

From Protracted Conflict to Strategic Partnership between China and India: Can India and Pakistan Follow the Same Path?

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Introduction

The two regional protracted conflict rivals of Asia, India and China, have found ways to become strategic partners in the twenty-first century. This research probes what explains this change and whether or not the engagement strategies employed by them can produce similar results if used in the India-Pakistan bilateral relations? I argue that although at the strategic level nuclear weapons detonation by India in 1998 was instrumental in developing a strategic balance between the rivals and within a few years a stable security environment emanated in the conflict offing, creating a setting stage for the exploration of possibilities of partnership in the economic, trade, and political realms, one of the major contributing factors in the partnership has been the soft power that both China and India possess. While the two Asian giants share common attributes such as strong military, population, economy, and information technology, among others, soft power in the form of culture, education, and values/ideals pertaining to open economies has forced them to look beyond the dynamics of the intractable conflict and find a common ground to work together. Both are mature states in all of these domains due to which the domestic political/institutional differences did not create an impediment to substantive strategic cooperation. There is political resolve in both countries in maintaining long-term friendship, enhancing cooperation, and achieving common developments. This is the exact opposite of the India-Pakistan case. While India is strong in soft power capabilities, Pakistan lacks strength in this domain and remains even less interested in developing the attribute. Consequently, even though both India and Pakistan realize that cooperation on different levels is possible, attainable, and beneficial to both parties and have progressed in attaining some of their stated goals of cooperation as part of the composite dialogue, in the presence of asymmetry in soft power resources, they are unable to comprehensively tap the unexplored opportunities to becoming strategic partners in this century.

The paper is structured in the following manner: The first section discusses various sources of power in general and intangible or soft power in particular. The second section draws a connection between hard power, soft power, and strategic partnership or accommodation policies. The third is a case study on the India-China strategic cooperation. The focus here is on the role of soft power in enhancing cooperation between them. The next section uses the principle thesis of the paper connecting soft power to strategic cooperation against the India-Pakistan case and argues that strategic cooperation lacks in this case because of the absence of soft power in Pakistan. A final section provides concluding remarks and some policy recommendations.

Dimensions of Power

States acquire power to attain security and survive in the world. States worry about their position in the international system and only power secures states' positions there. Power is thus a means to an end, security. Traditional conception of power includes military, economic, demographic, territorial, industrial, and political power.¹ With the

¹ See, Bruce M. Russett, *Peace, War, and Numbers*, (Beverly Hills: sage Publishers, 1972).

advancement of information technology, a new dimension of power has been included in the list of power, which is information technology. Power, however, always referred to a capability/attribute that is tangible and military power remains ‘the ultima ratio of international politics.’² Military power is used for defensive and offensive purposes, as well as to deter states from waging wars and to compel them to do what a state wants. Power in the military domain has also been used to swagger or to elevate the status of a state or a leader. Crises, conflicts, and wars in the history of world politics demonstrate the pivotal role tangible sources of power have played. Conflicts in the world are managed by crises and wars, which, in turn, are managed by the usage of hard power. World Wars I and II, the cold war, and all regional wars in the Middle East, South Asia, South-East Asia, Africa, or Latin America have witnessed the power of military capabilities of states. While military capabilities are the most important attributes in the realm of hard power, economic power is also salient. The cold war ended because the former Soviet Union did not have the economic means to stand up against the US anymore and continue with the game of arms race, even though militarily it had nuclear weapons in its possession and Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) was functional. Consequently, the salience of economic power cannot be undermined. Additionally, one cannot undermine the fact that hard power is exercised through economic sanctions in addition to military force.³

Balance of power as a policy, distribution of power, or system has always been measured in terms of tangible power. It is also no surprise that by ‘powerful states’ we mean ‘powerful in tangible terms’—that which can be measured and seen. United States is the preponderant power today because it has the most tangible resources in the world. The great powers of the world—Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Austro-Hungary—were considered major powers because they were militarily, economically, and industrial capacity-wise powerful. ‘Coercion,’ a common vocabulary in International Relations, has always meant military or economic coercion. Coercive strategies of compellence or war or even diplomacy could not and cannot be pursued without strong military or economic capabilities. Thus, tangible dimensions of power have been salient in world politics.

Intangible aspects of power were not considered by policy-makers or scholars until recently, although the defeat of the Vietnam War by the US in the hands of the Vietnamese insurgents proved the power of an intangible power—willingness to suffer—in the 1960s and early 1970s. This was most certainly a cultural attribute which explains why big nations lose small wars or why powerful actors face defeat against less-powerful ones or why the side with the larger army does not always win. Although this is a cultural attribute, this is different from the cultural component that soft power theorists refer to. Although a source of power, this has a negative connotation to it, unlike the cultural component that is a source of soft power and that which attracts other nations. In this case, culture refers to strategic culture of a country/nation/people, which plays important roles in the actions or policies that states or agents pursue. Here culture is not used to

² John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2001), pp.55-57.

³ Joseph S. Nye, “Other Countries Attracted to Our Values—Source of ‘Soft Power’,” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, January 6, 2000.

attract others, but an important factor indeed in shaping policies and influencing actions in the battlefields. Similarly, the power and strength of the terrorists stem from their culture that is different from the cultures that powerful states have been used to witnessing. The terrorists, too, have the willingness to suffer at any cost. Suicide missions, very common in today's terrorism, cannot be stopped by the acquisition of sophisticated conventional and non-conventional weapons or the threat to use bunker-busting and earth penetrating nuclear weapons. These have more to do with cultures and how these people see the world compared to others. Theorists and strategic analysts did not pay much attention to strategic culture as an important source of power⁴ for a long time.

More recently scholars have been engaged in understanding the value of soft power, which includes culture, values/ideals or policies, in interstate relations. Joseph S. Nye introduced the phrase "soft power" in his book, *Bound to Lead* in 1990, which ultimately led to the publication of another book, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, in 2004. As opposed to hard power which is used for coercion, soft power is the ability of a state to attract others rather than coerce them. It stems from a state's attractiveness in the realm of culture, values/ideals, and policies, among others. This also means that a state's culture or values must be attractive enough for others to be persuaded to do what the state wants them to do. States essentially want to co-opt, meaning they want others to want what they want. This understanding about states' intentions does not come from Nye alone. Structural realist Kenneth Waltz argued in 1979 that a state's power needs to be understood as a combination of its capacity to influence others to act as it wants them to, and to deter the influence of others.⁵ The strategy that Waltz emphasizes on to pursue this objective remains a military/strategic strategy. Nye argues that states can make others want what they want with the usage of three strategies: by threatening them with sticks, by paying them with carrots, or by attracting them. The last one is a function of the attractiveness of culture, values/ideals, and policies of a state. It is also the least expensive of the three strategies. Thus, soft power is referred to as "nonmilitary power that is capable of attracting, rather than coercing, others through intangibles such as policies, values, and culture" to obtain desired goals or objectives. To Nye, one source of soft power is values—liberty, human rights, and democracy. Another source is cultural exports—films, television programs, art, academic writing, and materials on the internet. Soft power can also work through international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). As for the United States, its soft power potentials come from all three sources. Liberalism is one of the primary principles America embraces. Democracy, which grants freedom, human rights, and liberty to the people, is what America stands for. American entertainment industry, including movies, music, software, and television broadcasting, is one of its largest export sector.⁶ Hollywood movies dominate world cinema which have penetrated every market in the world. America's leading role in NATO has kept this

⁴ For more information on strategic culture, see, Alastair Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security*, 19 (4), spring 1995, pp.32-64.

⁵ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, (Penn: Addison-Wesley, 1979), pp.191-92.

⁶ Lui Hebron and John F. Stack, Jr., *Globalization: Debunking the Myths*, (New Jersey: Pearson, 2009), p.90.

institution not only alive after the end of the cold war, but has enlarged it. NATO's political mission has been to unify the democratic states, which is why the organization survived the end of the cold war. Nye and many others argue that America's soft power, the benign face of the Americans, helped end the cold war,⁷ discussed more in the next section. It is believed that soft power is as important as hard military power in the contemporary world. However, states need to understand the salience of soft power in the realm of international politics.

While the game of hard power politics was introduced by realist thinkers, soft power, a variant of power, was not considered by the realists in comprehending interstate politics even though soft power seems to be as important as hard power. It is a known fact that although hard power is necessary, it has its limitations in accomplishing goals on its own. Soft power is then an asset for a state. A key question is: who is responsible for the proliferation of soft power? Interestingly, soft power stems as much from nongovernmental sources as from government actions. For the US, Hollywood and MTV—nongovernmental sources—as well as Voice of America and Fulbright scholarships—governmental sources—have promoted the idea that America is a desirable and admirable society. The next question that comes to mind which needs addressing is: who is to be attracted—the state elites or the people of the state? Soft power can be “high,” targeted at the elites of states, or “low,” targeted at the general public.⁸ While, both are individually important and in some ways cannot be separated, for a comprehensive and effective usage of soft power, a state needs to target elites as well as the general people. Bill Powell contends, “Soft power's real potency comes not from what other nations' governments think of you, but what their citizens think.”⁹ This is especially true if the country has democracy. In a democratic country, the government represents people and it is pertinent to impress the people first if positive or favorable policies are to be expected from that country. Although such guidelines must be considered if soft power is to be used for accomplishing policy objectives, as long as a country's soft power is developed effectively and institutionalized, sooner or later others are bound to see its attractiveness and be attracted to it.

Connecting Hard and Soft Power to Strategic Partnership

As stated in the previous section, military and economic powers are important in interstate relations, but they have their limitations in pursuing policy objectives of states. While wars may be fought and won with the usage of military force and a state may compel others to do what it wants with military or economic coercion, none of these would be a permanent solution to the problem a state is faced with. Wars ending with winners and losers are bound to produce post-war grievances; ultimately, a new war emerges over the same issue or for post-war dissatisfaction. The Second World War was a direct product of the dissatisfaction with the result of the First World War and post-war

⁷Josef Joffe, “How America Does It,” in G. John Ikenberry, ed., *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays*, 4th edition, New York: Longman, 2002, pp.596-606.

⁸ Joshua Kurlantzick, “China's Charm: Implications of Chinese Soft Power,” *Policy Brief*, (Washington D.C: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, June 2006).

⁹ Bill Powell, “The Limits of Power,” *Time*, July 19, 2007.

dissatisfaction of Germany. In the regional scenarios, three wars in the India-Pakistan conflict did not solve the enduring rivalry. Rather the result of each war, a defeat for Pakistan, triggered more anger in the defeated country, which, in turn, triggered either a new war or crisis in the conflict setting. Hard power is also less fungible when it comes to using it in the realm of developing partnership with the opponent while in conflict. In regional cases this is more applicable because of the proximity of the conflicting states. For example, in the India-Pakistan conflict, violence and crises remain part of the conflict setting, which are functions of the possession of military power—conventional in general and nuclear weapons in particular—by the dyads.¹⁰ It is difficult to create an atmosphere for developing partnership on any level under such circumstances. Where partnerships are created, institutionalizing them becomes difficult due to the conflict's propensity to attract violence and crises, especially in a nuclear environment.¹¹ Strategic partnership or voluntary accommodation in the midst of a conflict is difficult to be accomplished with the possession of hard power alone. Nuclear weapons may deter wars, but they may not alone help in turning rivals into strategic partners. Soft power does a better job in this regard compared to hard power.

During the cold war, the United States and Soviet Union were engaged in arms race for a protracted period, acquired conventional and nuclear weapons for more than forty years, fought proxy wars in different parts of the world, and faced off each other in a nuclear crisis in Cuba, but pursued the strategy of MAD religiously to deter wars between them. Consequently, there was no superpower war in that period. However, that was not the reason why the cold war ended. While conventional wisdom holds that the cold war ended because of Ronald Reagan's introduction of the Star wars program and his tough military stance on the US-Soviet front when Soviet Union faced extreme financial difficulties, American soft power helps in explaining the accommodation strategies that were embraced by Gorbachev much earlier, which paved the road to conflict resolution. The attractiveness of an open economy, a free society, and a popular culture could not be ignored by him any longer. Moscow saw Washington's power differently. It no longer focused on the power of America's military power, but its preponderance in soft power. Gorbachev understood that militarily there was parity with the US, but in the realm of soft power his country fell far behind. There was no attraction towards a closed economy, society, or culture. The Polish solidarity movement proved before and more so in the 1980s that nobody loves a closed society or absence of freedom. It highlighted the value of freedom and liberty. Gorbachev seemed ready for accommodation based on the attractiveness of the liberal culture. That being said, it is important to bear in mind that none of that would be possible if nuclear weapons did not exist in Soviet Union and militarily it was weak. Hard power resource in the military realm gives a sense of security to states and creates a setting stage from where to explore other possibilities. This also means that soft power alone cannot bring about partnership or accommodation between rival states. The presence of hard power is required for strong

¹⁰For more information on this, see, Saira Khan, *Nuclear Weapons and Conflict Transformation: The India-Pakistan Case*, (Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge Ltd., forthcoming).

¹¹Saira Khan, *Nuclear Weapons and Conflict Transformation: The India-Pakistan Case*, (Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge Ltd., forthcoming).

strategic partnership to result. Accommodation or partnership is a function of a combination of hard power and soft power. It is important to elaborate this connection and create a framework connecting hard and soft power to strategic partnership.

Strategic partnership in the economic and military realm between enduring rivals may develop under certain circumstances. States in long-running conflicts need to develop hard power in the form of military and economic capabilities to face off each other in crises and wars and balancing the power of the opponent remains the primary motivation of each state. Since conventional capabilities are less able to deter adversaries from waging wars, states in protracted conflicts that expect crises and wars in the offing are more proliferation-prone for deterrence purposes.¹² Nuclear weapons are absolute weapons that have the absolute ability to deter wars. However, by deterring wars, an environment for developing strategic partnership is not automatically created. Leaders need to be attracted to building partnership and that attraction does not come from the acquisition of nuclear weapons or hard power resources, although that may build a platform for accommodation to occur because states realize that the conflict is unending. The attraction, however, is a product of soft power that rivals possess.

In a long-running conflict, states are suspicious of each other on different realms and that suspicion becomes strong and consolidated if the states in question are unable to develop soft power resources. Through the usage of soft power, states can prove to their adversaries that there are good sides to them. For example, through cultural exports and the media, a state's values, principles, and ideas can proliferate. Similarly, a state's participation in international talks or mediation in conflicts often reflects its decent motives and attitudes. The proliferation of its values, ideas, and principles help in mitigating the effects of conflicts. Where both states in question are developed in the soft power arenas, it helps even more because then they are aware of their rival's motives and attitudes and the suspicion that they have of each other is somewhat muted. Their soft powers help in better understanding each other. The attraction towards each other is formed through these soft powers that they possess. Common interests are identified and paths to partnership are explored.

The acquisition of hard power, especially nuclear weapons, sets the stage for partnership to be developed, provided conflicts do not witness stability/instability paradox,¹³ and the presence of soft power in the conflicting states enables them to explore that path. Where one state is strong in soft power potential, the other may be attracted to it and follow accommodation policies that suit the strong power, such as the US-Soviet case, but that is also not automatic. Power symmetry on the hard power level is required for this to occur. Both need to be mature states in the realm of hard power. As stated earlier, military power is required for the lesser state to feel secure to develop strategic partnership with its adversary. Where there is asymmetry in hard power, the weaker power in both realms is unlikely to be attracted to the idea of strategic partnership for the

¹² See, Saira Khan, *Nuclear Proliferation in Protracted Conflict Regions: A Comparative Study of South Asia and the Middle East*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2002).

¹³ Saira Khan, *Nuclear Weapons and Conflict Transformation: The India-Pakistan Case*, (Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge Ltd., forthcoming).

fear of being exploited and dominated. A zero-sum mentality is likely to affect its decision. Under conditions where both have developed soft power, the asymmetry on the hard power level, conventional realm, may not matter that much.

In a nutshell, in the military realm, the acquisition of nuclear weapons creates parity between states in an asymmetric conflict and presents an environment for accommodation. The parity needs to be institutionalized which may take a few years, which builds the foundation for visualizing strategic partnership with the rival state. However, each state must be attracted to the other to start the process of partnership and this attraction comes from soft power attributes that each possesses. Each state must have something attractive to offer to the other which will be instrumental in driving them to building partnership in different realms. In today's world states must make concerted efforts to develop soft power to be able to attract others. Every state has culture, values, and ideas that may be likeable, but the most important function of a state is to highlight and proliferate those possessions through different means. In doing so, it makes others understand it better and often attracts them to value its principles, culture, and policies. The next section uses this framework against the China-India strategic partnership.

China-India Strategic Partnership

India and China have been engaged in a protracted conflict since 1953¹⁴ and fought a border war in 1962, which China won. Unresolved territorial issues between them dominated the conflict since then. This made them strategic adversaries, which produced and consolidated China's strategic partnership with Pakistan—India's rival in South Asia—and India's alignment with the Soviet Union, a rival of China. India's bitterness towards China strengthened with China assisting Pakistan in its nuclear weapons program and transferring missiles¹⁵—M11 missiles—in the 1980s and 1990s. While China tested its nuclear weapons in 1964 which triggered India's incentive to develop a matching capability, India's nuclear tests were conducted after more than three decades in 1998. Nonetheless, the Indian government cited Chinese threat as a rationale for its tests of 1998. In other words, they were primarily to secure India in the realm of China-India conflict, which would automatically take care of India's security needs in the India-Pakistan conflict. For more than half a century, the two Asian rivals have had strained relationship. However, for the past few years both China and India wanted to engage each other in the economic and even military realm. China-India relations thawed in 2000 which gained momentum with the visits of the top officials of both states, which includes Atal Behari Vajpayee's 2003 visit to Beijing. While economic cooperation between them started in the year 2000, in April of 2005 during the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to India, both agreed to create a 'strategic partnership for peace and prosperity' between them. India's foreign secretary stated that the agreement upgrades the ties between India and China and implies that they "do not look at each other as

¹⁴ For more information on China-India protracted conflict, see, Saira Khan, *Nuclear Proliferation in Protracted Conflict Regions: A Comparative Study of South Asia and the Middle East*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2002).

¹⁵ "India, China Agree to Form 'Strategic Partnership'," *USA Today*, April 11, 2005.

adversaries, but as partners.”¹⁶ They agreed to boost bilateral trade and economic ties, promote diplomatic relations, and address global challenges jointly. Additionally, they signed cooperation agreements in civil aviation, finance, education, science and technology, tourism, and cultural exchanges. President Hu Jintao’s visit to India in November of 2006 brought forth new developments in the China-India relations. During the trip, they signed thirteen agreements, emphasizing the salience of building a stronger strategic relationship and fostering greater economic cooperation. China is now India’s second largest trading partner. The two-way trade of 20 billion dollars a year is expected to double in 2010.¹⁷ China and India called the year 2006 as a China-India friendship year.¹⁸ On January 14th, 2008 during the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s visit to China, India and China decided to “promote bilateral cooperation in civil nuclear energy consistent with respective international commitments which will contribute to energy security and to dealing with risks associated with climate change.”¹⁹ They also pledged to resolve all outstanding differences between them including the border problem through peaceful negotiations and shared the notion that such differences should not disturb the positive developments between them.²⁰ Singh stated, “Our two economies are becoming engines of growth and must use our natural and human resources, technology and capital for the common benefit of the region.”²¹ Interestingly, China assured India that it would back the latter in its bid for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council and in response to that India has agreed to respect China’s claim over Taiwan.²² These developments are not symbolic. They are real and portray a unique shift from policies of confrontation to accommodation. The question is: what explains these new developments between the two Asian giants?

While Indian policymakers for long have been trying to focus on the notions that prosperity is dependent on having friendly neighbors and trading states are less likely to confront each other militarily, China seemed disinterested in considering these lines of thinking. On the India-Pakistan front, India has tried to use this strategy of engagement to create a peaceful environment in the conflict, but that has not worked effectively. It was expected that even if the conflict remains alive due to the unresolved territorial issue, trade and other bilateral relations could be strengthened. However, that did not work as effectively as it should have even though the composite dialogue between the two South Asian states is still ongoing. The border areas are less-than-calm in the India-Pakistan conflict, which creates adverse situations for the parties to advance on other levels. That situation is reversed in the China-India case. The border has mostly been calm and the interest to engage each other in trade was projected by China since 2000. There was interest in both states, which makes the question even more interesting. Why would China be interested in engaging India even if India is because of its status as a weaker power in the conflict? Although a number of factors from domestic to leadership levels

¹⁶ “India, China Strengthen Relations,” *CBS News*, New Delhi, April 11, 2005.

¹⁷ “India, China, and Japan,” *South Asia Monitor*, (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, January 3, no. 102, 2007).

¹⁸ “China’s Strategy of Containing India,” *The Power and Interest News Report (PINR)*, February 6, 2006.

¹⁹ “India, China Pledge Nuclear Cooperation,” *The Hindu*, January 15, 2008.

²⁰ “India, China Pledge Nuclear Cooperation,” *The Hindu*, January 15, 2008.

²¹ “We’ll Work with China for Better Trade Ties: PM,” *The Times of India*, January 14, 2008.

²² “China Backs India’s Bid for UNSC Seat,” *The Times of India*, January 14, 2008.

help in explaining this, the development and proliferation of soft power in both countries have been instrumental in triggering the engagement policies that both embraced.

India's hard power capabilities entail military, economic, technological, and demographic power; its soft power resources include normative, institutional, cultural, state capacity, strategy and diplomacy, and national leadership.²³ Democracy and culture are at the core of India's soft power. New Delhi attracts others through its political and cultural influences. India is the world's largest democracy, which naturally gives it a substantive advantage in several realms. With respect to its cultural influences, the cinema industry—Bollywood—stands out. It produces a record number of films every year which is proliferated to many countries of the world, especially with large Indian immigrant societies. India uses its hard and soft power to attain its policy objectives in today's world. As stated earlier, India's nuclear weapons produced a degree of parity with China on the strategic realm and with that, a platform to establish better relations between the two was created. India has been a much more confident actor in the asymmetric relationship with its nuclear weapons acquisition. A. B. Vajpayee in 2003 pledged during a visit to Beijing to respect China's sovereignty over Tibet and not to allow anti-China activities in India.²⁴ This commitment, coming from an Indian leader, was unexpected since the Tibetan government-in-exile led by Dalai Lama was in Dharamsala. Vajpayee's compromise was a direct product of India's strength in the nuclear realm and its desire to mend the fractured China-India relationship since 1998 due to India's nuclear tests. India also realized that it is almost impossible for it to fight a war with China again over the border issue which remains unresolved for a protracted period. Additionally, the border, the Actual Line of Control, is generally calm throughout the year,²⁵ which makes the situation even better for building partnership on levels where both are interested. However, the Indian leadership did not believe that competition with China will be over with the development of partnership in different non-controversial realms, such as trade. It was rather argued that "there will be areas of competition and there will be areas for cooperation."²⁶ This essentially means that both may still perceive security dilemma at the military realm and competition there may ensue as trade continues to strengthen between the Asian giants. In fact, both India and China seek "to advance their national interests through the projection of soft power, with military power in the background."²⁷ Economic development with the aid of trade remains one of the primary national interests of both states. The Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao declared in 2006 that China and India will be a source of economic power in the 21st century and that

²³ Baldev Raj Nayar and T.V. Paul, *India in the World Order: Searching for Major Power Status*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp.49-62.

²⁴ John Lancaster, "India, China Forge Link Hoping to 'Reshape World Order'," *The Washington Post*, April 12, 2005

²⁵ "Interesting Times for India-China Relations," *Rediff India Abroad*, January 14, 2008.

²⁶ Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's remarks on China. See, "Warm Up to China," *The Times of India*, January 14, 2008.

²⁷ Scott B. MacDonald, "China and India: Same Globalization Road, Different Destinies," *YaleGlobal*, October 24, 2007.

“cooperation is just like two pagodas—one hardware and one software.”²⁸ He further stated that if Indian and China can cooperate in the IT field, they can lead the world.²⁹

India’s soft power enhances its standing in the eyes of the world. India’s Bollywood, booming software and high-tech industry, and a vigorous democracy attract the world. With the spread of religion and culture from India to the neighboring regions over the millennia, “India has exercised a measure of ‘soft power’.”³⁰ Indian diplomat Shashi Tharoor calls soft power as “just one arrow in nation’s armor.” He further argues that if India wants its rightful place in the world it must build on its soft power and substantiates his opinion by stating that Gandhi used soft power to obtain Indian independence.³¹ Nye argues along the same lines and contends that Gandhi had ‘attracted moderate majorities in Britain to favor India’s independence’ and with that he left a legacy for India’s soft power.³² In the contemporary world, India’s classical music, dance, movies, cuisine, academic writings, even fashion and clothing are levers of its soft power.

Culture and civilization are attractive elements of soft power. Buddhism originated in India in the 5th century BC, but it died there too. However, it spread across Asia including Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Japan, Korea, Tibet, Mongolia, and China. Buddhist monks traveled long distances to spread the religion and scholars came to India to study at its universities. With that, there was exchange of ideas of philosophic, religious, and cultural traditions from the ancient times. The impact of this interaction can be seen and felt across Asia. It is this shared Buddhist heritage that New Delhi is now emphasizing on in its engagement with East and South- East Asia. By underlining the multi-millennia-old bond of Buddhism that it shares with these regions, “India is quietly clarifying that it is not a gatecrasher.”³³ China, on the other hand, has been trying to project a Buddhism-friendly image, focusing on its Buddhist heritage. It is trying to rebuild the monasteries and temples that were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution, which is a function of China’s Tibet policy. China has tried to soften its image towards Tibet by shoring up its Buddhist credentials. Buddhism remains India’s pivotal soft power push in Asia. Through Buddhism, India tries to remind countries including China of their long-standing links with it and also that the roots of their cultural heritage lie in India.³⁴

The Bollywood movie industry, as stated before, promotes Indian culture through its entertainment to the people of the world. Although they may not understand the Hindi language, they still enjoy the spirit of the films. In similar vein, Indian dance, classical

²⁸ Scott B. MacDonald, “China and India: Same Globalization Road, Different Destinies,” *YaleGlobal*, October 24, 2007.

²⁹ John Lancaster, “India, China Forge Link Hoping to ‘Reshape World Order’,” *The Washington Post*, April 12, 2005.

³⁰ C. Raja Mohan, “Indian Diaspora and ‘Soft Power’,” *The Hindu*, January 6, 2003.

³¹ “India Must Build on Its ‘Soft Power’: Tharoor,” *Hindustan Times*, January 15, 2008.

³² Joseph S. Nye, “Springing Tiger,” *India Today*, September 25, 2006.

³³ Sudha Ramachandran, “India Has Its Own Soft Power—Buddhism,” *Asia Times*, July 4, 2007.

³⁴ Sudha Ramachandran, “India Has Its Own Soft Power—Buddhism,” *Asia Times*, July 4, 2007.

music, art, fashion and clothing have the same effect.³⁵ Many argue that Bollywood “has done more for Indian influence abroad than the bureaucratic efforts of the government.”³⁶

To the extent that India is seen as a beacon of liberty, human rights, and democracy, others are attracted to follow its lead. It is one of the largest democracies in the world. Democracy remains one of India’s main success stories. It has a large and poor population, yet democracy has survived in the political system, which is remarkable. As George Perkovich puts it, “No state in history has been as populous, diverse, stratified, poor, and democratic as India.”³⁷ While this remains a model political institution for others to follow, most feel that there is no reason for China to see India’s democracy as an achievement since Beijing is a communist state. However, that China takes India’s democracy seriously is reflected in one of the statements made by Hu Jintao. He stated that democracy is ‘a good thing’ and it depends on the historic condition of a country. In the Chinese rural areas, the cadres are directly elected. The Communist party of China is the biggest party of China, but it is not the only one. There are 10 other parties and they have voice too. Additionally, they have votes in the upper house.³⁸ Jintao made special efforts to make a connection between the political system that exists in China and democracy.

In the field of education, India has world class scientific and technological educational institutions. The Indian Institutes of Technology admit a large number of world’s finest young technologists in information technology and engineering. Similarly, the Indian Institute of Science produces top-class scientists. India is considered a world-class player in information technology, biotechnology, and space.³⁹ Chinese students come to India, especially in South India, to learn English and IT-related subjects.⁴⁰ Chinese leaders recognize and underscore the value of Indian IT technology. The late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping said, “We live in the era of information technology, which is the second industrial revolution.”⁴¹ Indian IT industry has developed a name not only in China, an Asian country, but everywhere. The Americans speak of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) with the same admiration they accord to MIT or Caltech. The stereotypical Indian image has changed. Indians are no longer known as poor people, but ‘computer geeks.’⁴² India strives to become a ‘knowledge superpower’ and science and information technology companies from all over the world are establishing their research and development labs in India. Major American companies send some of their information technology work to India, where the mainstay of the economy is software development. India strives to become a major actor in the computer software field just as China is in the hardware arena. There is no doubt that in the contemporary world, India is

³⁵ Shashi Tharoor, “Making the Most of India’s Soft Power,” *The Times of India*, January 28, 2007.

³⁶ C. Raja Mohan, “Indian Diaspora and ‘Soft Power’,” *The Hindu*, January 6, 2003.

³⁷ George Perkovich, “The Measure of India: What Makes Greatness?,” Annual Fellows’ Lecture, Pennsylvania: Center for the Advanced Study of India, April 2003, p.12.

³⁸ “India, China Relations Getting Better and Better,” *Rediff India Abroad*, January 11, 2008.

³⁹ George Perkovich, “The Measure of India: What Makes Greatness?,” Annual Fellows’ Lecture, Pennsylvania: Center for the Advanced Study of India, April 2003.

⁴⁰ “China, India Still Suspicious of Each Other,” *Rediff India Abroad*, January 11, 2008.

⁴¹ “Let the Dragon and Elephant Tango,” *Rediff India Abroad*, January 11, 2008.

⁴² Shashi Tharoor, “Making the Most of India’s Soft Power,” *The Times of India*, January 28, 2007.

one of the pivotal “intellectual capitals”⁴³ of the world and others, including China, want to be engaged with India for that.

China is strong in the military realm and its defense budget has increased by double digits since the mid-1990s, which is expected to rise further. However, Chinese image and influence have been transformed due to its soft power, which includes culture, diplomacy, participation in international organizations, and its economic strength. Although China’s soft power includes culture and civilization like India, its soft power comes primarily from its economic success. While China remains a non-democracy and suffers from corruption, inequality, and lack of human rights or rule of law, its success in the economic sphere by tripling gross domestic product over the past three decades has made it an attractive country not only to the developing countries of the world, but also to the United States. China’s economic achievements attracted the United States. Even though China is a non-democracy and US advocates and promotes democracy in the world and wages war for the proliferation of that ideal, Washington did not hesitate to make Beijing its trading partner due to the latter’s economic success. India is no exception. China’s economic strength has naturally attracted India to be its partner in the economic sphere. China understands that its political institution does not attract others and consequently, it needs to create a situation where others admire its ‘culture and ways.’

In the cultural realm, China has an attractive traditional culture, but in today’s world global audiences are enjoying Chinese pop culture exports. It has been stated that China pursues “cultural diplomacy after economic diplomacy.”⁴⁴ At the keynote speech to the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Hu Jintao mentioned that China must “enhance culture as part of its soft power” which included the development of press, media, radio, television, film industry, literature, art, and internet culture, to name a few.⁴⁵ Speeches like this highlight the salience of soft power potential for China. China’s movies like Zhang Yimou’s *Hero* dazzle world audiences. Ann Lee’s *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* has become the highest grossing non-English film of all time, which made about \$170 million at the box office. Successful films like *Kung Fu Hustle* and *Hero* have left lasting impressions on the west. China makes special efforts to elevate its status in the eyes of the world. It is stated that “no other country in the world today spends so much money and manpower as China does to create an image.”⁴⁶ The primary “foreign policy goal of China’s media regulators is to export Chinese culture via TV and radio shows, films, books and other cultural products.”⁴⁷ China plans to promote the teachings of Chinese culture across the world so that states are not worried about the growing political and economic clout of Beijing. With a view to attaining that objective China has provided scholarships to doctors, engineers, and scientists since long. Also, the Chinese government has made special efforts for the proliferation of the Confucius

⁴³ Jeffrey Ambrose, “India: A Superpower in the Making?,” *The Real Truth*, May-June 2006.

⁴⁴ Zhongying Pang, “China’s Soft Power,” Center for North-East Asian Policy Studies, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2007), p.4.

⁴⁵ “Hu Jintao Calls for Enhancing ‘Soft Power’ of Chinese Culture,” *People Daily*, October 15, 2007.

⁴⁶ “The Rising ‘Soft Power’ of China and India,” *Business World*, May 30, 2005.

⁴⁷ James F. Paradise, “Can China’s Soft Power Offensive Succeed?,” *Asia Media*, March 5, 2007, p.1.

Institutes and about more than 150 Chinese language institutes across the world exist,⁴⁸ including at places like the London School of Economics and the University of Iowa. That being said, China has also attracted many international students. In 2006 China had 160, 000 foreign students from 185 countries and the figure is expected to rise by 2010. Because of China's impressive economic growth, it has also been able to attract these foreign students who study, among other subjects, Mandarin, Chinese medicine, acupuncture, and opera.⁴⁹

As part of its diplomatic endeavors, China wants to project a benign view of the country to the world—that China is committed to rise peacefully and it values peace and prosperity. China has been fully engaged with the world and plays a central role in the world system. It pursues a good-neighbor policy and with that in mind, it has provided aid to South-East Asian countries without any strings attached to them. In recent years China has given more aid to Indonesia, Laos, and Philippines than the US according to a 2006 study. In some countries Chinese aid was given to promote Chinese companies and mitigate others' concerns about rising Chinese economy. For Example, Thailand's politicians came to China for study-trips with Chinese aid, which is high soft power.⁵⁰ This elucidates how effectively China has used its soft power to win over these countries. China tries to advertise its aid policy through frequent visits of its officials in the neighboring states, which is part of its soft power. China wants to maintain peace in its periphery because its economic growth is dependent on peace. Chinese companies need outlets and only a peaceful environment in the region can provide them that. Beijing's decision to embrace free-trade and provide foreign direct investment boosts its image. Although a non-democratic country, China has indicated through its soft powers that it is a peaceful country that strives to focus on prosperity through economic advancement.

Chinese interest in global cooperation and governance has also been evidenced by its participation in multilateral institutions for the purpose of maintaining peace and stability in the world. China has been engaged in the six party talks to bring the North Korean nuclear crisis to an end. Its efforts in the talks have elevated its status as a peaceful state in the eyes of the world. While China has been suspicious of international organizations just a decade ago, since then it has joined the World Trade Organization, contributed more than 3000 troops for United Nations peacekeeping operations, helped on non-proliferation issues—it hosted the six party talks over the North Korean nuclear issue—and joined a number of regional organizations.⁵¹ With these endeavors China has made itself attractive to the world.

China and India have been able to use soft power to attract each other. The hard power ball game did not work to bring them together. However, as stated before, as both became confident conflict actors in the military realm and projected soft power potential, it was time for them to explore the path to partnership. Although China is far ahead of

⁴⁸ "China Flaunts its Soft Power," *Guardian Weekly*, October 26, 2007.

⁴⁹ "China Flaunts its Soft Power," *Guardian Weekly*, October 26, 2007.

⁵⁰ Joshua Kurlantzick, "China's Charm: Implications of Chinese Soft Power," *Policy Brief*, no.47, June 2006, p.3.

⁵¹ Joseph S. Nye, "The Rise of China's Soft Power," *The Wall Street Journal Asia*, December 29, 2005.

India in the economic realm, India's high-tech industry and software potential attracted China. India is aiming to become the fourth or fifth largest economy in the world by 2020.⁵² India strives to become a major power which is projected in its quest for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council. It is a large democracy with cultural heritage that attracts the world. It has broadened relationships with members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) including ones that have ongoing disputes with China. US-India nuclear cooperation deal of 2006 has also been a remarkable status-elevation for India. A country that did not join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and tested nuclear weapons got recognition of the United States as a responsible democracy with whom civilian nuclear cooperation can be developed. China understands that India and the US share values and ideals such as democracy and anti-terrorism. Thus, Beijing has also tried to look at the shared interests that China and India have—such as anti-terrorism and economic development. The Chinese Communist Party has identified sustained economic growth as the major national security priority. All developments depend on that. India factors heavily into that calculation. Indian massive market could be effectively used to pursue that objective. China looked at the 300-million strong Indian middleclass as potential consumers. China has been keen to make the China-India area a free-trade area. With the combined population of more than two billion, if accomplished, this would be the largest free-trade area in the world because they account for nearly half of the world's population, both proud of having almost 5000-year-old civilizations. That was a salient intention of China in a world where India is a fast-growing and a well-respected member of the international community. China also wanted access to other economies of South Asia through India that borders all six countries in the region. Additionally, Chinese information technology companies want to learn from India's success in service sector, while Indian companies look at China's manufacturing strength. China has been keen to take advantage of India's IT industry and software power and "integrate it with its hardware capabilities."⁵³ As for India, it is obvious why China would attract it. Its remarkable economic prowess made India reconsider its position vis-à-vis China. India wants to enter Chinese market and have access to the South-East Asian states through having better relations with China. However, this would not have been tapped had China not shown signs of distancing itself from Pakistan. China has overtly expressed concerns about militancy in Pakistan. In addition to its peace-making efforts in the United Nations and with respect to the North Korean nuclear issue, China has discussed with India about the importance of counter-terrorism. China has tried to change its image and impression in the world by projecting itself as a peaceful country through its soft power and India has closely observed "China's peaceful rise" for some years, which paved the way to building strategic partnership with China.

⁵² Jing-dong Yuan, "The Dragon and the Elephant: Chinese-Indian Relations in the 21st Century," *The Washington Quarterly*, no. 30, vol.3, Summer 2007, p.135.

⁵³ Anupam Srivastava, "The Strategic Context of India's Economic Engagement with China." *Indian Journal of Economics and Business*, 2006, p.9.

Absence of India-Pakistan Strategic Partnership

The India-Pakistan conflict started with the independence of the two South Asian states in 1947, the year that also witnessed the first war between them. They fought three wars, two over Kashmir, in 61 years and faced several interstate crises during the pre-nuclear and nuclear periods. They played a typical cold war political game in the South Asian region and acquired nuclear weapons with the hope of deterring wars in the conflict, although India's great power aspirations may have given it a stronger impetus to go nuclear in addition to wanting to develop a matching capability to deter its extra-regional rival China. This has been an asymmetric conflict from the start with India being the stronger power in all realms. To address that asymmetry, Pakistan was more inclined to acquire nuclear weapons. In the strategic realm, India proved to be a responsible player by not initiating wars with its weaker adversary, while Pakistan, a non-democracy during most of its life, did not miss an opportunity to trigger a war in the conflict setting. Unfortunately, crises having the potential to escalate to war did not stop in the nuclear period, making the border areas between them violent and turbulent. An atmosphere for conflict resolution was difficult to be created, although leaders of both countries made efforts to utilize windows of opportunity during infrequent periods of calm. India and Pakistan have had difficulty of consolidating any peace initiative due to the militancy problem in Pakistan in general and Kashmir in particular. Pakistan's support for terror tactics has been vehemently criticized by India. Pakistan, on its part, has most of the time denied its connections with terrorism or militancy in Kashmir. Thus, in addition to the Kashmir problem, Pakistan's connections with and support for terrorism and the role of its military in the political apparatus of the country have created bitterness with India. Thus, although with nuclear weapons acquisition, both India and Pakistan could have moved forward in developing strategic partnership, it became increasingly difficult for this to happen as borders remained bloody. The stability-instability paradox has much to do with the creation of this environment. Consequently, the setting stage of accommodation was not sturdy.

With regard to attraction, Pakistan has very little to offer. Under the same circumstances India could have been attracted to Pakistan if its soft power was strong. In the political realm, Pakistan has been ruled by the military for most of its life and the country has been faced with domestic political turmoil. Thus, India and Pakistan do not have political ideals to share. On the economic front, Pakistan has done miserably in the past few decades. Much of that is a function of its domestic troubles and facing economic and military sanctions after its nuclear weapons capability was revealed in the late 1980s. Pakistan's industrial and manufacturing sectors are weak compared to India. Thus, on this level, Pakistan does not attract India.

Culture-wise, Pakistan has not been able to offer much either. General Pervez Musharraf himself said that "Pakistan had a serious image problem and needs to do more to project its soft power in areas such as culture, tourism, arts, etc."⁵⁴ It demonstrates a culture where ideals of extremism and fundamentalism are followed. Interestingly, Pakistan had a multicultural society during its independence with 15 percent of Hindu

⁵⁴ "Pakistan: Sufism Promoted to Improve Image," *Indo-Asian News Service*, October 14, 2006.

population, 2 percent Christians, and the rest Muslims. However, during Ziaul Haq's period he systematically erased the multicultural heritage and replaced it with radical "Islamization" of civil society and the army.⁵⁵ The legacy of this is the presence of today's extremists in Pakistan. Unfortunately, "the rich Hindu, Buddhist, and Sikh legacy that was common between Pakistan and India was forgotten" by the Pakistanis. If they had recognized that their ancestors were part of these traditions, they would have tried to restore some of those values and that perhaps would have made them more tolerant and less violent.⁵⁶ Additionally, although an Islamic country, Pakistan has not been able to capitalize on that strength. Instead of demonstrating moderation that Islam promotes, the country's extremists project the religion as militant and war-like. If that was reversed, perhaps Pakistan's Muslim population would be one reason to develop ties with India that has one of the largest Muslim populations in the world. In fact in 2006, Pakistan set up a National Council of Sufism to project its soft power and improve its image in the west and President Musharraf became the patron-in-chief of the body. The Council's aim has been to "promote Sufi culture and folklore by organizing festivals, national and international conferences, seminars, and workshops. The aim is to spread the Sufi message of love, tolerance, and universal brotherhood."⁵⁷ Pakistan understands that unless it changes its image in its immediate neighborhood and in the west, it will be hard for it to attract others and earn respect from the international community. However, that is still in the infancy of its development.

On the educational level, Pakistan does not attract international students and does not promote its non-belligerent culture in the external world through its academic institutions. Takshashila (Taxila), the world oldest standing university and the principal learning center of ancient India which is located near Rawalpindi, has not been utilized as a soft power of the country. It can be compared to today's Harvard which was a cross-cultural knowledge-sharing institution. People from as far as China used to come to this university to obtain religion-oriented education. Thousands of pilgrims and students crossed the Himalayas to visit the ancient university town of Taxila. It was well-known for philosophy, art, and religion. Although an extension of the university, the university college of Engineering of Taxila was created in 1975, it did not get the prominence it should have received from the world. It could not compete with big universities of the world and did not attract students because of Pakistani government's inability to strengthen it and make it internationally visible. Pakistan could get closer to India through these ancient links.⁵⁸ The Islamia University of Bhawalpur⁵⁹ was one of the largest universities of the world where students from all over the world used to come to study religion. In fact, Egypt's Jamia Al-Azhar university followed it, which is so well-known in the world and which attracts students inclined to study Islam. Scholars spread Islam by teaching Al-Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh, and History, and other contemporary

⁵⁵ "Lessons from Pakistan," *Rediff India Abroad*, January 18, 2008.

⁵⁶ "Lessons from Pakistan," *Rediff India Abroad*, January 18, 2008.

⁵⁷ "Pakistan: Sufism Promoted to Improve Image," *Indo-Asian News Service*, October 14, 2006.

⁵⁸ Indian ancient universities include Nalanda in Bihar, Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, Ratnagiri in Orissa, and Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu.

⁵⁹ Jamia-Abbasia was a continuation of this following the academic pursuits of Jamia-Al-Azhar.

subjects. Pakistan's Jamia-A-Abbasia has not accomplished as much as Egyptian Al-Azhar has—all due to Pakistan's lack of focus on soft power.

On the diplomatic front, Pakistan has helped the US in its war on terror and continues to do so. Musharraf made serious efforts to crack down on the terrorists and dismantled the terrorist organizations in Pakistan. He made it an official policy to terminate cross-border terrorism in South Asia. He also announced the policy of his government to reform the *madrassas* by making their curricula broad and banned two terrorist organizations, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, that were believed to be responsible for the Indian Parliament attack.⁶⁰ These policy changes were substantial because before the 9/11 attacks, Musharraf himself insisted that there was a need to distinguish *jihad* (holy war) from terrorism, and argued that *jihad* was “a legitimate instrument of the Kashmiris’ freedom struggle.”⁶¹ President Bush has consistently praised Musharraf for his support in the United States’ war on terror. While that has in fact created a better image of Pakistan in the eyes of the world in general and US in particular, much work needs to be done in the domestic realm in Pakistan for others to reconsider Pakistan’s stereotypical image of promoting militancy.

While Pakistan’s Lahore based movie industry, Lollywood, has done well and exported movies to the neighboring countries, it is stated that “it never had the shine, glamour, or the entertainment value of its Mumbai cousin.”⁶² More work also needs to be done on this domain.

Given all of the above, it is not surprising that India and Pakistan have not been able to develop the same kind of strategic partnership that China and India could.

Conclusion

The paper investigates why the two strategic rivals—China and India—have become strategic partners and argues that non-material soft power in the form of culture, education, and values/ideas with regard to open economies have been instrumental in aiding this change and development. However, it also contends that simple soft power potential is not enough to change the course of a relationship from rivalry to accommodation/partnership. Hard or tangible power capability, especially in the form of military power, is required to build a platform from where to use soft power in achieving the objective. Since the China-India conflict was asymmetric, it was more important for India to decrease the gap that existed in the military realm before contemplating accommodation with its Asian rival. With India’s nuclear weapons detonation in 1998, it attained parity with China on the nuclear front. Once that was consolidated, in the next

⁶⁰ India claimed from the very beginning that these terrorist groups were responsible for the Parliament attack. However, later even Pakistan’s ISI came out in the open and stated that Jaish-i-Mohammed was responsible for the attack. Any move by the Pakistani government to ban this and other similar organizations was important to the Indians. See, B. Muralidhar Reddy, “Jaish Behind Parliament Attack: ex-ISI Chief,” *Hindu*, March 7, 2004.

⁶¹ Navnita Chadna Behera, “Kashmir: Redefining the U.S. Role,” *Brookings Policy Brief*, 110, November 2002, 2.

⁶² “Bollywood to Lollywood,” *Guardian*, August 17, 2007.

two years India saw an opportunity to attract China through its soft power and engage China economically for the prosperity of both nations. China, too, has used its soft power to attract India and create trade relationships to fulfill its drive for economic prosperity. Both share culture, civilization, have populous countries, and want to eradicate poverty through economic prosperity. There was common interest in both to attain this objective.

Pakistan's case has been different. Although India tried hard to develop partnership with Pakistan, its rival in the region, with the expectation that partnership on different levels may facilitate stability in the conflict relationship and even though Pakistan achieved its own parity with India on the nuclear level to feel secure in the India-Pakistan asymmetric conflict that favors India, the absence of soft power in Pakistan became an obstacle in the process. Pakistan has been a non-democratic country for most of its life and the country had little to attract the outside world due to its tarnished image. It has not been able to capitalize on its predominant religion, Islam, which has peaceful tenets, to attract the world. Rather Islam has been abused by the extremists in the country to make political gains, which has tarnished the image of the religion and the country both. In the educational sphere, Pakistan's institutions do not stand a chance with the Indian counterparts. Pakistan's Lollywood produces films that have not proliferated like India's. Therefore, even though the India-Pakistan composite dialogue has started, not much has been accomplished which can be alluded to as a great success story.

The primary policy implications of the paper are the following:

Protracted conflict rivals can be partners if both hard and soft powers are used effectively and where a shared interest for accommodation exists. Whether or not such accommodation will terminate the conflict is unclear, but states are unlikely to remain rivals indefinitely on some levels. With this, their security issues may be resolved in course of time once their economic partnership is institutionalized.

Soft power alone is not enough to bring about accommodation between long-running rivals. Nuclear weapons may help in creating an atmosphere to start using soft power for attracting the rival states to employ engagement strategies. The value of nuclear weapons lies in securing the weaker party to the conflict and bringing the parties to consider other options for the development of partnership. From this perspective, the acquisition of nuclear weapons may foster strategic partnership.

Regime type does not determine whether or not accommodation/partnership will occur between rivals. A democratic state and a non-democratic state can be partners if they can attract each other through their soft power. Ultimately, interstate stability may not be dependent on regime types.