

مركز البيدر للدراسات والتخطيط

Al-Baidar Center For Studies And Planning



Book Review

Soft Power – Means To Success In International Politics

Research Department

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The Center aims to utilise the vast amount of potential in Iraq's human resources by organizing programs to prepare and develop promising young people, including leaders capable of proposing, adopting and implementing visions and future plans that advance society and preserve its value system based on the commitment to a high moral standard and rejection of all types of corruption.

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The book “Soft Power” is one of the books that has become very popular among readers and followers, it is one of the widely circulated literatures in the world of culture, politics, and thoughts, this is due to two reasons:

1. The privacy of the book’s author, who is (Joseph Nye¹), and what is known about his specialization and his practical experience, and his focus in his writing about power, its nature, and its types and its future, he wrote many books in the field of leadership powers, presidential power, and the industry of the American era, and the future of power soft power book.

2. The idea of “soft power” that the author put forward in this book and talk about it and explained it in many lectures and meetings, and what soft power represents in terms of innovation or adding the quality of other types of economic and military power.

The Soft power or the “soft war” is a new and developed type with the tools of conflict at the time

The current field, in which it is used is the cultural, intellectual and media field...etc , they are the Soft tools, and seek to achieve political, cultural and economic for countries and sides that work and use it in conflict with others, soft power may achieve goals that real wars might be unable to reach in many ways.

Nye has dealt with soft power theory in this book and explained its concept, nature, sources, and its working mechanisms, as well as the role of foreign policy and public diplomacy in achieving its goals, and who are the competing countries of the United States in the field of

1. Joseph Nye - He is a Professor and Former Dean of the Kennedy School for government administrative and he has a PhD from Harvard University, He held political and security positions, as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs and Deputy Secretary of State and a chairman of the National Intelligence Council.

soft power? The author divided the book into five main chapters preceded by an introduction to the margins and sources at the end of the book.

Nye talks in the introduction about the motivation for writing about soft power, a question asked by

an attendee to the US Secretary of State Colin Powell at the Davos Economic Conference in Switzerland in 2003, on the reason why the US mainly focused on hard power instead of the soft one? He confirms that the soft power is important and it's not a weak point, rather, not using it in the American strategy is a serious mistake as well.

Nye says in this book that he first talked about the development of soft power in his book "leadership obligatory" in 1990, in which he pointed out that America is not only the strongest in the military and economic field ,soft power is added to them, and this increases the balance and stock of American power.

He addressed the same topic once more but briefly in his book "paradox power "in 2001, Then came his book - Soft Power - as he says, which reflects the nature of international relations, before, during and after the 2003 war on Iraq, which cost the United States a lot at the level of soft power and loss of popularity, although it achieved a victory in military hard power.

At a time when Nye believed that military force and its role are indispensable, However, the failure to give a decent identity the status of soft power, However, not giving due importance to the position of soft power is a strategic mistake, because the challenges and problems that the United States is facing cannot be faced with hard military power alone. Smart power is the combination of soft power and hard power

Chapter One:

From the book, which was entitled: The Changing Nature of Force, reviews evolution the historical concept of power through international experiences in multiple countries, and that power is of a changing nature with the change of time, place, resources, and capabilities, and

reviews the evolution and multiplicity of its nature from traditional to force Industrial, oil, nuclear and technological. Also, having the power resources is not necessarily that you are able to take advantage of it unless you properly plan to benefit from it, as the United States is stronger than Vietnam in resources, but they lost the war with it.

Nye defines soft power as: the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion, and the ability to influence the behavior of others to obtain the desired results and goals without having to excessively use military factors and their means. Soft power is a means of changing important balances in the international political arena, perhaps there are small countries, but in the balance of influence and authority, it ranks among the major countries because of its soft power and influence improve its use. Then Nye talks about soft power resources, and in his opinion, they are based on three resources:

1. Culture: the set of values and practices that create meaning for society, and have various manifestations such as literature, art, language, education, and others.

2. Political values: the more attractive and universal they are, the more likely they are to achieve the desired results in the context in which they are used.

3. Foreign policy: The domestic and foreign policy also plays a major role in the attraction or reluctance of citizens in other countries to it.

In this chapter of his book, Nye discusses the subject of the American war on Iraq, and the basic questions that were being raised about the war, about the legitimacy of the war? And about the backgrounds of the war, in terms of intelligence and information? And the interaction of the media and world public opinion with the war? These and other questions are all involved in the field and context of soft power and the extent of the effects it has left on the reputation of the United States and its global attractiveness regarding the disrespecting of international legitimacy, violating human rights and destroying many of the American theory in the world. The information age, the development of technical and technological means, the diversity of media and communication, are all factors that increase the importance of soft power and its valuable political, social and cultural life, which calls for it to take for

confederation with, whether at the governmental and official level or at the social and popular level.

As for the **second chapter**, in which he talked about the American soft power sources, Nye believes that America possesses the most important sources in the field of soft power and the global attractiveness of these sources, such as education and universities, cinema, films and music, brands of restaurants and clothing, as well as in the field of technology, information and technology and other fields.

Nye stated that America is not at the top in terms of attraction quality in life and the happiness indication that the Scandinavian countries usually compete for, but it is very close to the top and possesses what others do not have in many other areas. In the same context, Joseph Nye talks about the decline in American attractiveness in the world in various historical passages such as the Vietnam War and the spread of nuclear weapons, the most recent of which was the war on Iraq in 2003, in which the American reputation and attractiveness fell sharply, as the United States lost 30 points of support in most European countries, As well as countries in the Islamic world.

Nye talks about culture as the most important source of soft power, and quotes Secretary of State Colin Powell in which he says: I cannot think of the security of our country's credit from the friendship of future world leaders who have been educated in our country. In addition to this, the values and internal policy pursued by the United States, such as democracy, human rights, and other slogans and values that it raises inside and abroad, as well as important sources of strength are foreign policy in form and style, or in content and content. In this context, he discusses many of the positions taken by the United States of America in the field of foreign policy between aversion and attraction, and focuses on the war on Iraq, which caused problems for the United States with their friends and allies, including the Europeans.

In the third chapter, Joseph Nye reviewed the soft power of others, as he believes that despite America's global superiority, especially in the field of information, others also have resources for soft power, and they can be used to obstruct the achievement of the results desired by America.

Nye refers to the presence of four main parties and centers that possess soft power resources and represent the United States of America's competitor in this field: the Soviet Union, Europe, Asia, non-state actors.

At a time when the Soviet Union had attractive soft power resources after World War II and before the end of the Cold War, and it represented an advanced and desirable model for many countries in Europe and Asia due to its confrontation with communist culture as well as other technological and military sources, arts and popular culture, but then it could not resilience in the cold confrontation with the United States, which led to its collapse, disintegration, and the fading of its competitive soft power, as Nye sees it.

As for Europe, Nye believes that it represents the real and strong competitor at present to the United States, in many fields such as culture, arts, music, education, attractive European values and public diplomacy for its countries. Rather, it is superior to it in some non-military aspects, such as public diplomacy, where what France and Britain spend is equal to what the United States spends on public diplomacy. He discusses whether European power is an asset to the United States or a burden on it, and that depends on the way and behavior of the United States in dealing with it.

In Asia, which represents the largest population weight in the world, it possesses civilizational, cultural, natural and economic resources, while it possesses many important soft power resources, but at the present time it is lagging behind Europe and the United States, and Nye focuses in his talk about Asia on a group of major countries - not among them An Arab countries - China, Japan, India, and some small countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. Japan has an attractive soft power after growth and industrial and technological progress that is clear globally, but it suffers from many problems that impede its growth globally in the field of soft power, such as the aging of its population and its opposition to immigration and its problems that did not ease with its neighbors and others.

At a time when the rise of Chinese power is clearly increasing at the economic and military level And it represents the real competitor to the United States in the near and middle stage, and despite some of the internal problems that China suffers from, it is undoubtedly a

strong competitor and is growing in many areas, including soft power.

Joseph Nye refers to non-state actors as one of the main competitors or owners of soft power tools, non-governmental organizations and transnational or multi-national corporations nationalities in addition to international organizations such as the human rights organization and the United Nations. Where technology, the Internet and the development of technology have greatly helped in the expansion of these organizations, their social, political and media role, and their effects on public opinion, and even governments and official institutions to adopt or reject issues promoted or rejected by these organizations.

In **the fourth chapter**, Joseph Nye talks about the ingenuity in the use of soft power, and stresses that soft power needs a lot of accuracy and dexterity in its use because it depends on others' acceptance of it and attracting them towards it without coercion and threat. It usually takes a long time, compared to military power and economic power, a matter of achieving results and goals. And that foreign policy and public diplomacy are among the most important contributions that can be made in its use of soft power. In this context, Nye mentions the role of public diplomacy in the use of soft power and the extent of its impact, as he believes that it is based on three basic dimensions:

1. Daily communications to clarify the context for decisions and situations internally and externally and gives an example here Bin Laden and its impact, where prevention is not possible in light of the information revolution.

2. Strategic communications that establish the development of simple topics, and the third important dimension upon which public diplomacy is based is the process of building relationships with key people through grants, fellowships, and conferences, Where it refers to the American cultural and academic exchange project after World War II, in which 700 personalities participated, as it helped of Educating world leaders representing about two hundred, including former and current leaders of countries such as Anwar Sadat and Margaret Thatcher. Joseph Nye also points out in this context that postmodern masses are often not moved by governments, and this is what governments believe to be working indirectly and

behind the scenes, working with non-state actors and NGOs that play the role of governments as Rand and Ford Foundation Soros, Carnegie and their role in the Cold War against the Soviet Union and its collapse.

In this chapter, Nye talks about the Arab countries and the surrounding countries, and what they represent of energy storage, oil and a region in which Islamic culture is clearly strengthened, and he explains the aversion to the face of America in it despite the large amount of money and military and political support it spends, and discusses the reasons that led to that, perhaps the most important of them is the support of the United States of America to undemocratic, corrupt and outdated regimes, as in the Gulf family countries, and its support for Israel against the Palestinians who own the land, and the problems that accompanied the Iraq war without the cover of international legitimacy and the lack of truth of the allegations on which America founded the Iraq war in 2003. America did not properly and accurately use its public diplomacy in its three dimensions, which we mentioned earlier, in dealing with events, situations, and personalities in general.

in the fifth and final chapter, Nye dealt with soft power and American foreign policy, as he remarkably indicates the decline in American attractiveness and its concession, especially after Afghanistan and Iraq war, Undermining soft power and downplaying its importance, and despite the fact that this image has become more widely circulated about the American face and the multiplicity of factors that caused it, foreign policy plays the largest and most effective role in its effectiveness, negatively and positively. In this context, Nye urges American foreign policy and diplomacy, to show importance and priority to the American soft power and the necessity of its good use and continuous updating of the ways and method of its use. He also considers that the United States, despite all that is said about the loss of its power as a global pole and the superiority of others over it during the medium term; It is - according to his opinion - still the superior and the strongest in terms of ability and strength, especially in the information and technological field.

The soft power book continues to receive the attention and follow-up of many interested and specialists in the political, cultural, and intellectual fields, and sheds light on the interpretation

and analysis of many hidden corners of international and regional events at the present time. The soft power theory is a theory that has different and realistic applications and in multiple countries, and it is in Continuous modernization has developed in form and content, and many factors have contributed to this expansion of its influence and the depth of its influence, especially in light of the development of the technical and information revolution and its many tools in communication and media.

It is that a reading in the book “Soft Power” is a flash and an important window that gives an overall and abridged picture of the book and its legacy. It certainly does not refer to the original text and read it in its entirety, with its many ideas, perceptions, propositions, and details that a brief article on the whole book cannot comprehend.

Book Identity

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Translator: Dr. Muhammad Tawfiq Al-Bajirmi

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Remark:

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