

Can soft power be applied in terms of the Old Silk Road?

'Silk Road' as well as 'Soft power' are relatively recent terms. Soft power is a very popular concept in international affairs nowadays, ever since it was mentioned in a book published in 1990 by Joseph Nye - 'Bound to Lead'. While Silk Roads for the majority of their long history had no concrete name. But in the nineteenth century, the German geologist Ferdinand von Richthofen, named the ancient network of trade routes, formally established during the Han Dynasty of China "Die Seidenstrasse" (the Silk Road), and the term, was richly used by historians and therefore had also become well-known as a common and recognized name by wide public.

On one hand both of these terms are very new and recent but on the other hand, China has been transforming the world with its soft power ever since the trading with other nations began, far before anyone was talking about it. Europeans had become used and dependent on the goods delivered from China. Besides goods, other ideas as well, like religion, philosophies, sciences and new technologies, were exchanged. As one of the criteria of soft power is attraction and China, which came up with gunpowder and paper, and also had a monopoly on silk production, which became, considered an exotic luxury, extremely popular and demanded, it is safe to say that other nations were attracted by China. Therefore, it could be more open to accepting, or even adopting, Chinese culture, learning, philosophies and so on. China grew enormous influence - soft power and the Silk Road trade significantly helped to the development of the civilization of China, but also Korea, Japan, Iran, India, Europe, Africa and Arabia.

The State tries to display a good part of its culture only, so the rest of the world can sympathize and relate. China nowadays uses the Old Silk Road to gain sympathy as it shows there have been long-term, peaceful, prosperous and harmonious trade between China and other nations, including Europe. "It is no accident that many Chinese analysts now talk about the Chinese cultural emphasis on harmony or peace as the sources of China's soft power because these values essentially touch on the core issue of how power should be used." (Li, page 8) Culture is a very important potential source of soft power and China's goal is more than becoming an economic superpower. As Chinese economic power continues to grow, China wants to become a major world cultural power as well. It is not surprising that we can see overusing positives which bring the Old Silk Road to the world as there are many parts of Chinese history and culture which may be completely unacceptable to people in other societies. But China's soft power diplomacy has become more sophisticated and comprehensive in recent years. Its strategies now include expanding cultural and social exchanges, promoting economic independence, highlighting expected benefits from China's prosperity and presenting a peaceful and non-threatening new image around the world. It is obviously working, and China quite improved its international image. BBC World Service poll of 22 countries discovered that China is playing a significantly more positive role in world affairs than even the U.S. Even more interesting is the fact that neighboring Asian countries that have historically suspicious of China are thinking about China in a very benign way now. China has much more cultural power than people ordinarily think.

China grew applied soft power along the ancient Silk Road besides other things also because of its demanded goods and nowadays tries to spread its culture to other countries in the name of this historical tradition. China quietly expands its power overseas by promoting Confucius Institutes across the world, offering help in less developed regions, for example training programs for African elites, the appeal of China's model of development and so on. Basically we can say that even when China's soft power has lagged significantly behind the growth of the country's hard power and many strategists maintain that China is still not sophisticated in incorporating soft power into its strategic planning, China's soft power is already transforming the world and we can only guess how it will evolve in next decades and shape the world.

The essay does not answer the question of the essay.

Try to refer to your own viewpoint by using arguments referring to the text.

Kommentiert [UW1]: Here you should briefly explain the term soft power

Kommentiert [UW2]: "concrete" in English is "beton" in Czech

Kommentiert [UW3]: What do you mean by recent, since Richthofen coined this name already in the 19th century

Theoretical approach ~~on-to~~ “Soft power“

Soft power is ~~a term not not term used~~ only used for the Chinese political system. In many countries, most superpower countries ~~is~~ soft power is included in their political ~~structer~~structure and more or less is ~~”~~transforming the word“. But ~~-as~~ Mingjiang Li say ~~„~~„It has to be nurtured through a soft use of power and intentionally cultivated.“

So, what is the so-called soft-power? Nye says that soft power is “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments.”

If a country make good use of its resources of power through various domestic cultural, economic, and political programs and this will bring well-being to its own nationals, such use of power in the domestic context can resonate in the international arena and will produce a lot of admiration and respect from other countries. This is feasible way to get what you want, while by other countries is considered still as legitimate.

~~So-~~This attraction is usually based on power resources, such as culture, ideology, and institutions. Whereas hard power is evident in practices of threat, coercion, sanction, payment, and inducement. Soft power is preferable whenever is possible, not ~~because~~because its more moral then using force, but mostly by pragmatic and economic point of view: „ When you can get others to admire your ideals and to want what you want, you do not have to spend as much on sticks and carrots to move them in your direction.“

On the other hand, soft power as well as hard power need to think as a two power affecting each other. Inappropriate use of hard power can lead to the decline of a state’s soft power. An inappropriate and aggressive use of soft power can lead to make more enemies. For example, as Katzenstein and Keohane argue that American popular culture partially contributes to anti-Americanism in some parts of the world.

However, to gain soft-power, a state only attempts to display the good part of its culture that the outside world believes is enjoyable or agreeable, and hides those elements, that may cause uneasiness or misgiving in other states. In my opinion the main point how to ~~convince~~convince our partners is to emphasize what we have common.

There are two best option how to generate soft power in international relationship. The first is convince their leaders that state is considerate of the concerns and interests of other states. „American leadership will be more enduring if we can convince our partners that we are sensitive to their concerns ~~”~~“. The second best scenario would be to be able to have soft power over a majority of states.“ But as Nyes say: „this power is easy to feel, but hard to define.“

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If soft power is used in international relationship for easier way to get what you want, we can also ask question if soft power was used by ancient emperors and leaders. Even soft-power is ~~re~~latively new term, I think it is impossible that in ancient time was not such a use of power. Even if emperors and leader ~~did~~ didn't think more deeply to define this term, I think it was less or more used in their international policy and trade.

As regards trade, for China big vantage in ancient times for using soft-power, could be its long time lasted status of „center of the word“. With this status, if ~~e~~China's soft power and hard power in international policy was used well, it could lead to admiration and attracts many countries.

We can take a look, how ~~-~~Yo-Yo Ma describe a new silk road: „a modern metaphor for sharing and learning across cultures, art forms and disciplines.“ Even this ~~definicio~~definition regarding a new ~~in~~ovated silk road, the main character could be transformed also to old one. Silk road trade was mainly based on culture -attraction by countries along silk road. If your culture and commodities is attractive for other countries, it can lead to better trade and easier earning money. ~~In-From~~ this ~~poim of wiev~~point of view, ~~ehina~~China ~~oud~~could have a big tempting power for other countries and as we know, many countries in Asia and later also in Europe was less or more influenced by ~~ehinese~~Chinese culture. As Nye says: “When a country's culture includes universal values and its policies promote values and interests that others share, it increases the probability of obtaining its desired outcomes.“

As to China's purpose of cultivating superpower in last decade. ~~Deng and Zhang~~ argue that China's goal is more than becoming simply an economic superpower. China also wants to become a major world cultural power. However, in some points China's development could ~~has~~ have some serious signs of weakness too. As ~~Suisheng Zhao~~ argues that although China has moved quickly and made self-conscious efforts to cultivate soft power in order to promote its interests and expand its influence as a rising power, its approach to exercising soft power is flawed. This is largely because the pragmatic political values behind China's rapid economic growth.

China's current approach to soft power lacks contemporary moral appeals and is therefore hardly sustainable in the competition with the U.S. to inspire the vision of building a free and prosperous world.

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Can soft power be applied in terms of the Old Silk Road?

There are many Chinese analysts in China, who argue that the Chinese ~~Soft-soft~~ power is weaker than the ~~Hard-hard~~ power of China and it is therefore the weaker part of Chinese influence in ~~International-international~~ politics and position. However, there are also opinions that points on Chinese options which can become strong tools for building stronger ~~Soft-soft~~ power as a Chinese history, culture, traditional philosophy, institutions, ideology etc. How would Beijing attract the attention of foreign countries?

First of all is to define ~~Soft-soft~~ power, what is it? According to Nye's opinion the criteria for ~~Soft-soft~~ power are attraction, persuasion, cooptation, and emulation, but on the one hand Hard power which is based on military, economical and technological strength, can also produce attraction, appeal, and amity in certain circumstances and on the other hand aggressive cultural policy as a representative of the ~~Soft-soft~~ power can trigger off intolerance or international conflict. In other words, the most important is how to attract foreign countries and get appeal. As the author mentioned, not all cultural values can make stronger ~~Soft-soft~~ power as he used example of feet-binding for women in traditional Chinese culture, or social hierarchy which can weaken international influence of China. Good example for building Beijing's international rank is to use one of traditional term, "harmony". Harmony, cooperation, peace and other similar terms are connected with traditional Chinese culture in some ways, so in the spirit of these values Beijing decided act in international relations and in this way try to solve international problems and possibly improve various strategies that other countries will appreciate and thus strengthen Beijing's influence. Efforts must therefore be also in the interest of other states. According to the Confucian teachings, equilibrium relations can be maintained between nations by trading, and Beijing is trying to develop this direction according to the 13th Five-Year Plan. International educational exchange programs have also become a tool to strengthen Chinese soft power in recent years. Through these programs, they strive to reach Western education levels and to get Chinese universities to the forefront of global education. Confucius institutes in foreign countries also serve for this purpose. The author nevertheless believes that although China is consciously trying to strengthen its soft power, its influence tends to appeal to authoritarian elites and lags behind evolving current international standards.

In my opinion, Beijing builds international cooperation on its traditional values, which it seeks to include in the concept of the New Silk Road. In order to positively engage China in

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international relations, Beijing use established terms that are also of positive importance to foreign countries, which can build a trade artery for easier trade that draws on history. As in history, the Silk Road can be used not only for the movement of goods but also for the exchange of ideas and culture, as the author states educational international programs, which are included as part of the new Silk Road. This helps build a positive view of Chinese international politics, increases interest in Chinese culture, including learning Chinese, and thus increases the power of Chinese soft power. I think that in the sense of an old Silk Road, Soft-soft power can also be applied if we release the tools of hard power such as the army, economy and technology mentioned by the author, we still have cultural exchange and foreign countries' interest in China, which the author says is an important element in the evaluation of strength of countries' Soft-soft power. As the author states, although China's soft power lagged far behind China's hard power and the government began to strengthen it about 30 years ago, there were still values that can be considered as soft power, even though they were negligible in the historical context.

Good!

SOFT POWER: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics {Review essay}

The book is an unique piece of academic work. It consists of several chapters. Every chapter was created as a contribution of different authors. The whole book was compiled and edited by Mingjiang Li. The whole study is based on logical arguments and it is very easy for readers to follow the ideas of the author. The whole book well structured. As we can understand from the book title soft power is the crucial topic for research of the study. Consisting of 13 chapters, this book seeks to present an in-depth examination of China's soft power potential, the perspectives among Chinese elites on soft power, China's practice of soft power, and the impacts and implications of China's emerging soft power strategy in world politics. This study is interdisciplinary in nature since the subject of soft power involves domestic politics, culture, history, social relations, and, of course, conventional approaches to international relations.

As it was written in the introduction to this book author is trying to find answers to several questions. He uncovers lots of claims about China's soft power, for example, it is claimed that China has built up its soft power 'at the expense of the United States' and to have mounted a 'charm offensive' globally to transform the world in its own image. Is there any substance behind such claims? Or what is China's soft power? In which way is China accumulating its soft power? Why should there be such a rage about China's soft power at this particular time?

The author is trying to examine the soft power from many perspectives and angles. Starting with its theoretical understanding moving through several factors which shapes its more or less obvious form to point out specific issues in a state international policy. The author provides not only a clear examples of using the use soft power but also gives an explanation to the readers what might be the causes and consequences of its impact to presented international or bilateral image of the state. By reading this book, readers can easily find out those crucial factors which probably stand behind creating international presentation of the country made by its government. Domestic problems of governance, stability, and regime security have threatened China's soft power. Nevertheless, soft power will likely continue to drive China's aspirations abroad. In chapter 5, Jianfeng Chen explores China's soft power from the Chinese cultural Doctrine of the Mean, essentially a traditional Chinese philosophy about how to use power and influence. In the context of international relations, the Mean refers to a world that embraces a unity of opposites rather than absolute peace or absolute chaos. Moreover author shows that results of the soft power

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actions which are taken to create a positive and attractive image for international community can be more or less predictable in most of the cases.

At the beginning author pointed out who used the term "Soft Power" for the first time. Author says that term was first publicly used by Joseph Nye's in the 1990s . Author briefly provide a critical review of Nye's conceptualization of Soft power. On one hand Author analyses a hot debate of China' s soft power as a part of China's internal policy on the other hand he explains China's urgent need for receiving positive and admiring recognition in the international arena.

The book gives a ~~lot's~~lots of comparison between the soft power of the United States and China, especially in using of methods how to demonstrate that the nation is a superpower and it's culture, ideas and the way of ordering the world should be blindly followed by other nations. ~~The~~ crucial in the strategy of soft power is to ~~highlite~~highlight ~~the~~ uniqueness of the county and nation in the way that would be strongly appreciated by international community. In a ~~short~~ , ~~S~~soft power can be determined as an ability of nation to get what it wants through the attraction rather than correction or payments.

In the idealistic understanding of successful soft power one nation can convinces the world to follow voluntarily it's ideology, culture or even let the world think that emulating one model of- behaviour is ~~benefit~~beneficial for everyone. However, in reality the ~~prpess~~process of ~~atractio~~attraction other nations is a very ~~complexive~~completive process and there is no universal method for nation how to become a hegemon. Moreover ~~i-tis~~ , ~~it is~~ clear from this study that only ~~sucessfull~~successful use of sof_tpower is sometimes not enough. As I ~~Understand~~ -understand from the study, only combination of soft power, hard power, economy and technological domination can put a country on the way -to become hegemon . ~~On the other hand~~ , ~~the~~ author also demonstrate on example of the USA that cultural hegemony can gradually leads to anti- Americanism

A better approach to soft power is how the resources of power are used rather than ~~associating~~ associating sources of power as soft or hard. If a nation state (or any other actor) makes good use of its resources of power through various domestic cultural, economic, and political programs to bring well-being to its own nationals, it will produce a lot of admiration from other countries.

As it is obvious the sources of soft power not always produce ~~atractio~~attraction ~~persuasion~~persuasion for the others. As we see ~~velues~~values ideology culture of one country can come in to a ~~eonflic~~conflict with other. This conflict can offen increse in to hostility between nations. Demonstrating example of China, ~~i-t~~ it is clear that some sources of soft power and characteristics like authoritarian regime, or suppressions of democratic values

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and individualism will be strongly criticised from a western democratic ~~countries'~~countries' point of view. Since the mentioned values are the core ~~ed-of~~ the western countries it is ~~often~~often the reason for them to limit the cooperation with China. But ~~reality~~reality we can see that obstacle of different values can be overcome with a mutual economic ~~bussines~~business interest

On the other hand authoritarian regime, model of ~~hybr~~hybrid market and state control economy as well as ability to make a quick solution and adopt to new situations and ~~persistance~~ of CCP is ~~often~~often admired from the developing countries like Africa where the ~~rulers~~rulers are much more open to cooperate CCP regime. In result the projects of democratic countries involving in the ~~developping~~developing countries are far behind the China's projects.

As author mentioned the key role of China is to shape international community by ~~it's~~its actively participating on a global projects where the majority of the countries share ~~basicaly~~basically the same values and opinions for ex: global ~~wormming~~worming problem, more over thanks to ~~eurrent~~current policy of the USA and it's isolationism China is having a perfect chance to gain a very positive recognition if can propose solution to certain international problems. China's international image has improved quite substantially. In fact, a BBC World Service poll of 22 countries found that China is viewed as playing a significantly more positive role in world affairs than even the U.S. What is particularly noteworthy in the survey is the fact that even in ~~neighboring~~neighbouring Asian countries that have been historically suspicious of China, the general views a ~~re~~relativelyrelatively benign.

This study reveals that Chinese views on soft power widely vary, with the main stream believing that soft power is still a weak link in China's strategic planning but nevertheless should be an important component in China's future.

I suggest you to use Window's grammar and spelling check before submitting any written homework.

Put more emphasis on your own viewpoint by using arguments from the text.

Can soft power be applied in terms of the Old Silk Road?

When it comes to topic of chinese government policy, we can more frequently hear about term of soft power. What ~~we can~~ understand under term of soft power? How can China influence the rest of the world by using soft power? Is it possible to apply soft power in terms of ~~the sSilk Rroad~~? In ~~the~~ following text, I am going to focus on ~~the~~ theoretical approach of soft power in terms of the Old Silk Road.

Chinese leaders determined soft power as main international political strategy. Chinese ~~formarformer~~ President Hu Jintao remarked that international status of China depends on hard power as well as on soft power. The economy, technology and science could be considered as hard power, while soft power is more about influencing people through China's culture and traditional philosophy. Li Mingjian claims, that: "[U]nless the mainstream assessment of the state of China's soft power by Chinese analysts is that soft power is still a weak link in China's pursuit for stronger comprehensive national power." (2009, p. 2). ~~This~~ could be claimed based on the fact, that some countries are not worried about ~~Chinese success~~ in influencing other countries through soft power, because of hesitation to determine ~~what is~~ Chinese culture and values.

The question is what does really soft power mean? Li Mingjin claims that ~~it~~ is the ability to get desired outcomes because others want what you want, (2009, p. 3) and "the ability to affect what other countries want tends to be associated with intangible power resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions." (2009, p. 3). Under these circumstances, soft power's main sources are definitely for other countries attractive parts of culture, political values and impressive legitimate foreign policies. Soft power should be able to shape international institutions as well. Still, there might me question ~~where we is of~~ the border of ~~between~~ soft power and hard power. If one country is helping another one in any way without asking anything in return, could we claim that soft power ~~is in play~~? How ~~could we prove it~~? After all, is ~~the ehinese-Chinese~~ approach to soft power reasonable and effective, ~~if since~~ we know that hard power is also a good tool to produce attraction?

The ~~Old~~ Silk Road was a very important and famous trading network and ~~it is~~ significant part of the world's history. Although these roads were connecting ~~the whole world~~, it is mostly associated with Asia, and for it's is name name mainly with China. ~~The~~ Chinese leader Xi Jinping announced a new development strategy adopted by ~~the Chinese government, the~~ Belt and Road Initiative. ~~Could old Silk Roads increase attractivity of~~ chinese Belt and Road Initiative? I assume ~~if the Cehinese government's conviction that~~ culture, ideology and values is a great source of soft power, claim that Belt and Road Initiative is a renewal or old Silk Roads could get people attracted. However I am not concerned that being attracted by ~~the~~ idea of ~~the renewal of the~~ Silk Road, ~~the influence if the Chinese government could increase could significantly increase infuance of chinese government.~~

~~The~~ Chinese government is convinced that culture, ideology and values are good sources of applying soft power and soft power is an effective tool to influence other countries. Although it seems that China ~~hesitateshesitates~~ to determine what is it-s culture and values, and so for some countries Chinese soft power is not a big threat. ~~The fact~~ China proclaims that ~~the~~ Belt and Road Initiative is ~~attemptattempted~~ to renew ~~the eOld Silk Road which could~~ sounds attractive. ~~Hence, and in this way, the term "New Silk Road" can be applied, it could be applied in terms of Silk road.~~ However, I am not concerned that it could significantly increase ~~the influuance of the eChinese government.~~

Sources:

Kommentiert [UW22]: Try to avoid „we“

Kommentiert [UW23]: What is „this“ – try to explain in your own words

Kommentiert [UW24]: What is „Chinese success“ – do you mean „China's success“?

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Kommentiert [UW27]: Are you sure about the „whole world“?

Kommentiert [UW28]: You should specify „China“, since „China“ has not always been the same territory as nowadays

Kommentiert [UW29]: When?

Kommentiert [UW30]: Is the idea of the New Silk Road based on the Old Silk Road?

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Kommentiert [UW32]: Which influence? What kind of influence?

Kommentiert [UW33]: This you already stated before

Kommentiert [UW34]: This you already stated before

Li Mingjiang. 2009. „Soft Power: Nurture Not Nature“, in: Li Minjiang, Soft Power : China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics. Lanham: Lexington Books, p.1-18.

Nye, Joseph. 2004. Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization. London: Routledge.

Can soft power be applied in terms of Old Silk Road?

As professor Li Mingjiang explains in his book *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics*, the concept of soft power provides a unique perspective not only on China's current foreign and security policy but, more significantly, on the trajectory of China's rise in the long term.¹ The aim of this essay is to examine if soft power can be applied in terms of the Old Silk Road when international trade between China and Western empires began to rise. In order to find the answer to this essay's question, it is important to firstly understand the theoretical approach on soft power, both by Joseph S. Nye, the author of the concept, and Li Mingjiang as well. Moreover, it is also necessary to remember the fact that there are different approaches on Old Silk Road, as it is not just one route or one century to be considered.

Kommentiert [UW35]: Was it really „China“ at that time? ...

In 1990, the American political scientist, Joseph S. Nye, in his book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* developed the concept of **soft power**. Referring mainly to the United States, his concept of soft power stands opposite to military power and economic power, which are both examples of **“hard” command power**. As Nye explains, hard power can rest on inducements or threats. In his book, he suggests that there is also an indirect way to get the outcomes that you want, so-called “the second face of power.” A country may obtain its preferred outcomes in world politics because other countries want to follow it, by admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness. According to Nye, the ability to establish preferences tends to be associated with intangible power resources such as an attractive culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are legitimate or having moral authority.²

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Moreover, Li Mingjiang in his book adds that soft power doesn't exist in the nature of certain resources of power but rather it has to be nurtured through a soft use of power and it has to be intentionally cultivated through prudent use of all sources of power available in certain social relationships. Focusing on the words **intentionally cultivated and nurtured**, can it be then applied to Old Silk Road? Taking China as the subject of application, the question here is if ancient Chinese dynasties were aware of possibility to use soft power to expand its territories and develop trade relations. Furthermore, there was no “China” as we know it today, with set borders and set values or developed culture. No doubt it can be applied

Kommentiert [UW38]: If this is a quote, reference!

¹ MINGJIANG, Li. *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics*. Maryland: Lexington Books, 2009. ISBN 978-0739133774.

² NYE, Joseph S. *Bound to lead: the changing nature of American power*. New York: Basic Books, 1990. ISBN 04-650-0744-9.

for contemporary PRC's New Silk Road initiative where China uses infrastructural projects, cultural festivals, scholarships and loans to secure its presence mostly in South America, East Asia and Africa. In the 21st century, PRC follows a set goals and has a clear purpose, so it can be said that its soft power is intentionally cultivated through prudent use of all sources of power available in certain case. Grill and Huang noted that culture (including Confucius Institutes), domestic values and policies (especially the Chinese model of development) and foreign policy (including good neighbour policies, international peacekeeping and international aid) became resources of Chinese soft power.³

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Now, ~~the~~ two fundamental problems emerge. ~~First, one is the term of the~~ Old Silk Road ~~term~~. Both Li Mingjiang and Joseph Nye are showcasing soft power on specific examples, like China and ~~the~~ United States. However, applying soft power to ~~the~~ Old Silk Road or ~~the~~ Old Silk Road era is more difficult, mainly because it is hard to define what is meant by ~~the~~ Old Silk Road. Looking at this problem ~~by~~ using Richthofen's term 'Silk Roads' (**Seidenstrassen**), there is a quite limited time period. He applies the term only to the Han period, in discussing the relationship between political expansion and trade on the one hand and geographical knowledge on the other. The term refers in the first instance to a very specific east-west overland route defined by a single source, even though he recognizes that at that time there were other routes in various directions.⁴ Taking a closer look at the Han period, there are occasions that might be considered as Chinese empire engaging in something like foreign relations (the better term might be engaging with outside world). Thus, there is a situation when soft power could be potentially used. In 138 BC, emperor Wudi sent the first Chinese envoy led by Zhang Qian to form an alliance with the tribal Yuezhi, because emperor was hoping to persuade the Yuezhi to help him defeat a rival group, ~~the~~ Xiongnu. Zhang Qian failed in negotiating alliance, but he returned with information about sophisticated civilizations existed to the West, with which ~~China the empire~~ could advantageously develop relations. However, there is no mention that Zhang Qian or Wudi were trying to use culture or policies to form alliance with Yuezhi. There are also mentions about holding hostages and sending spare princesses to organize matrimonial alliances with enemies, but this part of Han diplomacy doesn't seem legitimate or having moral authority. Hence, it cannot be said that soft power was practised during this period.⁵

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³ LAI, Hongyi a Yiyi LU. China's Soft Power and International Relations. New York: Routledge, 2012. ISBN 78-0415604017.

⁴ WAUGH, C.Daniel. Richthofen's 'Silk Roads': Toward the Archaeology of a Concept. *The Silk Road* 5/1, 2007.

⁵ WOOD, Frances. *The Silk Road: Two Thousand Years in the Heart of Asia*. United States: University of California Press, 2004. ISBN 978-0520243408.

Shifting away from Richthofen's approach of the Old Silk Road, it linked the regions of the ancient world in commerce between 130 BCE-1453 CE, so not only during the rule of Han Dynasty. The mutual trade between West and East seems to play the most significant role. Li Mingjiang also argues *that soft power is the ability to get desired outcomes because others want what you want, rather than do what you make them do. It is the ability to achieve desired outcomes through attraction rather than coercion.* But what did the Chinese emperors want? Was the desired outcome prospering trade or something else? Chinese themselves used the Silk Road routes historically to import horses from Ferghana Valley, camels from Bactria, Persian luxury metalwork and textiles, and jade from Khotan, among other things they needed. On ~~the~~-contrary, China exported silk or porcelain vessels to the West, which should be considered as economy power or payment, but not as soft power.⁶ Now to emphasize the phrase **attraction rather than coercion**, extending territories in the past was often achieved by hard power. Ghengis Khan and his powerful army of Mongol horsemen spilled out of the eastern steppe and overran the surrounding territory in all directions. This was one of the most ferocious campaigns the world has ever known. When offered resistance, the Mongol armies took no prisoners. The Mongols even turned west beyond the Pamirs and attacked the Silk Route city of Merv. They are said to have massacred its 700,00 inhabitants - and even killed all the cats and dogs. This behaviour surely couldn't make positive impression on foreign entities.⁷

In conclusion, soft power cannot be applied in terms of the Old Silk Road. Regarding Chinese history, there seem to be several obstacles. Looking at the rule of different dynasties with different political values and different attitudes towards foreign relations, further and deeper analysis of historical events would be needed. Applying the theoretical approach of soft power to the Old Silk Road seems difficult, as no evidence of intentional nurturing of soft power was found. Moreover, the term Old Silk Road itself is hard to define.

VERY GOOD!!!

⁶ BEACH, Milo C. The Ear Commands the Story: Exploration and Imagination on the Silk Road. *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1, The Silk Road and Beyond: Travel, Trade, and Transformation, 2007.

⁷ The Silk Route of the Mongols. In: *UNESCO*. [online] Available at: <https://en.unesco.org/silkroad/knowledge-bank/silk-route-mongols>.

Kommentiert [UW41]: Goods/items

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