

Soft Power: An Instrument of the Global South

Soft power as a concept was introduced by David Nye as „the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than through coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced.“ (Nye 2004) Soft power may be regarded as a useful form of power for many countries (Su Changhe 2013) not able to wield hard or smart power (Nye 2013).

Currently the soft power and soft power efforts of the countries of the global South are represented by studies on individual countries but studies looking comparatively at different countries, thus, allowing for an understanding of these tools beyond the global North (from North America, via Europe to Russia) and its use by the states studied.

There is a distinction to be made between soft *diplomacy* and soft *power*. Soft diplomacy is understood as the mechanisms used by states and governments to exert influence. Soft power includes non-governmental actors who operate in the framework set by soft diplomatic initiatives and beyond. The edited volume will cover the soft power/diplomacy efforts of states like

- Indonesia
- Qatar
- Saudi-Arabia
- Turkey
- United Arab Emirates

These states use a variety of means to project influence globally and, esp., in the Islamic world; although the analysis should not be restricted to religious aspects.. Esp., its institutions and transnational institutions related to it (MWL, R20, IF20) are of interest. A analysis of this means in a comparative way allows for an understanding of the specifics of these policies and its role in international diplomacy. The comparative analysis of these case studies will deepen our understanding of these efforts beyond mere politics of influence.

Other case studies that will broaden the scope of analysis may include

- China, as the emerging global power at par with existing super powers
- India, being of more influence due to its increasing economic power and using tools related to the Hindutva governments concepts of Hinduism and including the Muslim minority in new concepts of spiritual soft power
- South Africa, as a representative of the increasing role of the African continent combining policies related to Africa with global politics (for instance using law as an instrument of soft power in the case of Palestine)
- Brazil, as a representative of South America and consciously using the BRICS framework

The intention of this edited volume is to understand this fast-paced development and contribute to an emerging theory of Islamic soft power as a sub-category of international soft power and soft diplomacy.

The edited volume *Soft Power: An Instrument of the Global South* welcomes contributions from disciplines like Studies of Religion, Political Studies, Diplomatic Studies, Law, Social Anthropology, Cultural Studies, History, and other fields related to the study of Soft Power. Case studies from other countries accepting the framework of the volume are welcome.

Submit the abstracts until September 2025, accepted abstracts will be notified in October 2025. Papers should be submitted until January 2026.

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