pascal Kalema Welo^{1,3}

¹International Relations Department, Central China Normal University, Wuhan, China

²International Relations Department, Université de Kinshasa, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo

³International Relations Department, Université de Lodja, Lodja, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Email: katsoeric@gmail.com, ruthpembengwey@gmail.com, kalemapascal18@gmail.com

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Abstract

The concept of power has traditionally occupied a central place in the analysis of international relations, both theoretically and politically, as a crucial concept for understanding the behavior of international actors. The concept of soft power is not a Chinese invention but an American one, developed by Joseph Nye in the late 1980s. However, the changes in the international system brought about by bipolarity have accelerated and reinforced the emergence of a new form of power as opposed to hard power. In this globalized, conflict-ridden international system, this article examines the challenges of Chinese soft power, the strategy China uses to advance its policies, and the answers to the question of whether Chinese policies will lead to a redefinition of power. Through an in-depth analysis of China's strategies and influence on the international stage, we attempt to shed light on the American vision of supremacy, which is quite different from China's stance of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. This approach allows China to present itself as a respectful partner that attracts nations that might otherwise be reluctant to accept Western influence. This reflection aims to contribute to the debate on the future of the international system dominated by Chinese soft power and how China is developing its influence strategies for its peaceful domination of power and to try to understand whether this Chinese vision of power can be adapted to the security, economic and political games in a conflictual and globalized environment.

Keywords

Soft Power, Hard Power, Power, Globalization

1. Background

“More than just a harmless, affectionate, but unconquerable panda, the sometimes

menacing Chinese dragon now wants to assert itself as a benevolent dragon, and is already meeting with a favorable response in several parts of the world” (Courmont, 2009).

To begin with, we need to understand that the notion of power traditionally occupies a central place in the analysis of international relations, both theoretically and politically, as a decisive notion for understanding the behavior of international players. It is undeniably one of the key notions around which political or theoretical readings of developments in the international system are structured.

With the aim of establishing a hierarchy in the balance of power between state actors in international relations, the notion of power is generally used in an attempt to evaluate the capacity of states to act. The realist school of international relations, for example, sees power as the capacity of one actor to impose its will on others. This notion of power thus appears to be relative, since its exercise concerns relationships between actors and not simply raw data.

Before the historian Joseph Nye proposed the distinction between hard power and soft power in the early 1990s, the notion of power and the ways in which it is exercised were multi-faceted, emphasizing that the most visible classical criteria (politico-military capabilities) were not the only ones to be taken into account, Military capabilities were considered to be the primary criterion of power used in the analysis and understanding of international power relations, alongside criteria such as territory, natural resources or demography, the latter being considered essentially in terms of the potential military advantages they could bring. This primacy of the military in relations between states and in the hierarchization of the latter is now partly called into question.

The arms race seems to be gradually giving way to the race for development, cutting-edge technological evolution, and the strategy of influence disseminated by groupings that are sometimes linguistic (Francophonie, Anglophonie, ETC...) and sometimes friendly (France-Africa, China-Africa, etc.).

The post-war international system was dominated by American supremacy, to the extent that academics such as Robert Kagan and William Kristol in 2000, believe that the contemporary international system is not built on the principle of a balance of powers, but around American hegemony (Kagan & William, 2000). For more than a decade, the United States has unquestionably been the world’s leading power in every sphere economic, military, technical, and cultural. William Pfaff has expressed his concerns about the dangers of hegemony at the dawn of the 21st century: By definition, hegemony is an unstable state, since the international system spontaneously seeks to resist it in order to balance it out. He who holds the hegemony is perpetually threatened: The United States’ international position has been weaker since it became “the sole superpower” at the end of the Cold War. Those in a position of hegemony are driven, from within, to pride and excess, and subjected, from without, to envy, resentment and threats (Bergent, 1999).

The animosity towards the United States embodied in the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the American unilateralism that followed, confirm this trend. American hubris, feared by William Pfaff, translates into an increased willingness to

interfere in the external affairs of sovereign states, in application of its policy of hard power as the world's policeman.

In terms of power, comparisons with Rome are legion, so much so that since the end of the Cold War, many experts have been predicting the same fateful fate for the United States as for the most powerful empire in the history of the West, and yet fallen, leading us to reflect on the future of Chinese soft power in a post-American supremacy world, insofar as China today appears to be the direct conqueror capable of playing the role occupied by the post-war United States.

Today, there is indisputable proof that China is a major world power, and that it has a vocation to play its role as such, given the multiple issues and challenges facing the global political system.

As a result, China is developing a vision of the world that differs from that of other great powers such as its direct competitor, the United States, based on the peaceful resolution of disputes between states, without intervening directly in the internal affairs of sovereign states, as evidenced by the directive principle of its diplomacy. At the 17th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 2007, soft power was formalized as a political principle, and is now the subject of numerous scientific studies.

It's worth noting that the concept of soft power, "the ability to change what others want through its power of attraction", developed by the political scientist Joseph Nye in an international environment marked by the disappearance of the Eastern bloc, and numerous theoretical and empirical reflections on power and decline, put forward the idea at the end of the 1980s that the transformations of the international system engendered by bipolarity had accelerated and amplified the emergence of a new form of power as opposed to hard power, "the ability to change what others do by force".

In this way, we will attempt to answer the essential questions raised by the present research topic concerning the future of the international system dominated by Chinese soft power, and the way in which China is developing its strategies of influence for the peaceful domination of power. Finally, we will try to understand whether this Chinese vision of power would be adapted to security, economic and political games in a conflictual and globalized environment.

2. Chinese Soft Power

In a post-Cold War international environment, the transformation of the international system engendered by bipolarity has accelerated and amplified the emergence of a new form of power: soft power, as opposed to hard power. As Ding Sheng pointed out in 2008, it was only in the mid-1990s that academic and political circles began to take a real interest in soft power (Sheng, 2008).

Before this form of power was taken up by academics, it can be found in the analects of Confucius' speech compilations, as witnessed by this formulation: If the inhabitants of distant lands do not recognize the authority of the prince, let him make culture flourish, in order to attract them.

It should be noted that China, in its quest for peaceful domination, had in the 1950s promoted an ideology at the service of Third Worldism, and then in the late 1960s sought to propagate the ideas of its Cultural Revolution; so it had already attempted, in its own way, to put forward a form of soft power, with results that were, to say the least, debatable (1965-1975) being the most significant example.

China's adoption of soft power as a political principle at the 17th Communist Party Congress in 2007 has prompted reflection on its strengths and weaknesses, and the ways in which it can be applied in an unstable political system in constant competition. "If a country has an admirable culture and ideology, other countries will tend to follow. (...) There's no need for costly and less effective hard power. (...) Acceptance of a culture often inspires both psychological aspiration and rational identification." (Wang, 1993)

2.1. The Weakness of Chinese Soft Power

In the post-Cold War world political system dominated by Western influence, Chinese soft power faces multiple existential challenges characterized by Western values and customs, such as: the problem of perception, and linguistic and cultural barriers.

Problems of perception: Despite China's efforts to improve its international image, certain controversial domestic policies (such as human rights violations and repression of freedom of expression) continue to damage its reputation. It lacks many of the non-governmental organizations that generate much of America's soft power, as Fan Shiming points out, and foreign audiences are often suspicious of government-led projects, so the effects of China's use of soft power are mixed, plus, the government monopoly hinders the flowering of intelligence and rich resources in the population, which could contribute greatly to the influence of Chinese soft power, he concludes by mentioning two major factors that limit Chinese soft power, the first is nationalism and the second is China's reluctance to take full advantage of an uncensored civil society (Nye, 2015).

Indeed, the great powers try to use culture and narrative to create a soft power that defends their national interests, but it's not easy to sell them when the message is incompatible with their national realities (Nye, 2012), as a result, China, like other major powers, faces a number of barriers.

Linguistic and cultural barrier: China faces challenges related to the language barrier, which limits its ability to effectively disseminate its culture and values on a global scale, as do other regional powers such as France, for example, which disseminates its French language as an official language in 32 countries on 5 continents making it easier to promote French culture.

In addition, audio-visual transmission, characterized by a linguistic barrage, is struggling to establish itself in linguistic zones traditionally dominated by other major powers, such as French-speaking Africa, where French radio and television stations like TV5 monde, RFI and France 24 are easy to pick up. And let's not forget the organization of the Francophonie Games, which relies on the Organi-

zation International de la Francophonie to carry the French vision around the world (Xin, 2017), something that China is unable to do to spread its culture and worldview.

This barrier is a major flaw in China's policy of seduction, because no matter how many promotional initiatives are launched, China Radio International and CCTV (China Central Television) are unable to make the international public consume China's image, as in the case of major international events such as the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and the 2010 Shanghai World Expo, which had no major impact on international public opinion, compared with the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, which are becoming an event of the century despite being poorly organized compared with Beijing.

2.2. The Strength of Chinese Soft Power

China is developing an effective soft power strategy that gives it many strengths in the international system. After Chinese academics and political elites studied the American influence on the international system, many Chinese schools of thought developed in an attempt to appropriate and give a Chinese orientation to soft power to increase its influence, given that it is somewhat behind the American hard power.

According to this school, soft power is made up of ideas and principles, institutions and political measures that operate within a nation's culture and cannot be separated from it. Thus, culture is the mainspring of Chinese soft power, since it encompasses the other two (foreign policy and domestic political values).

From the above, Chinese cultural influence has a rich history and culture that arouses interest and admiration worldwide. Aspects such as Chinese literature, art, cuisine and philosophy all contribute to strengthening China's cultural influence. As Mr. Li Changchun pointed out in April 2007, "the construction of Confucius Institutes is an important channel for glorifying Chinese culture, helping Chinese culture to spread throughout the world, and is part of China's international propaganda strategy".

In addition, students, tourists and other Chinese nationals abroad have an obligation to convey a good image of China in their countries of residence, as evidenced by the philosophy of "going out" to Chinese "zouchuqu", which encourages young Chinese to go abroad. This is why in February 2015 the authorities issued a manual of good manners, reminding us that every Chinese citizen abroad is the guarantor of the country's image (Cabestan, 2010). The aim of this handbook is to spread a positive image of China, with its growing diaspora abroad playing an important role in its soft power.

In addition to Chinese culture as a force for Chinese soft power, economic diplomacy plays a crucial role in China's influence in the international system. As the world's second-largest economy, China has increased its influence through massive investment in economic and infrastructure projects abroad. This economic presence reinforces China's soft power and fosters closer ties with other countries,

giving it the power to use its economic strength to blackmail its rivals.

3. Chinese Soft Power Strategy

Contrary to the American soft power strategy, which is based on values that can be considered universal, as well as the internal foundations of American society, which are based on intangible principles that are disseminated throughout the world, such as democracy, liberal economics, freedom of expression and religious faith: democracy, liberal economics, freedom of expression, religious faith, China's respect for the principles governing international relations, as Mr. Li Mingjiang points out, enables the creation of a "set of favorable environments" for China's rise to power: a stable and peaceful international and regional environment, a cooperative environment based on equality and mutual benefit, an "objective and friendly" media environment, etc. (Li, 2008). It develops a soft power strategy based on two major levers using the influence of dependence on its economy as well as the system of encirclement in multipolarity.

3.1. Economic Dependence

In this new international system in which globalization reigns, the economic weapon is today used as a capital means of pressure or as a primary instrument of domination in the struggle for influence between East and West. Today, in the face of the nuclear impasse, the economic struggle is coming to the fore in a war that is being waged not only between East and West, but also and above all between rich and poor countries and between rich countries themselves. This struggle, which is being carried out on a new terrain and which is blurring the old divisions of the world into camps and blocs, increases the number of protagonists and, what is more important, can be waged autonomously, that is, even in the absence of military forces.

This is how the Chinese, aware of their economic capacity and the importance of the economy in the new international system, use this lever to keep their influence on the world without imposing any obligation on any sovereign state, except that it is essential to answer the question of how China uses economic leverage as strategies of its soft power. For methodological purposes, three important elements will be used to answer this question objectively.

Overseas Investment: Since becoming General Secretary of the Communist Party of China in 2012 and President in 2013, President Xi Jinping has launched a series of strategic initiatives at home and abroad, all aimed at ensuring China's political stability and economic growth, while also positioning China as a major new player on the international stage.

It should be noted that one of the most notable approaches is undoubtedly the strategic vision of a New Silk Road, now more often referred to as the "One Belt, One Road" initiative, renamed the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2017. Through this initiative, China finances infrastructure projects in many countries, thus strengthening its economic and diplomatic relations, this allows it to increase its

influence in the targeted regions and makes China the center of the world as often claimed by Chinese history which makes China the Middle Kingdom (Elisée & Reclus, 1902).

Development assistance: Although China has a long tradition of development assistance, China's recent and remarkable surge in foreign aid has significant implications for the global aid architecture, based on principles that diverge in many respects from those of traditional donor countries in the OECD's Development Assistance Committee. Especially with regard to non-interference, mutual benefit and unconditionality, as taken up by Zhou Enlai during his visit to 14 countries in Asia and Africa in 1964, in the Eight Principles of China's Foreign Aid (Huang & Ren, 2012) which were originally established on the core values of equality, mutual benefit and unconditionality. Since then, they have been the fundamental framework for China's foreign aid to other developing countries, China's offer of non-conditionality offering loans and aid to developing countries, often without the strict conditions imposed by other donors. This allowed him to gain influence and build diplomatic relations.

Trade agreements: By establishing free trade agreements and facilitating trade, China strengthens its economic ties with other countries, which can improve its image and reputation abroad. This Chinese policy of trade agreements first made it the world's low-cost factory before the West opened industrial sites in China to take advantage of a cheap labor force which is considered as a first phase of the transformation of Chinese industrial power, while the second phase began when we saw Chinese groups producing themselves and exporting relatively basic products (Barroux, 2023). China has replaced the Japanese and Koreans in televisions or freezers, to more sophisticated products such as smartphones or computers, without forgetting its ecological policy which makes it today the leader in electric cars in the world. We have seen the emergence of Chinese champions such as Lenovo, Huawei and Haier (2024).

To do this, China is establishing strategic economic cooperation partnerships with countries to collaborate on economic, technological and environmental projects, which strengthens its position on the stage of influence on the international scene, making it a major and unavoidable player.

It seems like a hasty conclusion, except that we admit that today China's economic health influences the economic stability of the countries of the world, an economic crisis in China could have repercussions on all regions of the world without exception, this is how by being aware of the economic stakes China uses its economic influence to strengthen its political and diplomatic relations with other countries, This can affect political decisions in regional groupings without any binding obligation.

3.2. Multipolarity

It is an important strategic lever of Chinese soft power constituting an important instrument to recreate the most favorable conditions for the consideration of its

interests by playing alliance games, in fact, the status of great power has traditionally been conferred on those states that had the armed force at hand to enforce their will, Today, the use of force faces major obstacles, including the fear of direct confrontation between the major nuclear powers.

From the above, it should be noted that the great powers are developing and adapting new strategies of non-binding influence to resist in the dominant power games, to do this, China is opting for the strategy of multipolarity as one of the important levers of influence of its soft power because many events tend to demonstrate the validity of the multipolar strategy such as polycentrism in the communist world, the diplomatic flexibility of China, the decline of the O.T.A.N., the economic power of Europe and Japan... The poles are multiplying, because the content of power has changed (Thuan, 2024).

In addition, an important question that will allow us to fully understand this strategy used by China is how does China radiate its soft power in alliance games? we will find the answers by analysing China's presence in three regional groupings (the BRICS, ASEAN and the Lancang-Mekong Mechanism).

➤ **BRICS:**

This group of countries has become a leading force in international relations and its rise in power illustrates the end of Western domination over world affairs, abounding together, a population of 3.24 billion people and their combined national incomes amount to 26 trillion dollars, which represents 26% of the world economy.

It should be noted that each BRICS country is an important country in its respective region, explains Mr. Padraig Carmody, However, China has become the leader of the group, he adds, and through the BRICS it presents itself as the main voice of the South, calling for the reform or overthrow of the existing international order (BBC News, 2023).

To assert themselves in the face of Western powers, the BRICS seek to strengthen their position in world bodies and the weight of the Yuan in the monetary system, to emancipate themselves and constitute a new economic and geopolitical force. This is the wish expressed by the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) at their 15th summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 22 to 24 August 2023.

According to Steve Tsang, although the BRICS members don't have much in common at first glance, President Xi has tried to show his counterparts that they all want a similar future: none of them want to live in a world dominated by the West. What the Chinese are proposing is an alternative world order in which autocrats can feel safe in their own country. They can find another direction of development without having to accept the conditions imposed by the democratic powers of the United States and Europe (Renard, 2023).

This is how China uses BRICS to achieve its national goal of confirming itself as a great power capable of competing with the United States and all Western countries.

➤ **ASEAN:**

It is an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that plays a crucial role for China in a geopolitical war of influence in the China-US rivalry in Asia through its strategic position between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, making it a crucial crossroads for maritime trade and trade routes. China seeks to strengthen its influence in this region to secure its trade routes and strategic interests, while countering the influence of the United States and other major powers in this region, this dynamic has an influence not only on China-ASEAN relations, but also on the balance of power in Asia and beyond.

Since China is the leader in the region despite its rivalry with its neighbor India, it is developing the containment strategy to counterbalance American influence because this region is also a playground where the United States seeks to strengthen its influence. By developing strong relations with ASEAN, China can counter US efforts to contain its rise by creating a regional bloc that can act as a counterweight to US influence, fostering multipolarity.

It is worth remembering that while China is now generally considered to be the country that has developed the strongest ties with ASEAN member states, it was the strong anti-communist sentiment shared by Southeast Asian nations that was originally founded on August 8, 1967 in Bangkok (Narine, 2002) until 1997, which was a pivotal year in China-ASEAN relations, it is generally referred to as the year in which ASEAN member countries and China held their first informal summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to officially recognize the process of rapprochement between China and ASEAN and to adopt a strategy of “good neighbourliness” and “mutual trust” aimed at strengthening and expanding ties between the two countries. China and ASEAN in the twenty-first century (Lai, 2007).

In addition, in the logic of regionalization, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was established in 1994 in order to engage China in a regional security process, in fact, this forum provides a space conducive to the discussion of relations between China and the United States, since it is one of the two regional forums in which the United States is directly involved in this region of Asia that the Chinese have not been able to avoid because one of China’s essential objectives in joining the ARF [is] to be able to curb initiatives that it considers harmful to its interests and to try to remove certain subjects from the agenda (Mack, 1996).

Since China stopped viewing the ARF as “an instrument in the hands of Western powers to interfere in the internal affairs of Asian member countries,” the forum has become an important channel for conveying its own perception of security and advancing its security interests. The ARF summits have recently been useful for China to convince its Asian partners that it is acting as a responsible country and that its interest is not to destabilize the region.

➤ **The Lancang-Mekong Mechanism:**

It is one of the regions with the greatest potential for development in Asia and beyond it refers to an important river that crosses China and the Indochinese peninsula, it is called the Lancang River in China, while in its downstream part, after

flowing in Yunnan Province, it is called Mekong River, which crosses Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam.

In 2012, Thailand proposed the Lancang-Mekong Sub-Region Sustainable Development Initiative, which received a positive response from the Chinese side. At the 17th China-ASEAN Summit held in November 2014, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang proposed the establishment of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Framework, which was warmly welcomed by the five countries bordering the Mekong River with the aim of creating a community with a shared future of peace and prosperity among the countries of the Lancang-Mekong region, and officially launched the LMC Facility ([Lancang-Mekong Cooperation, 2021](#)).

By initiating and leading the Lancang-Mekong Mechanism, China seeks to position itself as a leader in the Southeast Asian region, thereby strengthening its power and influence through diplomacy and cooperation. These resources, thus ensure stable access while minimizing tensions. Indeed, China uses the Facility to promote infrastructure projects and investments in neighboring countries, which promotes connectivity and economic development. This helps to create an economic dependency that strengthens its position as a containment strategy in the region to counter the influence of the United States and other powers in the region by seeking to create a regional bloc that can act independently of external pressures.

This river is far from being a zone of Chinese influence, but it has also become a field of expression for Sino-American rivalry, which can be illustrated by the existence of separate cooperation groups, as evidenced by the former US ambassador to Thailand Michael DeSombre, who described the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation as a “parallel organization” to the Mekong River Commission, which is the result of development programs led by the United States. United States during the Cold War, in 1995, and worked with the governments of Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam.

For his part, Chinese Minister Wang Yi considers that the Lancang-Mekong has become “one of the most dynamic emerging cooperation mechanisms in the sub-region”, adding that the LMC is actively seeking coordinated development with other sub-regional mechanisms, such as the Greater Mekong Sub-Region (GMS) and the Greater Mekong Mekong Cooperation (LMC) Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Chongqing.

4. Towards a Redefinition of Power by China?

According to Gérard Dorel, power is a state that in the world is distinguished not only by its territorial, demographic and economic weight, but also by the means at its disposal to ensure a lasting influence on the entire planet in economic, cultural and diplomatic terms, while for Serge we will define power as a capacity: Ability to do, ability to do things, ability to prevent things to happen, ability to refuse to do ([Corpus, 2019](#)).

Until the first decades of the twenty-first century, only the United States was in

a position to really have all the attributes of power, which is why Védrine (2004) put forward the concept of American hyper power. But China's growing weight in all areas suggests the return of a bipolar confrontation, even if the context is no longer comparable to that of the Cold War, in particular through the role played by secondary or incomplete powers (European Union, BRICS, petro monarchies, regional associations).

Indeed, it should be noted that globalization in any case shifts the notion of power into the context that relations between states are characterized by interdependence and not by coercion, which makes the notion of domination complex, as shown by the example of Russian energy power (Puissance, 2021).

The power of states is also weakened by the leading role of transnational actors, such as financial markets, multinational companies, non-governmental organizations, and terrorist networks. China's redefinition of power in a conflictual international system is based on a soft power strategy that contrasts sharply with the traditional approach of the United States, often characterized by the use of hard power. This transformation reflects not only a shift in the balance of power on the world stage, but also a new way of understanding diplomacy and geopolitical influence.

China, in its logic of the 2049 objective, has gradually understood that in order to increase its global influence, it must adapt its vision that the realities of globalization impose on the international system of the 21st century, which is by far characterized by military force but rather than by interdependence, making the world a global village.

Aware of the challenges of the era, China is developing the strategy of economic diplomacy by investing in infrastructure in Asia, Africa and Europe to create networks of economic dependence that strengthen its influence without resorting to military means, this economic strategy is visibly pragmatic in its emblematic project of the "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI).

In contrast to the approach of the United States, characterized by a frequent use of hard power, is clearly different from that of China, characterized by non-interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state and non-interventionism as often the United States has often resorted to military interventions to promote its interests, as in Iraq or Afghanistan, on the other hand, China adopts a posture of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, this approach allows it to present itself as a respectful partner, thus attracting nations that might be reluctant to Western influence.

China actively participates in multilateral forums such as the UN, ASEAN and the G20, thus strengthening its position as a responsible player in the international arena. It seeks to promote a multipolar world order, in contrast to American unilateralism. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, China highlighted its assistance to developing countries, emphasizing its role as a partner in international cooperation.

China is striving to build an alternative narrative that highlights its economic and social successes by positioning itself as a model of development, especially for

developing countries, China's significant poverty reduction is often used to illustrate the effectiveness of its political and economic system. This narrative is reinforced by initiatives on global issues such as climate change, where China presents itself as a responsible leader, contrasting with the criticism of the United States over its withdrawal from international agreements.

China's redefinition of power has major geopolitical implications as it seeks to establish partnerships based on economic and cultural interests, rather than military bases. This creates a new balance of power, where developing countries can choose alternatives to Western influence, thus fostering a multipolar world.

By promoting economic development and cooperation, China aims to create a more stable regional environment. For example, through the Lancang-Mekong Mechanism, China offers solutions to common challenges such as water resources management, thus strengthening cooperation without resorting to military threats. China's redefinition of power in a conflictual international system, through a soft power strategy, is a major challenge to the established world order. By privileging culture, economics and multilateral cooperation, China is establishing an alternative model to that of the United States, centered on hard power. This development could transform the dynamics of power and cooperation on the international stage, making it necessary to reassess the engagement strategies of other powers.

5. Conclusion

In an international environment post-Cold War and the transformation of the international system engendered by accelerated bipolarity and amplified the emergence of a new form of power, soft power as opposed to hard power, the strategies of influence of the emergence of Chinese soft power represent an element on which we must believe in a redefinition of the notion of power in the contemporary post-Cold War international context.

In contrast to traditional approaches, often characterized by hard power as an instrument of domination by the major Western powers led by the United States, China's strategy emphasizes cultural, economic and diplomatic influence for its peaceful and readily acceptable domination in the perspective of win-win cooperation by cultivating relations based on mutual respect and cooperation. China is asserting itself as a key player on the world stage, seeking to reshape the international order in favor of a multipolar system. This dynamic raises important questions about the future of international relations and the modalities of cooperation between nations.

6. Proposals

1) For scientists: It is crucial to intensify in-depth research on Chinese soft power compared to American soft power to better understand its geopolitical implications, and not to remain in an imaginary of the notion of power in a world of continuous change. Comparative studies can shed light on the differences and similarities between Chinese strategies and those of other powers, notably the

United States.

2) To policymakers: Policymakers should conduct in-depth analyses of China's cultural and educational policies. Understanding how these initiatives influence international perceptions can help develop appropriate response strategies by adapting foreign policies to the new realities of peaceful power propagated by China so all countries recognizing China's growing influence, should engage in constructive and inclusive dialogues, cooperation on global issues such as climate change, Public health and sustainable development could offer common ground.

In short, the redefinition of the notion of power through the prism of Chinese soft power already seems to be an indisputable fact given the influence that China has on the international scene and it should be emphasized that the foreign policies of all countries should adapt to avoid being surprised by the realities that are imposed.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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