THE CRITICISM OF THE UNIVERSAL EXPRESSION OF SOFT POWER FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A SMALL STATE

Miroslav Mitrović [*]

Globalization and the development of information technology strongly influence international politics and relations, increasingly transforming them according to the determinants of hard and soft power. This imposed and simplified binary context of the capability of states to influence others is the subject of discussions with a pronounced tendency to establish as clear a dichotomy as possible and a sharp division into hard and soft power. Attempts at quantitative and qualitative measurements of complex social indicators of soft power, however, are met with reasoned critical reviews. The validity of the criticism of measuring soft power is based on the author's subjectivity, the narrow niche of delegated indicators, the selective and subjective choice of determinants, etc. The main hypothesis of the paper is based on the premise of non-linearity of the overall development of states and the imposed division into the powerful and weak. The criticism is based on the defined criteria that have been imposed by the "leaders" of opinion, powerful and influential states, which project them in accordance with their potential and achieve soft power at the same time. By analysing the theoretical framework of the interpretation of the phenomenon of soft power, the paper contributes to the establishment of its correlation with the factors of hard power. Moreover, by analysing the results of earlier research, by comparison, as well as by modelling, it contributes to the criticism of the sustainability of the universal approach to soft power. Furthermore, by critically considering the existing implemented methods of measuring soft power, with the summary of the proposed wider, more objective models, the paper provides a contribution to the basics of the projection of the soft power of a small state.

Key words: *soft power, state power, international relations, national security, small state*

[*] Strategic Research Institute, University of Defence in Belgrade, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, miroslav.mitrovic@mod.gov.rs

Introduction

Considering state from the point of view of its resistance to threats to national security, it can be concluded that the issue of its power is also the issue of its weakness.[1] The resistance of a country to threats to national security can be viewed through the influence of external and internal factors. Anticipating possible weaknesses in the system of national defence and security, which represent the likely targets of action by opposing forces, is certainly of great importance. However, power elements, which at the same time represent possible weaknesses, are very difficult to measure or quantify.[2]

State power and its resilience

Current international relations affect the complexity of the issue of the analysis of state power[3], which can be discussed starting from Baldwin's position, stating that power has to be viewed from the point of view of its context.[4] Different approaches to the interpretation of power lead to different outcomes and emphasizing the priorities of its agents. For example, state power can be identified with material (armed forces, population in terms of age structure, education and capabilities, economy, science and technology and the degree of their development, geographical location, natural resources, etc.) and non-material indicators (quality of foreign policy, moral strength, national unity of population, political talent and characteristics of state leaders, etc.).

The theory of a complex, multidimensional, and thus more difficult to measure approach to power, through the introduction of the concepts of "soft" and "smart" power, has been presented by Joseph Nye, as a result of changes in global security environment, which confronts earlier realistic and conservative theories of state power.[5] Nye suggests that power, due to the influence of globalization and technology, acquires new sources and dimensions, thereby affecting the change of its very structure and appearance. According to him, power is no longer so tangible,

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[1] Miroslav Mitrovic, "Assessments and foreign policy implementation of the national security of the Republic of Serbia", *Security and Defence Quarterly* 34, no. 2 (2021), pp. 7-19.

[2] Miroslav Mitrović, „Kvalitativno komparativna analiza – moguća primena više vrednosnih modela u strateškim procenama", u: *Zbornik radova XLVI međunarodnog simpozijuma o operacionalnim istraživanjima SYM-OP-IS 2019*, pp. 592-597.

[3] Gordana Mišev, "Pokazatelji bezbednosti i stabilnosti savremenih država", *Vojno delo* 3/2020, pp. 5-17.

[4] David Baldwin, „Power Analyses and World Politics: New Trends versus Old Tendencies", *World Politics* 31, No. 2 (1979), pp. 161-194.

[5] Joseph Nye, „New Dimension of Power", *Foreign Policy*, Autumn 1988; Joseph Nye, „Soft power", *Foreign Policy*, No. 80, Fall 1990; Joseph Nye, *Soft Power - The Means to Success in World Politics*, New York, Public Affairs, 2004.

material and measurable.[6] He presents the idea stating that indicators of power can be presented through a complex synergistic and hybrid interpretation of the so-called traditional (hard) and soft indicators within smart power. Moreover, he believes that the resources of soft power necessarily cause attraction and differ in three main categories: culture, political values and foreign policy.[7] Nye suggests that power does not necessarily have to express influence, but can be used as a hybrid instrument for pre-emptive defensive deterrence.[8] In this way, state power can be considered a preventive system of its capacities of resilience to threats to national security.

The interpretation of soft power has taken a central role in the context of the assessment of regional and global spheres of influence of states that aspire to an important role in the world politics. According to some opinions, the interpretation of hard and soft power, originally used exclusively to characterize foreign policy of states, at the beginning of the twenty-first century began to be used in the sphere of internal policy of states.[9] Broadly speaking, the concept of soft power is used in the context of assessing the potential of regional and global spheres of influence.

It can be said that state power is expressed through the integrative correlation of the factors of hard and soft power. At the same time, the hard power factors are: political factors (organizational state stability, rule of law and political freedoms, corruption, sovereignty, etc.); economic factors (gross national income, foreign direct investment, foreign and public debt, economic growth, unemployment, living standard, etc.); energy factors (degree of energy dependence, available energy resources, transit capacities and potential, active energy reserves); demographic factors (population, age and gender structure, natality, migration); security factors (budget, strategic documents, management and control, weapons). The soft power factors are much more complex and, in principle, represent cultural influence, state image, ideological model, public diplomacy, political system and culture, etc. Shortly, soft power is based on three sources, and the first in order of importance is culture, then political values, and, finally, foreign policy influence. Culture and political values have to be harmonized with their counterparts in a target society, because congruence and desire for adoption define the amount of soft power. Soft power will have a positive influence on a target group if foreign policy is assessed as reasonable, legitimate and moral.[10]

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[6] Joseph Nye, *The Future of Power,* New York, Public Affairs, 2011.

[7] Joseph Nye, *Soft Power - The Means to Success in World Politics*, gen. quote.

[8] Joseph Nye, *The Future of Power*, New York, Public Affairs, 2011, p. 9.

[9] Иван Радиков, Яна Лексютина, „'Мягкая сила' как современный атрибут великой державы", *Мировая экономика и международные отношения*, 2012, № 2, pp. 19–26.

[10] Kiymet Yavuzaslan, Murat Cetin, „Soft Power Concept and Soft Power Indexes", *Business Challenges in the Changing Economic Landscape* - Vol. 1/2016, pp. 395-409.

General components of soft power

Research indicates the influence of cultural products on the international public.[11] International relations, and also the experiences of individuals, made on the basis of communication through cultural products, can be viewed as a form of ideological and cultural influence (soft power) that is carried out through public policies, values and cultural dimensions.[12] Some attitudes structure soft power through image, affinity and preferences towards country, its cosmopolitanism and the internationalization of cultural products.[13]

The drivers of soft power are reflected in diplomacy, socio-political system (political and civil freedoms, free access to traditional and electronic media, the level of general civil freedoms, the transparency of the work of state function holders, the level of corruption, etc.), popular and classical culture (popularity and language range, number of Nobel Prize winners in literature, export of cultural goods, etc.), education (number of foreigners studying at universities, university ranking, etc.), and socio-economic category (innovation and patent, development aid, etc.).[14]

Each country's assessment of soft power is different, because its sources also differ. In modern research, in addition to hard and soft power, "sharp" power[15] is increasingly mentioned, which refers to authoritarian regimes and their capability to penetrate and perforate the information environment in democratic liberal societies.[16] Sharp power is described as a part of a new global battle to lead, buy or coerce action by political influence.[17]

A critical review of soft power

As the key components of soft power, in his papers in the early 1990s Nye[18] particularly emphasizes the attractiveness of culture and ideology, international institutions, internal political culture and foreign policy. However, the emphasized

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[11] Juliano Laran and Keith Wilcox, „Choice, rejection, and elaboration on preference inconsistent alternatives", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 38, No. 2, pp. 229-241.

[12] Alexandre R. Neto, José M. de Sousa-Filho and Afonso C. Lima, „Internationalization of culture and soft power", *European Business Review*, Vol. 34, No. 1, 2022, pp. 103-126.

[13] Jonathan McClory, „The new persuaders: an international ranking of soft power", Institute for government, 2012, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/, 10/02/2022.

[14] Robert Łoś, „Siła współczesnych państw. Ujęcie teoretyczne", *Przegląd Politologiczny*, 2/2018, pp. 31–44.

[15] Malcolm Tull, *Soft Power in Action: A Case Study of Sri Lanka and the Port of Colombo*, Institute of International Maritime Affairs, Cultural Interaction Studies of Sea Port Cities (April 2019), pp. 181-204.

[16] Christopher Walker and Jessica Ludwig, „From 'Soft Power to Sharp Power': Rising Authoritarian Influence in the Democratic World", National Endowment for Democracy, Washington, D.C., 2017, pp.8-25.

[17] Anne-Marie Brady, „How China's 'sharp power' is muting criticism abroad", *The Economist* 14 December 2017.

[18] Joseph Nye, „Soft power", *Foreign Policy*, No. 80, fall 1990.

influence of culture and ideology is justifiably exposed to criticism. Namely, culture itself is the subject of strategy, that is, it can be viewed as strategic culture which, apart from its forms of manifestation, also has deeper connotation related to the attitude of the people towards issues of defence and security.[19] The examples of the Soviet Union at the end of the 1980s and the US at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century, indicate that popular culture or ideological patterns, which are attractive in a certain period, when they are implemented by force, without the development of relations and voluntary acceptance, have negative effects and lead to a violation of general soft power of the one who implements it.[20]

Furthermore, there is no doubt that ideology and institutions have pronounced importance in assessing soft power. This was particularly emphasized through the establishment and imposition of some standards, rules and norms of behaviour in the form of guiding state in the implementation of internal and foreignl policy. In this way, the established norms acquire the status of universal and generally accepted norms. The establishment of international institutions that promote these norms enables the creation of a favourable international environment for state creator, and other states, due to belonging to an organization in which they have political or economic interests, implement and support norms and established rules in turn.

It is necessary to emphasize the interaction and related conditioning of hard and soft power. Namely, positive identification with an authority in the sphere of hard power, which has strong armed forces, economy and influence in international relations, greatly contributes to the execution of its soft power. Generally speaking, the very fact that a country has powerful armed forces can serve as a source of admiration and a desire for identification. For example, on the eve of World War II, Japanese militarists and Chinese nationalists were inspired by the German military model.[21] Likewise, strong economy is often used as a resource for hard power, imposing will through trade sanctions and embargo. However, economic model and state power can also be a resource of soft power. A successful model of economic development is capable of exerting a magnetic influence on others, primarily developing countries. Moreover, not only the actual state of given country's economy, but also predictive assessments of its development prospects, can act as a resource of soft power.[22]

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[19] Vladimir Ajzenhamer, "Strateške studije u službi hegemonije: pogled na stratešku kulturu iz ugla druge generacije", *Vojno delo* 4/2020, pp. 7-29.

[20] The pronounced interventionism and almost arrogant unipolar dominance of the US, represented in the arbitrary and violent violation of international norms and rules (e.g. Kosovo, Iraq), have led to the erosion of the US soft power and the strengthening of Anti-Americanism in the world, despite the great popularity of the US mass culture. In the same way, the communist Soviet Union drastically damaged its influence, which it exercised through ideology on a great number of countries that aspired to achieve a similar state model, by violent defence of ideological model, carrying out intervention in Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

[21] Иван Радиков, Яна Лексютина, „'Мягкая сила' как современный атрибут великой державы", gen. quote, p. 20.

[22] Ibid.

It seems more correct not to distinguish between hard and soft power according to the resources which it is based on, but on the basis of the character of its implementation ("stick" or "carrot/attraction"). For example, democratic values, which Nye calls a resource of soft power, can also be imposed by coercion, as Washington has demonstrated many times. The degree of effectiveness of such imposition of democracy by force calls into question the values and sincerity of those who use them to achieve their goals. In this context, there is no alternative to soft power based on attraction and pressure-free adoption.[23]

There are opinions that all great states try to include soft power in their foreign policy strategies, through three main areas of action: public diplomacy, traditional diplomacy, development programmes and humanitarian aid.[24]

Despite great potential[25], the capacity of influence of public and cultural diplomacy in the process of increasing state soft power is often overemphasized. The influence of the expansion of foreign radio broadcasting, the management of international information programmes and the implementation of educational and cultural exchange programmes is overemphasized. It should be emphasized that the aforementioned instruments of public diplomacy have to be implemented on the basis of reciprocity, voluntary acceptance and a sense of sincere mutual benefit. Moreover, the effects are not accomplished overnight because public diplomacy is a long-term and subtle approach to creating a positive image in the country and abroad. At the same time, the achievements of public diplomacy can be quickly and almost completely destroyed, especially when the sphere of interest of soft power is "defended" with the instruments of hard power (the mentioned examples of the USSR and the US). On these grounds, it is rational to conclude that effective and long-term oriented development of soft power is based on international law, absence of force and unilateral imposed solutions, attractiveness and reasonable foreign policy adapted to historical circumstances. At this moment, China has this approach to establishing and placing its soft power in international relations.[26]

There is the dichotomy of propaganda and soft power, but it is not absolute, precisely due to the relation and conditioning of soft and hard power, which represents the realistic framework of the material influence of propaganda (incentives, rewards, blackmail, etc.). In practice, both soft and hard power are often used simultaneously (e.g. economy) in the form of propaganda, which is the closest thing to "smart power". Defining whether it is soft or hard power is based on the perception and circumstances of its implementation (economic sanctions - hard power/economic aid - soft power; military victory - to loser - hard power/to non-participants - soft power).

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[23] Ibid, p. 21.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Miroslav Mitrović, "Javna diplomatija u paradigmi hibridnog koncepta sukoba", *Vojno delo*, 2/2018, pp. 309-325.

[26] At the CCP Congress held in 2014, President Xi Jinping emphasized: "We should increase China's soft power, give a good Chinese narrative and better convey China's message to the world."Asit K. Biswas and Cecilia Tortajada, "China's soft power is on the rise", *China Daily,* 2018/02/23. https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201802/23/WS5a8f59a9a3106e7dcc13d7b8.html, 14/02/2022.

Soft power is effectively marketed through the provision of international aid, which aims to promote donor-recipient relations, form a positive image of donor in the recipient's public opinion and increase donor's international authority. Stronger and longer-term effects of aid are on the side of open and non-selective access. Namely, the US is an important international donor, but this aid is often conditioned by indicators of hard power (membership in the alliance, internal policy, the armed forces' development, the estimated level of democracy, etc.). On the other hand, China does not express selectivity and does not interfere in internal affairs of states, does not deal with changing political culture, does not impose its social norms, thus successfully promoting its system and developing a more universal form of soft power.

The cultural and scientific expansion of the West can, in some cases, be equated with hard power. For example, the Bologna Process, related to education (soft power), through bureaucratization and coercion of introduction (hard power) has caused strong negative effects and reduced positive effects. In the field of science, the influence exerted by the "impact factors" of the ranking bases of scientific papers is also dominantly related to the Western countries. Science and its influence can generally be viewed as soft power. However, the publication of papers in scientific periodicals, which is ranked as influential and reference one, is conditioned by hard elements, such as financial compensations before considering paper for publication, paid language certificates from recommended companies, etc. This is particularly evident in the field of social sciences, while in the field of natural, medical and technical sciences the situation is more favourable, so the publication of papers is greater, which can be attributed to a more concrete implementation of achievements in these fields. Namely, critical political and social studies can encourage different and critical opinion in society, and their control on the world stage is carefully carried out by the "authorities" of the scientific community. The research on the representation of authors in the best-ranked journals in the field of communication and media according to the *Scopus* index list can serve as an example. The study indicates that international co-authorship is rare, and authors from the developed Western countries rule almost the entire domain. More than 95% of the journals indexed in the *Scopus* database of journals in this field are owned by developed countries, which also defines the content. Considering the categorization, the journals with the North American content and very low international indexes have the highest ranking[27]. Internationality occurs only in the following categories, and journals from smaller countries also appear in even lower categories. With its conclusions, this research supports the theory of dependence[28], which brings science and its influence from the field of soft power to imposed and pressure-based hard power.

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[27] Internationality implies joint or independent papers by authors from non-Western countries.

[28] Marton Demeter, „Nobody Notices It? Qualitative Inequalities of Leading Publications in Communication and Media Studies Research", *International Journal of Communication* 12(2018), pp. 1001–1031.

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The criticism of the linear approach
to measuring soft power

The issue of comparing state soft power is complex and depends on several factors. First of all, soft power, its development and influence are primarily related to state as the dominant form of political organization. The soft power of organizations can be equated with the soft power capacities of the leading states in such an organization (US – NATO, Germany and France – EU). The increase of soft power depends on the capacities and the state that develops them, and also on the characteristics of the state that this power is directed towards. The main objects of action are also states, with different levels of development and political organization. A state that has the ambition to act as a subject has to take into account the characteristics of the object state: the level of economic development, culture, ethnic and religious structure, the existing political system, the level of development of general culture and education, historical factors, foreign policy preferences, etc.

Current analyses point to several adopted methods for defining the scale of soft power. The general indicators are: diplomacy, culture, state management, education, business/innovation and digital communication.[29] Institutions that deal with soft power assessments use different data collection methods within several subcategories. Furthermore, there are several methods of calculation, which encourages tentativeness and subjectivity. It can be noticed that the criteria are based on hard indicators, which gives an advantage to strong states.[30] Having in mind that soft power is projected according to the object, there is great tentativeness and generality of the conclusions.[31]

Some of the criticisms of the current methods of "calculating" soft power, and thus the ranking of states, are: non-systematic behaviour (various sources), non-standard actions (various calculation patterns), subjectivity (starting from one's own and not general values), disproportion (dominance of great states), collision (the relationship between image and soft power), lack of orientation (soft power is directed towards a specific object, and is not abstract). The results obtained by this approach are quite debatable and inconclusive; quantitative measurements have too many errors based on a great number of assumptions and simplifications, and are often based on ideological and political grounds.[32]

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[29] Jonathan McClory, „The Soft Power 30-Global Ranking of Soft Power 2019", USC Center for Public diplomacy, Portland, 2019.

[30] Jonathan McClory, „The new persuaders: an international ranking of soft power", gen. quote.

[31] „Global Soft Power Index 2021: 15 Nations from MENA Feature", *Brand Finace*, 25/02/2021. https://brandfinance.com/press-releases/global-soft-power-index-2021-15-nations-from-mena-feature, 15/02/2022.

[32] Иван Радиков, Яна Лексютина, „'Мягкая сила' как современный атрибут великой державы", gen. quote, p. 25.

A possible approach to the development of the soft power of a small state

The great heterogeneity of modern society conditions the absence of universal appeal, so it is impossible to talk about universal soft power. Moreover, many actors who have highly developed soft power in certain segments are perceived quite negatively and repulsively in others. For example, the US has a strong influence on general, popular culture, but is generally perceived negatively in the context of its interventionism.

A prerequisite for a state to develop its soft power is its constant development and multiplication of universal and special values, such as national culture and science, a successful economic model, just society, peaceful foreign policy, solving international problems, etc.[33]

In order to conduct soft power, it is necessary to communicate with all publics. The internal public, which is aware of the soft power of its state, develops stronger cohesion, is motivated for new efforts and strengthens its identity. The public of the state, which is the object of action, adopts cultural patterns, develops a sense of identity closeness and a deep sense of alliance and relation.

At the same time, one should bear in mind that the promotion of soft power is not and must not be equated with propaganda. Soft power based on propaganda has short-term, in a longer period, negative effects on the subject of action and leads to a loss of trust and reputation of the subject, not only in the public opinion of the object of action, but also in the wider international community. The strength of soft power is in attraction, the absence of coercion, violence and blackmail. The difference between soft power and the implementation of propaganda is the absence of deception, substitution of facts, misinformation, one-sided communication, persuasion without the possibility of reasoned discussion, etc.[34] However, propaganda can also be (not necessarily) based on appeal. It does not exclude the use of various options for manipulating people's minds, which is uncharacteristic of soft power. According to certain authors, the meeting points of the concept of soft power and propaganda are, obviously, the scene of a neoliberal and realistic approach to international relations. In the realist approach, there is no difference between propaganda and soft power.[35]

It should be emphasized that the level of influence of state soft power is defined by its real, complex national power, and thus by its general image. In this regard, it is possible to assume that state can temporarily make its desired rather than actual achievements attractive.[36] Furthermore, international image does not directly and unconditionally define

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[33] Ibid, p. 22.

[34] Miroslav Mitrović, „Genesis of propaganda as a strategic means of hybrid warfare concept", *Vojno delo*, 1/18, pp. 34-49.

[35] Марина М. Лебедева, „'Мягкая сила': понятие и подходы", *Вестник МГИМО-Университета*, 3(54)/2017, pp. 212-223.

[36] Иван Радиков, Яна Лексютина, „'Мягкая сила' как современный атрибут великой державы", gen. quote, p. 23.

soft power. Namely, states that have a strong international general image[37] do not have to be holders and exponents of soft power, on the contrary. An important characteristic of the state that has soft power is the establishment and nurturing of certain values and norms, its political and economic model and their expansion and popularization beyond national borders. In this sense, only states that are capable to offer their system of socio-political values, and aspire to a leading role in world politics, to the status of a power centre, can have soft power. That is why the concept of soft power is primarily found in the context of the characteristics of some historical stage in the development of the US, the Soviet Union and China.[38] It is also noticeable that foreign policy ambitions of such states are based on elements of hard power. In this regard, the conclusion is that soft and hard power are inseparable and a state that has pretensions to be a subject in international relations has to synergistically and harmoniously develop both segments of its general power.

The establishment of soft power requires defining its components. Taking into account that even small states, in relation to their proportion, can exert an influence, especially in their environment, there is a need for their approach to the assessment and development of soft power. The existing methods have already been critically considered and indicate the possibility of great divergence and tentativeness of the results of the quantitative measurement of soft power. As an alternative, it is possible to opt for the identification of fields in which the soft power of a small state is generated, while respecting the subjective determinants of hard power. Some already used groups of factors can serve as a basis: economic influence, membership in international regional institutions and image in neighbouring countries, cultural and educational cooperation programmes implemented in the region, level of development of bilateral relations and aid programmes with states.[39] This makes possible to develop a model of the development of soft power, which adopts a comparative analysis of the field of its manifestation. The approach is based on the assessment of the economic, political and cultural influence of state in the world or region. The economic influence is viewed through the prism of foreign investment, development aid programmes and the popularity of the economic model. The political influence can be assessed based on relations with other states of the world or region, international image, foreign policy strategy, as well as participation in the activities of international organizations, while the cultural influence can be assessed based on the analysis of public diplomacy. The diversity and customized flexibility of the approach to analysis and modelling contributes to the objectification of the results.[40]

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[37] Let's say, according to the image criterion related to security, life quality, stability and general freedoms, Iceland, Portugal, Austria, Sweden, Switzerland and Canada are leading, that is, states that do not exercise soft power and do not exert influence. See: „Island najsigurnija zemlja na svijetu", *Bankar*, https://www.bankar.me/2019/02/02/island-najsigurnija-zemlja-na-svijetu/, 17/02/2022.

[38] Иван Радиков, Яна Лексютина, „'Мягкая сила' как современный атрибут великой державы", gen. quote, p. 23.

[39] Иван Радиков, Яна Лексютина, „'Мягкая сила' как современный атрибут великой державы", gen. quote, p. 25.

[40] Ibid, pp. 25-26.

The competition of different states in the field of soft power is insufficiently studied, because most scientific papers are focused on the analysis of a particular state, without taking into account the activities of others. Moreover, often only the influence of the subject on the object is considered, without taking into account the fact that the opposite party is also active and uses soft power in response.[41] Planning the influence of soft power should also be based on long-term goals, so activities in culture, science and education are recognized as instruments for achieving long-term goals, and the media as a means of short-term goals.[42]

Conclusion

Soft and hard power represent the integral state power, and it is impossible to separate them. It seems that hard power precedes soft power, and that the development of soft power components is conditioned by the degree of development of hard power factors. General, "smart power" emphasizes more dominant influence of soft components. Due to the intertwining of indicators, the consideration of soft power is more objective from the point of view of the motives of the set goals, rather than the structure of the instrument itself, which often has a hybrid hard-soft structure.

It is rational for small states to develop their asymmetric approach to establishing power. Namely, small states lack the capacity of hard power elements. However, their positioning and strength in international relations can be greatly strengthened by an asymmetric approach to the development of soft power components, based on prerogative competences and value capacities available to state, which can be developed and improved. In this way, the effort to get out of the gray zone of impotence in international relations, where small states are always forced to ultimate solutions under pressure, is encouraged. By strengthening the available elements of power, with practical foreign policy, the support of available and economical solutions in the field of hard power, a small state can have a respectable position in the international community.

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[41] Марина М. Лебедева, „'Мягкая сила': понятие и подходы", gen. quote, p. 219.

[42] Ibid, p. 220.

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S u m m a r y

Globalization and the development of information technology strongly influence international politics and relations, increasingly transforming them according to the determinants of hard and soft power. This imposed and simplified binary context of the capability of states to influence others is the subject of discussions with a pronounced tendency to establish a clear dichotomy and a sharper division into hard and soft power. However, attempts at quantitative and qualitative measurements of complex social indicators of soft power are met with reasoned criticism. The criticism of the measurement of soft power is based on the subjectivity of the author, the narrow niche of delegated indicators, the selective and subjective choice of determinants, etc.

The main hypothesis of the paper is based on the premise of non-linearity of the overall development of states and the imposed division into powerful and weak states. The criticism is based on the defined criteria that have been imposed by the "leaders" of opinion, powerful and influential states, which project them in accordance with their potential and achieve soft power at the same time.

By analysing the theoretical framework of the interpretation of the phenomenon of soft power, the paper contributes to the establishment of its correlation with the factors of hard power. Also, by analysing the results of earlier research, comparing them, as well as modelling, it contributes to the criticism of the sustainability of the universal approach to soft power. Furthermore, by critically considering the existing implemented methods of measuring soft power, with the summary of the proposed wider, more objective models, the paper provides a contribution to the basics of the projection of the soft power of a small state.

The paper points out that soft and hard power represent the integral state power and it is impossible to separate them. It seems that hard power is ahead of soft power and the development of soft power component is conditioned by the degree of development of hard power factor. General, "smart power" emphasizes more dominant influence of soft components. Due to the intertwining of indicators, the consideration of soft power is more objective from the point of view of the motives of the set goals, rather than the structure of the instrument itself, which often has a hybrid hard-soft structure.

It is rational for small states to develop their asymmetric approach to power establishment. Namely, small states lack the capacity for hard power elements. However, their positioning and strength in international relations can be greatly strengthened by an asymmetric approach to the development of soft power components, based on prerogative competences and value capacities available to state that can be developed and improved.

In this way, the effort to get out of the gray zone of impotence in international relations, where small states are always under pressure and forced to ultimate solutions, is encouraged. By strengthening the available elements of power, with practical foreign policy, the support of available and economical solutions in the field of hard power, a small state can achieve a respectable position in the international community.

Key words: *soft power, state power, international relations, national security, small state*