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# China's Soft Power Offensive in the United States: Cultural Diplomacy, Media Campaigning, and Congressional Lobbying

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**CLAREMONT McKENNA COLLEGE**

**CHINA'S SOFT POWER OFFENSIVE IN THE UNITED STATES: CULTURAL  
DIPLOMACY, MEDIA CAMPAIGNING, AND CONGRESSIONAL LOBBYING**

SUBMITTED TO

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BY

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As China's economic and military power develops and expands, it has been focusing recent efforts on upgrading its soft power in order to quell concerns and apprehensions about its rise. As the two most powerful nations in the world, China and the United States have both attached great importance to Sino-U.S. relations, recognizing that the structure of the future global community will be largely dependent upon these two countries effectively collaborating in shaping the global structure and improving global issues. Facing an American public that views China as a threat and competitor, as well as Western media that consistently paints China in a negative light, the Chinese Communist Party has realized the need to reach out to the American populace and facilitate people-to-people ties, increasing its soft power in the country and thus facilitating a stronger bilateral relationship. This thesis reviews three areas of China's soft power push in the United States: cultural diplomacy, which includes creating more educational opportunities, building Confucius Institutes, organizing cultural events, and increasing diplomatic outreach; media campaigning and propaganda through news, television, radio, and the internet; and congressional lobbying.

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## INTRODUCTION: US-CHINA RELATIONS

Every age has seen the rising and falling of great powers, the constant struggle between nations of comparable strength and force, and the strained efforts between countries for cooperation in a global world where every nation state is fighting to secure one's own interests and national security. In the past, nations used their military might and strength to conquer other countries and add to their empire. Traditionally, a country's power has been measured by its military capability, its competency fighting in a war and its probability of victory. A given definition of power is "the ability to effect the outcomes you want and, if necessary, to change the behavior of others to make this happen."<sup>1</sup> According to this view, a country's ability to force another country to behave in a certain way or give up its sovereignty is representative of that nation's power. Most people associate a country's power with its military might and capability, which is known as hard power. However, in the past few centuries as countries have settled into their definite locations and territorial warfare became less frequent, the largest priority has been to protect one's own territory from foreign economic and political imperialism. In addition to one's defense capability and military power, another useful way to secure one's national security is through alliances with other countries. Since the end of World War II and throughout the

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<sup>1</sup> (Gray, 2011)

succeeding Cold War, the world began dividing itself into two different teams, on one side were the U.S.-led Western democracies and on the other were the Soviet Union-led communist regimes.<sup>2</sup>

Although there have still been multiple wars around the world, in the past few centuries there has been a gradual shift in international relations from the use of brute force and manpower, or in other words hard power, to what has been the combination of both soft and hard power, the former being preferable and the latter used as a last resort. In today's day and age, the term hard power not only refers to a nation's military stockpile and defense system, but also refers to economic tools such as sanctioning. However, the other type of power, and one that is growing increasingly more common and useful in today's international sphere, is called soft power. Soft power was first termed by Harvard's Joseph S. Nye, Jr., and refers to a state's ability to use cultural and political values in order to attract allies.<sup>3</sup> Joseph Nye deliberates that soft power is the ability to obtain what you want through cooption and attraction rather than the hard power of coercion and payment.<sup>4</sup> Soft power is much cheaper than military power, using values, ideas, and practices to influence and persuade other countries.<sup>5</sup> Soft power tools ranges from spreading democratic principles and assisting countries using humanitarian aid to spreading influence through music, movies, and art. Basically, soft power tools can be considered anything that leads to promotion and increased attractiveness of a nation, thereby shaping the preferences of others.<sup>6</sup>

In the current era, there are many complex bilateral and multilateral relationships composing the world of international relations. Arguably one of the most intricate, interdependent, contentious, and important bilateral relationships in the whole world is that of

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2 (Spiegel, Taw, Matthews, & Williams, 2012)

3 (Spiegel, Taw, Matthews, & Williams, 2012)

4 (Li & Worm, 2010)

5 (Gray, 2011)

6 (Szczudlik-Tatar, 2010)

the United States of America and the People's Democratic Republic of China. Ever since President Richard Nixon's rapprochement to China from 1969 to 1972 and the official establishment of ambassadorial diplomatic relations in 1979,<sup>7</sup> the two countries have seen forty years of ups and downs in a delicate relationship that has been at times forcefully held together out of mere necessity. China and the US are often described as having a love-hate relationship; on the one hand, the two countries firmly disagree with many aspects of the other party's policies and principles, while on the other hand they both need the other for economic stability and national security. Economically, the two nations are currently interdependent to such an extent that a small action or decision taken in one country can have tremendous impacts on the other. China is the United States' 2<sup>nd</sup> largest trading partner<sup>8</sup>, serving as the United States 3<sup>rd</sup> largest goods exports market and largest supplier of goods imports.<sup>9</sup> On the flip side, the United States is China's largest goods exports market and 3<sup>rd</sup> largest supplier of goods imports.<sup>10</sup> In addition to a very important economic relationship, the United States and China are essential to one another politically. The two countries share a large amount of power internationally, and both have membership in many of the same international institutions, such as the World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, and United Nations, both being a permanent member in the Security Council. Since the 1980's, China and the U.S. have established more than 60 dialogue mechanisms that cover a large array of different topics, including political, economic, military, educational, scientific and technological, cultural, counterterrorism, nonproliferation, and regional and international affairs, as well as exchanges between the two legislatures.<sup>11</sup> Some of these mechanisms include the Strategic and Economic Dialogues, the Joint Commission on

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7 (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, 2012)

8 (Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, 2012)

9 (The World Factbook , 2013)

10 (The World Factbook , 2013)

11 (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, 2012)

Commerce and Trade, the High-Level Consultation on People-to-People Exchanges, and the Joint Commission on Science and Technology Cooperation.<sup>12</sup>

Fortunately, the two nations share several of the same concerns internationally and have several overlapping goals, necessitating cooperation and engagement on a number of different international issues. These issues range from North Korea, Iran, and Syria to global warming, HIV/AIDS, and energy security.<sup>13</sup> The United States and China are neither allies nor enemies, but necessary partners working to shape and create a global world of peace, stability, and order. However, there are a few factors threatening and prohibiting a stronger alliance between the two great powers. These factors include historical incidences, differences in domestic and international politics, and negative domestic public opinion.

#### ROCKY PAST RELATIONSHIP

Since establishing diplomatic relations in the late 1970's, the United States and China have seen numerous incidents in the past that have tested and threatened to break the relationship. When President Richard Nixon began considering normalization with China, he knew there would be strong opposition and backlash from both Republican and Democratic parties.<sup>14</sup> After all, China was a Communist regime, an ally of the Soviet Union, helped North Korea during the Korean War, and vowed to annex Taiwan, all of which were viewed negatively in the American people's eyes and led to hostile perceptions toward China. In efforts to seal a diplomatic relationship with the People's Republic of China, in 1979 the United States officially terminated diplomatic relations with Taiwan, withdrew military forces from Taiwan, and terminated the

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12 (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, 2012)

13 (Bergsten, Freeman, Lardy, & Mitchell, 2008)

14 (Garison, 2005)

Mutual Defense Treaty.<sup>15</sup> After normalizing relations with China, many different incidences exacerbated the negative perception of China in American's eyes. The One Child Policy implemented in 1978 was seen by Americans as a cruel and unreasonable infringement on human rights and personal freedom.<sup>16</sup> The constant struggle between the people of Tibet and the PRC (People's Democratic Republic of China) was seen as an infringement on Tibetan's religious freedom and rights. The infamous Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 sparked vehement American domestic opposition against any kind of relationship with China, and both Congress and the public pushed for stricter punishment toward the Communist regime.<sup>17</sup> In 1992, China's Deng Xiaoping and Russia's Borin Yeltsin signed twenty framework agreements, establishing friendly relations and military cooperation, causing Americans to be more and more skeptical and opposed to the Sino-American relationship. China and Russia continued to work together and further solidify political and strategic cooperation, further evolving the Sino-Soviet alliance.<sup>18</sup> On the other side, the United States' actions have also caused much Chinese domestic opposition through the years. Incidences such as the "accidental" NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in 1999, the invasion of Iraq and continual interference in other country's affairs, arms sales and support of Taiwan, and political backing of Japan are all themes that do not resonate well with the Chinese public,<sup>19</sup> receiving severe criticism.

## DIFFERENCES IN POLITICS AND STANCE

The United States and China have fundamental differences in culture and history that make it inevitable for dissension and conflict to occur in carrying out foreign policy. China has a

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15 (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, 2012)

16 (Bergsten, Freeman, Lardy, & Mitchell, 2008)

17 (Garison, 2005)

18 (Nemets, 2006)

19 (Garison, 2005)

long history of foreign imperialistic powers exploiting the country and extorting its resources. Since the First Opium War against Great Britain in the mid 1800's, China went through 100 years of suffering and exploitation caused by outside forces, with many Western powers fighting over China's resources and exploiting China's cheap work labor. As a result, China's foreign policy is strictly anti-aggression and anti-imperialism, taking a hard stance against interference in other country's affairs. Chinese foreign policy officially has five main principles that reflect its emphasis on non-interference and peaceful coexistence. These principles were established when the People's Republic of China and India signed an Agreement on Trade and Communications between the Tibet region on April 29th, 1954, and have been the pillar for Chinese foreign policy ever since.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, China has supported many US-backed resolutions in the United Nations and has joined in many of the same international institutions, actively working together with the U.S. on a number of different issues. However, China has also blocked a number of U.S.-backed United Nations resolutions that they viewed as too imperialistic or aggressive, especially recent resolutions against Iran and Syria that have called for increased aggression, tough sanctioning, and forced regime change.

In all actuality, the United States and China have a large number of overlapping goals and principles. Neither side wants nuclear proliferation or warfare, and both want a stable and peaceful global world. The consistent divergence between the two countries is rooted in the means of achieving a certain goal, with the United States more willing to use force and receive a quick response and China preferring to use diplomacy and negotiation, willing to wait a long time for results even if it means at the cost of more lives during a war or rebellion. Due to this different approach to international politics, the Chinese public sees the U.S. as domineering and overbearing, deliberately and unreasonably interfering in other country's domestic affairs. The

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20 (Ghali, 2004)

U.S. public, on the other hand, sees China as unjust and inhumane, only caring about economic profits and power, insensitive to the oppression of the common people.

## THE PUBLIC OPINION

Today there is much contention and criticism between both the two governments and the people of each country, especially in light of various complications in the Middle East within the past two decades. Misperceptions exist on both sides and the U.S. and Chinese governments know that in order to have a stronger alliance, it is necessary to increase understanding; not only cultural, but also a fundamental understanding of the history and mentality that forms the basis behind each country's strategic actions and policies. History is a very important factor that has the largest impact on any country's current stance. For example, China's history of foreign imperialist powers exploiting the country has caused it to take a very anti-aggression and anti-interference stance on political issues. On the other hand, the United States' history encompasses a much more active theme, with the common people taking the initiative to leave what they saw as an unjust British government and setting up their own idealistic government to be run by the people and for the people. Due to the fact the United States underwent a long war before gaining independence, the American people believe that sometimes a war and period of struggle is necessary before being able to enjoy a brighter future. For the Chinese, on the other hand, it is much better not to "rock the boat", and maintaining stability is the primary goal. A war or forced aggression not only leads to instability but also hampers the chances for peace, and must be avoided at all costs.

Due to China's centralized authoritarian rule, all laws are subject to the leaders and all national decision making happens by the nine or so Party members that make up the Politburo

Standing Committee, the top political leadership of China.<sup>21</sup> While China's leaders are somewhat sensitive toward public opinion, the people essentially have no say in national decision making, and leaders can make decisions rather freely. The situation in the United States, however, is much different. Since the power and responsibility of the United States government is split into three branches, national decisions not only happen at the executive level but are also largely influenced by the legislative branch. In addition, due to the American democratic style of government, the public can influence these decisions. In light of these facts, even if certain members of the government have a deep understanding of another country's culture and reasons for its stance, cooperation and engagement with the United States not only needs support of the executive branch but also of Congress, and essentially of the public. China is not oblivious to this well-known fact, and both the United States and China both realize that a stronger relationship necessitates deeper understanding of the other side, not only at a governmental level but also among the peoples of each country.

As a whole, the Chinese understand American history and culture far more than Americans understand China, although it is limited and not very comprehensive. Chinese students learn about American history and all are required start learning English from kindergarten and continue learning all the way through high school,<sup>22</sup> a process which inevitably allows students to gain a basic understanding of Western culture. The Chinese watch American sports such as the NBA, watch American movies and TV shows, buy American products and name brands, and Chinese youth enjoy listening to American music. On the other side, however, Chinese history and culture courses are electives in some high schools and colleges and are not exactly considered popular. Mandarin language is also not a very popular choice among k-12

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21 (O'Neil, Fields, & Share, 2010)

22 (Ward, 2010)

students due to its level of difficulty. According to a 2008 study, Mandarin is only the 7<sup>th</sup> most studied foreign language in the United States, attracting only 0.67% of foreign language students.<sup>23</sup> Another study in 2006 showed that only about 51,582 students in American colleges and universities study Chinese, again in 7<sup>th</sup> place behind Spanish, French, German, American Sign Language, Italian, and Japanese.<sup>24</sup> Although the number of high school and university students studying Mandarin has increased largely since the time these studies were produced, the gap between Chinese students studying English and American students studying Chinese is still very large. There is a very small minority of Americans willing to listen to music in a foreign language other than Spanish, and most Americans prefer to watch American movies and TV shows. The majority of American people's knowledge of China is at a very superficial level, focusing on such stereotypical things as Chinese food, China town, Kung Fu, and Chinese porcelain tea sets.

Coupled with the lack of interest in Chinese culture is a very discontented public whose views on China are shaped largely by the Western media, which constantly paints a primarily negative and prejudiced picture of the authoritarian regime. Recent media highlights have focused on China thwarting U.S. efforts to stop Iranian uranium enrichment which is a threat to U.S. national security, prohibiting the United States and allied forces from aggressive Syrian intervention, allowing North Korea to keep its nuclear weapons, China hackers hacking sensitive American databases, the Chinese government deliberately keeping the Yuan undervalued in the trading market, and China's extremely high levels of pollution. With these negative themes constantly resonating within the American public's mind, the Chinese government has realized the urgent need to send a positive message to the American people, and has recently focused a lot

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23 (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2011)

24 (Dube, 2012)

of its recent efforts toward attracting more American interest. The biggest problem is lack of trust. According to a survey released in 2012, 66% of Americans see China as a competitor and threat to people's jobs, 15% see China as an enemy, and only 16% view China as a partner.<sup>25</sup><sup>26</sup> 78% of Americans consider the large amount of American debt held by China as a very serious problem, and half of Americans view China's negative impact on the global environment, cyber-attacks on the U.S., and China's human rights policies as all very serious problems.<sup>27</sup> China is seen as spoiling the international environment and as an enemy of human rights both domestically and internationally, as demonstrated by its support for regimes in Myanmar and Sudan,<sup>28</sup> and for its cooperation with regimes committing extremely severe human rights abuses.

Facing a largely disgruntled American public, China has realized it will need to take greater steps toward changing American misperception and opinion from unfavorable to favorable. Chia's new leadership attaches great importance to the U.S. and wants to see further cooperation between the two countries on tackling world issues.<sup>29</sup> In a recent meeting between China's President Xi Jinping and the U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, Xi Jinping states that China and the U.S. should advance "a new type of relations between major powers that features equality, mutual trust, tolerance, mutual learning, cooperation and common prosperity."<sup>30</sup> China and the United States both agree that deepening cultural exchanges is an important and essential factor in order to facilitate smoother collaboration between the two countries, and China has stressed the importance of having more people-to-people exchange.<sup>31</sup> The Chinese government has focused on three main areas in an attempt to reach out to the American public. These three

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25 (Hartig, 2012)

26 (Pew Research Center , 2012)

27 (Pew Research Center , 2012)

28 (Hartig, 2012)

29 (Embassy of the People's Republic of China , 2013)

30 (Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 2013)

31 (Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 2013)

areas are through the spreading of cultural influence, media campaigning, and congressional lobbying.

## CHAPTER 1: CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

According to Joseph Nye, the man who coined the term “soft power”, there are three sources of soft power of a country. These three sources include: culture, which are the elements that attract others; values, including political values in its internal and external policy; and foreign policies.<sup>32</sup> China has gradually adopted a soft power strategy in the pursuit of its “peaceful rise”, and China has noticed that culture has been playing an increasingly predominant role in today’s global competition for comprehensive national power.<sup>33</sup> Hu Jintao has stated that the increase in China’s international status and influence will have to be demonstrated not only in hard power but also in soft power, and that how to improve China’s soft power through cultural development is one major practical issue facing the country.<sup>34</sup> Spreading cultural influence assists in shaping a country’s image. Image-making is essential in international relations, and has been steadily increasing as countries reach out to foreign publics.<sup>35</sup> Cultural influence is one of the most significant aspects of soft power and is usually what comes to mind when thinking of soft power mechanisms. American soft power influence has spread all throughout the world. Whether it be through companies such as Apple, Microsoft, McDonalds,

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32 (Szczudlik-Tatar, 2010)

33 (Li & Worm, 2010)

34 (Li & Worm, 2010)

35 (Hartig, 2012)

Subway, and Starbucks or through Hollywood blockbusters and TV series, all share a piece of American culture with its consumers. American hip-hop, pop, and rap music are very popular among foreign youth, as well as American clothing brands. The U.S. is considered the world's center for popular culture production, accounting for 42.6% of the global cultural market, while China lags at a mere 1.5%.<sup>36</sup> Can China compete?

In actuality, China possesses an extremely attractive culture that is considered to be distinct and unique worldwide. Due in large part to China's 5,000 year history, China's cultural resources are plentiful, and include Chinese language, calligraphy, philosophy, music, movies, arts, architecture, food, medicine, martial arts, and China towns in major cities all over the world.<sup>37</sup> Even with all these resources, China continues to lag far behind the U.S., UK, and Japan in terms of its cultural influence overseas.<sup>38</sup> In efforts to boost the spread of its culture internationally, in 2006 China launched its first National Five-year Plan for Cultural Development.<sup>39</sup> According to this program, the government planned to meet the rising demand and increase the global competitiveness of Chinese cultural merchandize by increasing investment in cultural projects, reforming the way they operate, and expanding the quantity and quality of cultural products.<sup>40</sup>

This plan stresses that in order to increase understanding of China overseas, cultural exchanges with the rest of the world must be increased.<sup>41</sup> This plan also proposed the promotion of holding cultural activities abroad as well as the promotion of Chinese cultural products and services through overseas film, television and art festivals, book fairs and expositions, as well as

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36 (Li & Worm, 2010)

37 (Li & Worm, 2010)

38 (Li & Worm, 2010)

39 (Li & Worm, 2010)

40 (Xinhua News Agency, 2006)

41 (Xinhua News Agency, 2006)

seeking to adjust the style of radio and television productions to meet the demands and tastes of overseas listeners and viewers.<sup>42</sup> Since this 2006 initiative, many other measures have been taken in efforts to further improve Chinese influence abroad.

With respect to cultural diplomacy, China employs two different strategies. The first strategy is “inviting in”, in which China conducts cultural activities within the country and creates conditions that attract foreigners to China, who in turn report back to their own country and spread the message of Chinese culture. The second strategy is termed “going out”, and refers to conducting activities in other countries, targeting an audience outside China. The goal is to reach those with no interest or superficial knowledge in China in order to increase their understanding about the country and reshape their views, replacing negative with positive propaganda.<sup>43</sup> Three important channels used by the Chinese Communist Party in spreading its cultural influence abroad is through education, especially by the use of Confucius institutes, by hosting cultural activities, and by diplomatic outreach.

## EDUCATION

There is a massive imbalance between Chinese and American students when it comes to language study and education abroad. A recent study showed that ten times more Chinese students study abroad in the United States than American students study in China, and 600 times more Chinese study English than Americans study Mandarin.<sup>44</sup> In the academic year of 2011 there were almost 200,000 Chinese students enrolled in U.S. educational institutions, an increase of 23% from the previous year.<sup>45</sup> Many Chinese students flock to the U.S. in order to receive an

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42 (Xinhua News Agency, 2006)

43 (Szcudlik-Tatar, 2010)

44 (U.S. Department of State, 2013)

45 (Quartz, 2012)

education that promotes and develops creativity, independent thinking, entrepreneurship, U.S. education is a good way to ensure job opportunities in foreign corporations back home, and is a way to skip the dreaded Gaokao (higher level entrance exam).<sup>46</sup> In contrast, the academic year of 2011 saw only 26,000 U.S. students traveling to China for study abroad and other educational opportunities.<sup>47</sup> To fight this imbalance and improve cultural ties, the Chinese government has worked together with the United States government to promote the study of Mandarin and studying abroad in China by creating funding and development opportunities, an effort helped and supported by the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the U.S. Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Defense, to name a few.<sup>48</sup>

In 2009 President Barack Obama, in cooperation with the Chinese government, announced the 100,000 Strong Initiative, which was officially launched in May of 2010 by then Secretary of State Hilary Clinton.<sup>49</sup> The 100,000 Strong Initiative has a goal of sending at least 100,000 American students to study in China by the year 2014, aiming to increase the number as well as the diversity of U.S. students studying in China.<sup>50</sup> In addition to developing specific opportunities funding sources for underrepresented students to study in China, the initiative also aims to equip students with the tools to help in managing the growing political, economic and cultural ties between the United States and China that will be needed in the future.<sup>51</sup> Recently, in January of this year, former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton announced the creation of the 100,000 Strong Foundation, a nonprofit organization that aims to enhance and expand opportunities for US students to study abroad in China and learn Mandarin, further facilitating

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46 (Quartz, 2012)

47 (Witherell & Mokha, 2013)

48 (U.S. Department of State, 2013)

49 (Witherell & Mokha, 2013)

50 (Witherell & Mokha, 2013)

51 (U.S. Department of State, 2013)

the realization of the goals laid out in the 100,000 Strong Initiative.<sup>52</sup> The declared mission of the foundation is to strengthen the U.S.-China strategic relationship through study abroad.<sup>53</sup>

China has also been actively employing its “inviting in” and “going out” method within the United States to achieve these goals of stimulating increased educational exchange between the two nations. Under the above mentioned “inviting in” strategy of cultural diplomacy, China primarily uses educational means, such as projects to improve the quality of education at Chinese universities in order to attract more foreign students, the development of Chinese language study programs for foreigners, educational offers and grants for those willing to study in China, and government program scholarships.<sup>54</sup> In 2005, China announced an initiative intended to boost Chinese teaching in American universities and language institutes both in America and around the world.<sup>55</sup> This initiative included eight measures, of which four measures were immediately worked on.<sup>56</sup> The first measure was to speed up the process of building Confucius Institutes overseas which serves as a base for Chinese language teaching and cultural exchange by giving non-degree courses.<sup>57</sup> Second was to further develop multi-media and audio-visual teaching materials like "Chengo Chinese" and "Great Wall Chinese." Third was to launch the Advanced Placement (AP) Chinese Program in 2,500 American universities in 2006. Lastly was using programs such as "Volunteer Program for International Chinese Teachers" and "Measures for Certifying Teachers' Ability to Teach Chinese as a Foreign Language" to help train the teaching staff.<sup>58</sup> Other measures included enlarging the test question database of the Chinese Proficiency Test, helping overseas universities build Chinese language libraries, donating Chinese books to

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52 (Witherell & Mokha, 2013)

53 (Billings, 2013)

54 (Szczudlik-Tatar, 2010)

55 (Pan, 2006)

56 (Xinhua News, 2005)

57 (Xinhua News, 2005)

58 (Xinhua News, 2005)

primary and secondary schools giving Chinese courses, and further increase the competition of Chinese proficiency tests for foreign college students.<sup>59</sup>

## CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES

In its “going out” strategy, the most significant initiative producing the largest amount of visible results is the network of Confucian Institutes that have been developed since 2004, all promoting the teaching of Chinese language abroad.<sup>60</sup> These Confucius Institutes operate under the Ministry of Education and the Chinese National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (Hanban).<sup>61</sup> Once a year the Confucius Institutes have Chinese proficiency competitions for foreign students, and winners of the national rounds take part in the final competition in China. These institutions also operate as centers for the HSK exam, which is an international Chinese proficiency exam that many students hoping to study abroad in China can take to assess their skill level.<sup>62</sup> Since 2004, China has established over 700 Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms in almost 100 different countries around the world promoting not only language but also Chinese culture, simultaneously shaping a new image of China.<sup>63</sup> The first Confucius Institute in the United States was founded in 2004 at the University of Maryland at College Park, and since then has spread to private institutions like Stanford and Columbia University as well as a large number of public institutions, including Universities of Alaska in Anchorage, Delaware, Manoa in Hawaii, Kansas, Boston in Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Dallas in Texas, Toledo, Utah, Middle Tennessee, Portland, Kennesaw, San

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59 (Xinhua News, 2005)

60 (Szcudlik-Tatar, 2010)

61 (Szcudlik-Tatar, 2010)

62 (Szcudlik-Tatar, 2010)

63 (Hartig, 2012)

Francisco, and Wayne State Universities.<sup>64</sup> Altogether within the United States, there are currently about 70 Confucius Institutes that are hosted by about 60 universities,<sup>65,66</sup> not taking into account the various Confucius classrooms hosted by high schools across the nation.

Confucius Institutes are generally seen in a positive light, especially for universities struggling financially. The host university of a Confucius Institute must provide a faculty member to serve as administrator, and subsequently China's Hanban provides not only money for the director's salary but also sends over trained and financed language teachers and textbooks.<sup>67</sup> The school gets \$100,000-\$150,000 in funding, teaching materials, and the chance to apply for additional money for specific programs.<sup>68</sup> Hanban coordinates the cooperation between the partner institutions in China and abroad which run Confucius Institutes, and approves applications for the establishment of new Confucius Institutes as well as supervising their operations and quality management.<sup>69</sup>

Confucius Institutes have been rapidly growing in number and popularity over recent years. The total number of registered students in Confucius Institutes has risen to 360,000 over the year 2010, a 56% increase.<sup>70</sup> Part-time and full-time teachers have reached 4,000.<sup>71</sup> These institutes provide opportunities globally for people to learn about the Chinese language and culture, not only providing language courses but also hosting cultural events like exhibitions, film screenings, readings, concerts and lectures.<sup>72</sup>

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64 (Redden, 2012)

65 (Guttenplan, 2012)

66 (Fischer, 2012)

67 (Guttenplan, 2012)

68 (Guttenplan, 2012)

69 (Hartig, 2012)

70 (Hartig, 2012)

71 (Hartig, 2012)

72 (Hartig, 2012)

## CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

In addition to educational opportunities, China also hosts many cultural events around the world that further facilitate the spread and attraction of its unique and ancient culture. China undertakes over 1,300 cultural exchanges a year, sponsoring “Year of the Chinese Culture”, “Chinese cultural festival”, Chinese New Year celebrations, and many more.<sup>73</sup> Some of the channels through which China spreads its influence to foreign audiences include organizing festivals of Chinese culture and exhibitions of Chinese art, participation in international film and theatrical contests and book fairs, as well as the China Book International program to support the translation of Chinese literature into foreign languages.<sup>74</sup>

In addition, there are many Chinatowns all over the world. The United States has numerous Chinatowns throughout the country, including in such major cities as New York City, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Boston and Chicago.<sup>75</sup> These Chinatowns are popular places to host Chinese cultural events, both large and small scale, as well as a good place to go for those looking to get a taste of China without leaving the country. In these Chinatowns one can eat at many authentic restaurants hosting a myriad of Chinese cuisines, shop for Chinese trinkets and commodities in small gift shops, buy Chinese movies, and visit art shops. As for cultural events, each Chinatown has unique celebrations and activities open for all to participate. For example, in New York there are large and flourishing Chinatowns both in Manhattan and Queens that host many parades and festivals.<sup>76</sup> San Francisco, which has one of the largest Chinatowns in the United States, hosts a flower and street fair in honor of the new year, a Miss Chinatown U.S. pageant, a Chinese New Year Treasure Hunt, and a Chinese

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73 (Li & Worm, 2010)

74 (Szcudlik-Tatar, 2010)

75 (Polland, 2013)

76 (Polland, 2013)

New Year 10k run.<sup>77</sup> Los Angeles is known for its large Golden Dragon Parade and the Great Chinatown Hunt, as well as many festivals held at various museums. Washington, D.C. has a large variety of events including brunches, cooking classes, and parades with kung fu demonstrations, lion dancers and live music.<sup>78</sup>

#### EMBASSY DIPLOMATIC OUTREACH

Chinese embassies in the United States have also actively played a significant role in spreading Chinese culture and reaching out to the public through a variety of different methods. For example, occasionally Chinese diplomats will be asked to give speeches at universities. Last year in April, Political Counselor of the Chinese Embassy in the United States Mr. Zhou Jingxing was invited to speak at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service of Georgetown University. He talked about China-US relations and Chinese foreign policy, as well as answering questions on China-U.S. economic relations and other issues.<sup>79</sup> In 2011, Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission of the Chinese Embassy in the United States Mr. Deng Hongbo, delivered a speech at the Symposium on China-US relations hosted by the Lou Frey Institute of Politics and Government at the University of Central Florida (UCF). Minister Deng talked about the progress and development of China-U.S. relations, not only trade and economic relations but also more locally through people-to people exchange. He emphasized the need to deepen mutual understanding and trust, cooperating more closely internationally and regionally while respecting the other side's core interests, properly handling differences, and developing a cooperative partnership based on mutual respect and mutual benefit. The audience included over 800 people,

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77 (Polland, 2013)

78 (Polland, 2013)

79 (Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 2012)

including former U.S. Congressman Lou Frey, representatives of the political, business and academic communities of Orlando and the faculty and students of UCF.<sup>80</sup>

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80 (Embassy of the People's Republic of China , 2011)

## CHAPTER 2: MEDIA CAMPAIGNING

While cultural diplomacy is defined as “an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment by making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas and/or facilitating cultural transmission abroad”, public diplomacy is a much broader term that encompasses not only cultural diplomacy but also exchange diplomacy, listening, advocacy, and international broadcasting.<sup>81</sup> Public diplomacy is a country’s engagement and communication with foreign publics, and involves the cultivation and influence of foreign public opinion in order to achieve the desired goals of the host country.<sup>82</sup> A main channel through which public diplomacy is implemented is through the media, which is another important soft power instrument classifiable as a “going out” strategy tool.<sup>83</sup> Media comes in many different forms, including newspapers, television, websites, radio, and magazines. China refers to all media work abroad as *wai xuan*, or “external propaganda.”<sup>84</sup> This propaganda is reflective of and directly accountable to the Chinese Communist Party. China knows that the world views its “peaceful rise” with suspicion and mistrust. Americans see China as a threat to both economic and national security, and still hold many negative opinions of the country and its Communist government.

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81 (Hartig, 2012)

82 (Hartig, 2012)

83 (Szczudlik-Tatar, 2010)

84 (Bequelin, 2009)

American media consistently portrays a negative image of China and write stories that reinforce the stereotype of China as having a corrupted authoritarian government and as being a threat to the United States' security interests and U.S. citizen's jobs. In order to offset its negative image as portrayed by the Western media, China has stepped up its external propaganda in recent years using public diplomacy to introduce China to the world and help foreigners understand what it calls the "real China", not just the negative stereotype painted by the media.<sup>85</sup> The Chinese Communist Party's propaganda efforts have mainly been in the direction of reassurance, dispelling concerns about China's growing economy, military, and its increasing political and diplomatic influence.<sup>86</sup> The four top agencies that have been selected in the plan as image-shapers to represent the voice of China are China Central Television (CCTV), China Radio International (CRI), Xinhua News Agency and the China Daily newspaper. In 2009-2010 these media outlets received \$8.7 billion by the government to portray China's point of view to the world.<sup>87</sup> The Chinese government also actively recruits foreigners to work for these organizations as local country experts, although the content of all produced media still receives restrictions by the government who actively monitors everything sent abroad.<sup>88</sup> If the goal of Western media is to write about sensational and controversial news stories to rake in large profits, the heart of China's strategy is to manage perceptions and give readers a look at world affair from the Chinese point of view.<sup>89</sup>

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85 (Hartig, 2012)

86 (Newmyer, 2009)

87 (Shambaugh, 2010)

88 (Myerson, 2010)

89 (Newmyer, 2009)

## THE NEWS

Immediately after the PRC's former President Hu Jintao's accession to power in 2002, he initiated a multibillion dollar media expansion overseas in a strategic effort to globalize Chinese state media and make "the voice of China better heard in international affairs."<sup>90</sup> Since Hu Jintao's push in 2002, Chinese state broadcasters have significantly strengthened foreign news operations. An example of such include China's official news agency Xinhua, which as of 2012 had set up over 150 branches overseas and intends to increase the number to 200.<sup>91</sup> Chinese state broadcasters have also enhanced foreign language services, with many online news websites including versions not only in the English language but also Spanish, French, Korean, Japanese, Arabic, and Russian. State broadcasters have also established the supporting bureaucracy to get the government's message out swiftly when news breaks.<sup>92</sup> President Hu again emphasized the need for China to increase its soft power in an address to the 17<sup>th</sup> National Party Congress in 2007, and in recent years there have been more direct and aggressive measures taken in setting up spheres of influence abroad and promoting awareness of Chinese news agencies.<sup>93</sup> Four influential news organs include Xinhua, The People's Daily, China Daily, and The Global Times.

Xinhua News Agency is the largest and most influential news agency in China, founded in the 1930s by the Chinese Communist Party and since then has served as a primary mouthpiece for the government.<sup>94</sup> Today it is the principal press agency for China and the chief source of news stories for other news agencies in the country, which get most of their material from Xinhua. Xinhua News Agency established Xinhuanet on November 7, 1997 to serve as an online news provider of the agency, and began providing around-the-clock news releases that aim to

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90 (Bequelin, 2009)

91 (Kan, 2012)

92 (Bequelin, 2009)

93 (Shifei, 2011)

94 (Troianovski, 2010)

shape public opinion domestically and improve China's image abroad.<sup>95</sup> Xinhuanet is run in eight different languages, including Chinese (simplified and traditional), English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Japanese and Tibetan. Xinhuanet releases 15,000 news stories a day, in which 12,000 are about China, and serves as an important tool in portraying China's politics, economy, society, science and technology, education, and culture to the world.<sup>96</sup> In 2010 Xinhua News Agency launched a 24-hour global English TV News channel in more aggressive attempt to push soft power and increase its influence worldwide.<sup>97</sup> Xinhua News Agency has targeted the United States specifically, and has an office on the top floor of a skyscraper in Times Square, right next to media giant Thomson Reuters. In August of 2011 Xinhua News Agency rented out one of the highest-profile billboards at the north end of New York City's Times Square, flashing its brightly lit emblem to the estimated half a million people passing through the area every day, comfortably situated right next to big brand names like Coca-Cola, Prudential, and Samsung .<sup>98</sup>

People's Daily is also another very important news source and tool used by the Chinese government to influence foreign audiences. People's Daily is the newspaper mostly identified with the Chinese Communist Party, and was managed by the Central Committee of the party since the early days of the People's Republic of China, playing a major role in spreading Maoist ideas and stimulating the Cultural Revolution.<sup>99</sup> Just like Xinhua News Agency, The People's Daily has an online version of the national newspaper called the People's Daily Online. While Xinhua News Agency has occupied Times Square, People's Daily Online has an office in New York's Empire State Building.<sup>100</sup>

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95 (Xinhuanet, 2013)

96 (Xinhuanet, 2013)

97 (ABC Radio Australia, 2010)

98 (Shifei, 2011)

99 (Thinking Chinese, 2012)

100 (Shifei, 2011)

China Daily launched a U.S. edition specifically tailored for an American public in 2009, and has offices in six major U.S. cities of New York, Washington DC, San Francisco, Chicago, Los Angeles and Houston.<sup>101</sup> China Daily features reports of local events related to China in the U.S., has analysis and opinion pieces from both American and Chinese thinkers and business leaders, and also features personal profiles of those working to increase mutual understanding between China and the United States. This U.S. edition was targeted especially at companies interested in engaging with China and those interested in China's changing economic, cultural, and political landscape, working to promote U.S.-China corporate interaction and deepen understandings between the two interconnected business communities.<sup>102</sup>

The English language version of the Global Times was launched by the state-owned publishers of the People's Daily in 2009 and became China's second English-language daily distributed nationally. The newspaper consists of 24 pages and claims to give international readers the opportunity to understand China and give China the opportunity to express itself.<sup>103</sup> In February of this year Global Times launched a bilingual U.S. edition, officially becoming the first newspaper from China's mainland that launches both Chinese and English daily at the same time. This edition seeks to cover world events from a Chinese perspective, giving American readers insight into the complex and dynamic country through vivid and accurate reporting.<sup>104</sup>

## TELEVISION AND MOVIES

The Chinese Communist Party also uses television as a portal through which to disseminate Chinese culture among the foreign public, both through TV channels and movies, although the

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101 (China Daily USA, 2010)

102 (China Daily, 2009)

103 (Tejada, 2009)

104 (Global Times, 2013)

latter is not as successful or as effective as the former. China's national TV channel, CCTV, has established several broadcasting centers around the world and has multiple stations broadcasted in foreign languages.<sup>105</sup> In September of 2000, CCTV (Chinese Central Television), launched CCTV-9 (CCTV International), a station intended for foreign audiences and broadcasted in English. CCTV-9 is broadcasted internationally on a variety of platforms: Rupert Murdoch's Sky satellite to the UK, Fox services in the USA, and Vanuatu in the mid-Pacific.<sup>106</sup> There is another station broadcasted in Spanish and French called CCTV-E&F<sup>107</sup>, as well as channels that feature Arabic and Russian.<sup>108</sup> The purpose of these channels is not only to report current events, but also to introduce Chinese history, geography, culture, and nature to foreign populaces.<sup>109</sup> In the United States, CCTV-9 and CCTV-E are both on the Dish satellite, but audiences continue to be very small. In fact, 90% of CCTV's viewers are in China, and 80% of those are Chinese natives wishing to improve their English.<sup>110</sup>

In 2012 China Central Television opened a new broadcast bureau in Washington, D.C. and launched three news programs in English for an American audience.<sup>111</sup> Americans can watch these CCTV programs on cable and satellite systems across the country. "Biz Asia America", whose lead anchor is former Bloomberg and CNBC correspondent Phillip Yin, reports on general news and emphasizes economics, finance, trade, and business, as it relates to North and South America and China.<sup>112</sup> "The Heat" is a Saturday night debate and talk show, and "America's Now" focuses on Central and South America.<sup>113</sup> Although the format is set up like a

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105 (Kan, 2012)

106 (Cull, 2009)

107 (Travel China Guide, 2013)

108 (Szczudlik-Tatar, 2010)

109 (Travel China Guide, 2013)

110 (Cull, 2009)

111 (PBS News Hour, 2012)

112 (PBS News Hour, 2012)

113 (PBS News Hour, 2012)

Western TV station, these shows have a underlying goal of building a good reputation for China, and work to portray China's views on various global issues. The journalist's roles are strictly to be good mouthpieces for the government while advancing its goal of propaganda.<sup>114</sup>

The Communist Party has actively called on Chinese movie producers to step up and promote the country abroad through film productions.<sup>115</sup> China's attempts at public diplomacy and the spreading of Chinese culture through the movie industry, however, have been quite futile and have produced minimal results. In fact, Chinese-language films haven't scored a hit in the United States since director Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* won the Best Foreign Language Film Oscar in 2001.<sup>116</sup> In 2011, China made 791 films, but only 52 of them could be sold to foreign countries. At the U.S. box office in 2011, Chinese films earned only about \$400,000,<sup>117</sup> while the box office returns of twenty-one U.S. films in China was about \$780 million, the *Transformers: Dark of the Moon* alone drawing almost \$150 million.<sup>118</sup> Two Beijing-based film firms, the Bona Film Group and Huayi Brothers Media, decided to team up and invest in China Lion Film Distribution in hopes of achieving more success abroad.<sup>119</sup> In 2010, China Lion Film Distribution announced an exclusive partnership with AMC Entertainment to introduce mainstream Chinese movies in the United States and Canada.<sup>120</sup> All Chinese films require government approval for release, and are subject to China's censorship rules and must be approved according to its propaganda motives.<sup>121</sup> As part of propaganda efforts, in 2011 China Lion Film Distribution released the drama celebrating Chinese communism once known as *The Founding Of A Party* but renamed *Beginning of the Great Revival* for

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114 (PBS News Hour, 2012)

115 (Sino Daily, 2011)

116 (Sino Daily, 2011)

117 (Kan, 2012)

118 (Kan, 2012)

119 (Sino Daily, 2011)

120 (Film Journal International News, 2010)

121 (Sino Daily, 2011)

overseas English-language markets.<sup>122</sup> Produced by the state-run China Film Group, *Beginning of the Great Revival* was made to mark the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party, and is a companion piece to 2009's "The Founding of a Republic" about the 1949 revolution.<sup>123</sup> However, the movie did not do very well in the U.S. box office and did not receive very high reviews.

Television has also been used as a method of advertisement. After months of preparation and millions of dollars, in 2011 China's President Hu Jintao launched an advertisement campaign in Times Square and American TV to correct the "incomplete understandings" the American public has about the country.<sup>124</sup> The 60 second advertisement in Times Square gave a brief introduction of China as a country home to 1.4 billion people, 56 ethnicities, and has a history that stretches back 5,000 years. Featured within the advertisement were a current Chinese pop star, CCTV movie anchor, and a Chinese rocket scientist.<sup>125</sup>

The New York Chinese Film Festival, first established in 2010, also hopes to promote cultural exchanges between China and the United States. The festival aims to help Americans better understand Chinese culture and deepen the friendship between American and Chinese people through mutual understanding.<sup>126</sup> Another goal of this festival is to improve the development of the Chinese film industry by building a platform for international promotion of Chinese films and professional communication between the American and Chinese film industries.<sup>127</sup> This film festival is jointly held by the Chinese American Arts Council and the Chinese movie channel CCTV6.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> (Landreth, 2011)

<sup>123</sup> (Variety Media, 2011)

<sup>124</sup> (Fish, 2011)

<sup>125</sup> (Fish, 2011)

<sup>126</sup> (New York Chinese Film Festival, 2011)

<sup>127</sup> (New York Chinese Film Festival, 2011)

<sup>128</sup> (Xinhua News English, 2010)

## RADIO

China Radio International (CRI) is the international radio broadcaster in China targeted to the world audience, and is China's only national overseas broadcasting station.<sup>129</sup><sup>130</sup> CRI, used as another propaganda tool, aims to promote a positive image of China and is beamed to all parts of the world in 38 foreign languages for a total of 290 hours every day.<sup>131</sup> China Radio International offers various special programs of news, current affairs, remarks, entertainment, politics, economy, culture, technology, and more.<sup>132</sup> Using the same strategy as many other media propaganda tools, CRI hires non-Chinese propagandists who work as broadcasters, web editors, and in other information control jobs.<sup>133</sup> In recent years, CRI has been buying more air time in a number of AM and FM radio markets in the United States and Europe, while broadcasting directly into Africa, the Middle East and Latin America.<sup>134</sup>

## THE INTERNET

The Internet has not only been a vital part of China's domestic economic and social development, but has also played a huge role in building soft power and public diplomacy. The Internet has been an essential tool used by the Chinese Communist Party in various ways to facilitate the spread of Chinese culture, promote language learning, and serve as a channel through which existing agencies and corporations can increase awareness and reach a larger population. One of China's top internet officials has stated that the government will use the

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129 (Myerson, 2010)

130 (China Internet Information Center, 2013)

131 (China Internet Information Center, 2013)

132 (China Internet Information Center, 2013)

133 (Myerson, 2010)

134 (Shambaugh, 2010)

Internet to "create an international public opinion environment that is objective, beneficial and friendly to us".<sup>135</sup> Almost all corporations, newspapers, TV channels, movies, radio, cultural events, educational opportunities, job opportunities, and any information regarding the country can be found via the Internet.

By December of 2011, 116 of China's 117 centrally-administered SOEs (state-owned enterprises) had set up their own websites, and most of the SOEs have been continuously building and improving their websites in order to promote soft power. As SOE websites are gradually transforming from simple propaganda venues to business-oriented platforms, the firms are being urged to actively explore website models to help them create sites that better serve their companies.<sup>136</sup>

The above mentioned news agencies, including Xinhua News, People's Daily, China Daily, and The Global Times, as well as CCTV, are all accessible through the Internet. Just like China's SOE websites, these agencies have been reforming and polishing up their websites in an effort to compete with Western companies. These firms also have Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Foursquare, and Linked In accounts, and some even have applications for mobile platforms including iPhone, iPad, Blackberry and Android.<sup>137</sup>

The Internet also serves as an important means for China to build support with overseas Chinese, as well as guide and organize their opinion. PRC-based Internet sites are now the leading source of Chinese language and China-related news for overseas Chinese.<sup>138</sup>

## SETBACKS

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135 (Garnaut, 2010)

136 (Technology Marketing Corporation, 2012)

137 (China Daily USA, 2010)

138 (Brady, 2009)

With the rise of Chinese media in the United States and the increased efforts of Chinese companies to compete with those of the United States, there has been growing skepticism and resentment of both the structure and content of Chinese media, not just by Americans but also by the Chinese. Government organizations and enterprises are the main force behind the exports of Chinese cultural products, but these products tend to portray China's ancient civilization and current economic development while lacking any type of entertainment quality. Cultural products without entertainment value rarely become popular overseas.<sup>139</sup> In addition, many argue that the strong control the Chinese government and the CCP exerts over news and information hampers its ability to compete against such names as CNN and BBC. All information on the state-run channels must reflect the government's views. CCTV describes itself as "the mouthpiece of the Party and the government,"<sup>140</sup> and Xinhua News describes its activities as "conducted from start to finish under the direct leadership of the central party authorities."<sup>141</sup> The goal of these news operations are not about informing the public, but about channeling a specific view of China to the rest of the world. Chinese movie producers complain that the government's restrictions on movie content as well as its push for propaganda hamper the movie sector's ability to compete with Hollywood blockbusters.<sup>142</sup> Many agree that for Chinese media to gain more popularity and earn more respect, the government will have to loosen its controls and facilitate a free, independent atmosphere. As of now, the CCP's Office of Foreign Propaganda, more commonly known as the State Council Information Office, oversees all matters relating to external propaganda.<sup>143</sup>

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139 (Kan, 2012)

140 (Bequelin, 2009)

141 (Bequelin, 2009)

142 (Sino Daily, 2011)

143 (Brady, 2009)

### CHAPTER 3: CONGRESSIONAL LOBBYING

While the first two chapters illustrate the Chinese Communist Party's attempts to directly reach out to the American public by educating foreign populaces about Chinese culture and language, as well as the use of various media tools to shape American's perception of China, this chapter focuses on the CCP's direct efforts to influence American policies and decision making through the act of Congressional lobbying. Cultural and public diplomacy is indeed an effective tool in swaying the foreign public and facilitating the gradual process of altering perceptions, but China has also realized that in order to expedite the improvement of economic relations and further facilitate soft power pushes, it will have to directly reach out to the core of U.S. power: the policy makers.

In its most simple form, lobbying is described as a primary avenue through which firms attempt to change policy.<sup>144</sup> Firms, organizations, groups, and individuals use lobbying to communicate with lawmakers, informing government officials as to what a group of citizens want.<sup>145</sup> Lobbying is simply the advocacy of a point of view, and can be performed by a wide range of special interest groups including but not limited to corporations, colleges and universities, churches, charities, public interest or environmental groups, senior citizen

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144 (Kerr, Lincoln, & Mishra, 2011)

145 (Marzec, 2012)

organizations, and state, local or foreign governments.<sup>146</sup> Lobbying covers a wide array of topics with the most frequent topics including whether laws and policies need to be revised or enacted, how taxes are calculated or distributed, or if the political process needs to be updated. In corporate lobbying, industries advocate for protection from economic shocks or foreign competition through subsidies or tariffs. Locally, companies can lobby for the creation of infrastructure improvements and other specific needs.<sup>147</sup> Lobbying is a complicated process that involves adequate preparation, gathering of information, and constant communication. This includes the research and analysis of legislation or regulatory proposals, monitoring and reporting on developments, attending congressional or regulatory hearings, working with coalitions, and informing not only government officials but also employees and corporate officers of the implications of various changes.<sup>148</sup> Due to the complicated nature and process of lobbying, most corporations and businesses will choose to hire consulting firms to do their lobbying. These consulting firms have the necessary internal expertise and connections to find the right government official related to the topic, examine all relevant issues and laws, organize meetings with lawmakers, and present their client's or company's case. If a business or group does not have sufficient funds to pay for these professional lobbyists, they will occasionally band together with other groups that have similar concerns and goals, using their combined funds to hire a lobby firm.<sup>149</sup> Lobbying plays a very influential role in politics and government in the United States, and it is estimated that lobbying expenditures outnumber other forms of politically-targeted activities like campaign contributions by a factor of nine.<sup>150</sup> For the year of

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146 (American League of Lobbyists, 2011)

147 (Marzec, 2012)

148 (American League of Lobbyists, 2011)

149 (Marzec, 2012)

150 (Kerr, Lincoln, & Mishra, 2011)

2012, there were approximately 12,389 unique, registered and actively engaged lobbyists and a total lobbying expenditure of about \$3.30 billion.<sup>151</sup>

## BACKGROUND

China essentially first began “lobbying” in the United States back in the 1940s as groups of Chinese and Americans tried to influence the United States’ people and government on behalf of Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist regime in opposition to the Chinese communists, led by Mao Zedong.<sup>152</sup> Ever since the Nationalist’s defeat to the Communists and retreat to Taiwan in 1949, Taiwan has played an active and consistent role in American politics, using money, charm, pressure, and creativity to cultivate friendships and secure protection from the People’s Republic of China. Taiwan has effectively gained access to the White House, Congress, Wall Street and editorial pages by spending millions of dollars on some two dozen lobbyists and political consultants, and has a strong support base among the American people.<sup>153</sup> The Chinese Communist Party, on the other hand, was much slower in realizing the importance of lobbying. Just a decade ago China all but ignored Congress, with some Chinese officials believing that the Senate and House of Representatives were simply mouthpieces of the Executive Branch. The occasional attempts to influence U.S. politics were both clumsy and ill-informed, as China lacked a comprehensive understanding of the structure and responsibilities within the separate branches of the United States’ government.<sup>154</sup> China finally began to realize the importance of lobbying after being repeatedly outfoxed on Capitol Hill by Taiwan, which already had a solid, sophisticated and effective procedure to influence legislation. In 2005, the Chinese embassy

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151 (Politics, 2013)

152 (Cohen, 2013)

153 (Sciolino, 1996)

154 (Reid & Cornwell, 2011)

retained Patton Boggs, one of the top lobbying shops in Washington, and the China embassy continues to pay the lobbying firm a monthly retainer of \$35,000 for assistance in influencing U.S. legislation.<sup>155</sup> In the last half of 2005, employees of Patton Boggs LLP made at least 116 contacts with lawmakers or their aides on behalf of China.<sup>156</sup> In addition to Patton Boggs, the Chinese government retains other firms to influence Congress, including Jones Day.<sup>157</sup> As China has developed a deeper understanding of how Congress works, it stopped relying on U.S. presidents to keep Congress from upsetting bilateral relations and began using lobbyists to burnish its image with increasingly assertive lawmakers.<sup>158</sup> China's lobbying in Washington has become increasingly sophisticated as it continues to gain a more complete and comprehensive understanding of the role Congress plays in policy-making debates.<sup>159</sup>

China has long registered to lobby and influence opinions in the United States under the Foreign Agent Registration Act,<sup>160</sup> which was enacted in 1935 as an attempt to reform the lobbying process. This act required all foreign agents to make periodic disclosures of their lobbying activities, and was basically a move that aimed to mitigate foreign propaganda.<sup>161</sup> More recently, however, Chinese companies have begun to sign lobbying firms and register under the Lobbying Discloser Act in a more aggressive endeavor to lobby Congress and the Executive Branch.<sup>162</sup> Under the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (subsequently modified by the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007), all lobbyists who meet specified conditions must register as a federal lobbyist and disclose all lobbying activities, a measure to further

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155 (Reid & Cornwell, 2011)

156 (Forsythe, 2006)

157 (Forsythe, 2006)

158 (Forsythe, 2006)

159 (Reid & Cornwell, 2011)

160 (Blumenthal, 2011)

161 (The United States Department of Justice, 2013)

162 (Blumenthal, 2011)

increase transparency.<sup>163</sup> In 2010, four Chinese businesses and trade associations, Huawei Tech, Investment, China-United States Exchange Foundation, Sichuan Tengzhong Heavy Industrial Machinery, and BGP Inc., reported lobbying activity to the Secretary of the Senate's office. The four organizations spent a total of \$425,000 on lobbying, which was significantly higher than previous expenditures by Chinese firms registering lobbyists under the Lobbying Disclosure Act.<sup>164</sup> However, despite China's increasing business ties to the U.S., there are still only a few firms registered under the LDA to lobby, and countries with long-standing ties such as Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland all report more business registering and more money spent. Nevertheless, Chinese business spending in 2010, which was largely fueled by Huawei Tech's Sprint Nextel bid, put China's businesses into the highest levels of spending by foreign companies registering under the LDA.<sup>165</sup>

## CHINA LOBBYING

China has ramped up its Congressional lobbying efforts in recent years, hiring top-notch lobbying firms whose ranks are filled with well-connected former U.S. and Canadian officials, and there has been notable increase in China's influence on Capitol Hill.<sup>166</sup> In 2008 China opened a new \$200 million embassy in Washington, D.C. with 10 full-time diplomats working on congressional affairs, most of them speaking perfect English. This was a huge improvement since the 1990s when the Chinese embassy had only employed one diplomat focused on congressional affairs, a position which was seen as a dead-end job for functionaries who rarely

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163 (Kerr, Lincoln, & Mishra, 2011)

164 (Blumenthal, 2011)

165 (Blumenthal, 2011)

166 (Eckert, Younglai, & Ljunggren, 2012)

left the embassy.<sup>167</sup> China's rapidly increasing influence in American politics has not gone unnoticed. Members of Congress, lobbyists and other observers speculate that China's new prominence is both the result of its increasingly sophisticated efforts to influence events at the center of U.S. power as well as a growing realization among U.S. lawmakers that China has become a critical economic player across America.<sup>168</sup> In 2010 China launched a multimillion-dollar lobbying effort so effective that it has become a threat to the increasingly alarmed Taiwan, who has in turn been upping its lobbying efforts and pushing its own counter-measures. The anti-communist view of China held by Congress members has been changing as the socialist country becomes progressively capitalistic, and some legislators who used to be pro-Taiwan have now begun to lean toward China.<sup>169</sup> Zhou Wenzhong, who was China's ambassador to the United States from 2005-2010, said he visited about 100 senators and representatives in their districts during his time in Washington. He claimed that it wasn't just lobbying efforts that helped improve China's image in Congress, but it's also due to "the common interests that more and more members have seen the importance of this relationship."<sup>170</sup>

The majority of lobbying spending among Chinese firms comes from Huawei Tech., which spent \$425,000 in 2011 and a whopping \$1,200,000 in 2012. Huawei Tech. is a major telecommunications firm in China, serving as China's biggest maker of phone equipment,<sup>171</sup> and its top issues lobbied include telecommunications, trade, and radio and TV broadcasting.<sup>172</sup> The company currently has seven firms registered to lobby U.S. lawmakers, including APCO Worldwide, Doyce Boesch and Fleishman-Hillard, according to forms filed under the Lobbying

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167 (Pomfret, 2010)

168 (Pomfret, 2010)

169 (Pomfret, 2010)

170 (Pomfret, 2010)

171 (Engleman & Salant, 2012)

172 (Politics, Huawei Technologies, 2013)

Disclosure Act. That is up from four firms in 2011, two in 2010 and one in 2009.<sup>173</sup> In addition, the company had about \$1.3 billion in U.S. revenue in 2011, up from \$760 million in 2010.<sup>174</sup> However, not everything has been going smooth for Huawei. Huawei Technologies has been repeatedly accused by the United States of cyber espionage and there are undergoing investigations as to whether or not the company poses a threat to U.S. national security. Huawei Technologies has also seen multiple deals fall apart in the US, both in 2008 when Huawei and private equity firm Bain Capital were forced to give up their bid for 3Com Corp after a U.S. panel rejected the deal because of national security concerns, and again in 2011 when the company was forced to relinquish plans to buy some assets from U.S. server technology firm 3Leaf after the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States mandated that Huawei divest certain parts of the deal.<sup>175</sup> Huawei Technologies was frustrated during attempts to secure an equipment supplies contract with Sprint Nextel because of its being hampered by security concerns, including apprehensions that the firm is connected to the Chinese military.<sup>176</sup> In the midst of these concerns and investigations, recently Huawei's executive vice president Eric Xu has come out saying the company is no longer interested in the United States market and wants to focus on developing in other parts of the world.<sup>177</sup>

There are several other Chinese firms that have used lobbying to work with or buy out companies. State-owned enterprise BGP Inc. is a seismic survey company wholly owned by the Chinese National Petroleum Company, and was also lobbying Congress in support of a venture with a U.S. firm. BGP spent \$35,000 on The Glover Park Group to help them with outreach to Congress, and the lobbying team consisted of former staffers to Sen. Byron Dorgan and former

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173 (Eckert, Younglai, & Ljunggren, 2012)

174 (Engleman & Salant, 2012)

175 (Eckert, Younglai, & Ljunggren, 2012)

176 (Blumenthal, 2011)

177 (Pasick, 2013)

minority leader Gephardt. The Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) accepted BGP's bid to form a joint company with ION Geophysical Corp, and the two companies created the company INOVA.<sup>178</sup> Baidu, the government-controlled Chinese search engine, recently registered as a client of Sidley Austin. In 2011 Baidu tried to influence the annual Special Report 301 to be released by the Office of the United State Trade Representative. The Special Report 301 aims to protect American property rights overseas, identifying those countries with inadequate intellectual property rights laws, of which may be subject to such actions as sanctioning.<sup>179</sup> The year previously, in 2010, the USTR report called out Baidu for providing the platform for the majority of illegal downloads in China, which is a contentious issue between the two countries.<sup>180</sup> Chinese state oil company CNOOC is trying to buy Nexen Inc., a Canadian oil company with assets in the U.S. Gulf, in a deal valued at \$15.1 billion. The company hired Hill and Knowlton, whose lobbyists include Robert Ludke, a former Democratic congressional aide who worked with the Chinese company during its bid for Unocal.<sup>181</sup> In 2011 China's fastest growing Internet company, The Alibaba Group, hired an influential lobbying firm in Washington in its attempt to navigate a takeover bid for Yahoo. The lobbying firm was The Duberstein Group, led by Kenneth M. Duberstein, who was President Reagan's White House chief of staff.<sup>182</sup> Chinese companies continue to be increasingly involved in Congressional lobbying, and as their understanding of the American political process deepens, they have been paying more attention to what happens at Capitol Hill.

A recent endeavor by the China embassy in Washington, D.C. has been the launch of an intense lobbying effort to kill legislation that would punish it for its currency system The

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178 (Blumenthal, 2011)

179 (Office of the United States Trade Representative, 2011)

180 (Blumenthal, 2011)

181 (Eckert, Younglai, & Ljunggren, 2012)

182 (Protest, 2011)

legislation advocates for retaliatory tariffs on Chinese exports if the Yuan remains artificially low against the dollar. China is afraid this legislation would cause a trade war between the two countries, and the embassy has employed various methods to fight this issue, including the creation of a 12-member "Congressional Liaison Team" that has been meeting with aides to key lawmakers and making phone calls to congressional offices to talk about the problem. As mentioned before, the Chinese embassy also pays law firm Patton Boggs LLP \$35,000 a month to lobby Congress and to provide China with a greater understanding of congressional politics.<sup>183</sup>

Despite the increasing success and influence China has had on Capitol Hill and the gradual changing of perceptions of China among members of the U.S. government, there is still much skepticism and mistrust of the country that makes it difficult for Chinese firms and organizations to achieve prominence in Washington. China has a long way to go in order to gain favorable opinion among the majority of policy makers. In fact, some in Washington are growing nervous over the rise of China's influence in the market. Republican lawmaker Randy Forbes stated, "The fact that they have formalized their lobbying efforts means that they're getting bolder and bolder in the actions that they have, and I think that should concern individuals in the United States."<sup>184</sup> In order to combat growing mistrust and nervousness among Congress, China will need to increase communication and cooperation with the White House on these sensitive issues as well as deepen their understanding of the U.S. government and processes to facilitate greater efficiency.

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183 (Reid & Cornwell, 2011)

184 (Eckert, Younglai, & Ljunggren, 2012)

## CONCLUSION: A WORK IN PROGRESS

As China's economy develops and expands, its diplomatic and cultural influence has also grown and spread to different corners of the earth, especially in developing countries.<sup>185</sup> China is using its resources to the fullest in its push for soft power diplomacy, and is learning from and evolving according to what they have observed in other country's soft power efforts.<sup>186</sup> The CCP has carefully studied and assessed how other nations have succeeded or failed throughout history, applying its own techniques and utilizing China's unique and ancient culture to attract the interests of foreign populaces. China believes that in order to develop a comprehensive national power, both hard and soft powers are important.<sup>187</sup> Now that China has a stable, growing military and a strong, massive economy, the country has been explicitly stating the priority it places on developing and cultivating soft power through its actions and policies.<sup>188</sup> In his report to the 17<sup>th</sup> National Congress in 2007, former President of the PRC Hu Jintao stated, "China will attach more importance to cultural development, and conduct cultural exchanges with foreign countries more actively, so as to enhance the international influence of Chinese culture."<sup>189</sup> He also stated that "culture has become a more and more important source of national cohesion and creativity

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185 (Pan, 2006)

186 (Bergsten, Freeman, Lardy, & Mitchell, 2008)

187 (Bergsten, Freeman, Lardy, & Mitchell, 2008)

188 (Bergsten, Freeman, Lardy, & Mitchell, 2008)

189 (People's Daily Online , 2010)

and a factor of growing significance in the competition in overall national strength,” and “we must enhance culture as part of the soft power of our country to better guarantee the people's basic cultural rights and interests.”<sup>190</sup>

China's soft power efforts in Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Africa receive large amounts of press coverage and international attention. However, China's recent public diplomacy efforts in the United States have been increasingly prominent and influential, and is a topic worth greater discussion. The progressively direct and aggressive soft power techniques used by the People's Republic of China toward the United States is reflective of the country's growing realization of the importance of Sino-U.S. relations in today's global community. In fact, due to the United States' predominant economic, political, and military power, China has recognized the U.S. as its most important bilateral relationship.<sup>191</sup> As China gained a more comprehensive understanding of the role that the American public and all three branches of the government play in U.S. politics, China has become increasingly involved with the United States at a domestic level, employing various methods to gain influence and facilitate China's soft power push. China has made impressive strides within the last decade infiltrating the American population and establishing the country's presence both among the public and within Congress.

Education continues to be a highly effective method in the encouragement and facilitation of cultural diplomacy. As China's position as a global power rises, more and more students flock to China as their destination for an overseas education. Students travel to China to study Mandarin, economics, international relations, and other subjects. The Chinese government has played on the rising of educational interest in China by reaching out to students overseas, building Confucius Institutes and providing scholarships and other study opportunities for those

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190 (Hong'e, 2007)

191 (Bergsten, Freeman, Lardy, & Mitchell, 2008)

interested in the increasingly powerful, developing nation. For those who are not interested in China or lack understanding of the country, the CCP has recently worked towards establishing and promoting cultural activities and increasing diplomatic outreach to raise awareness.

China's usage of media in public diplomacy not only aims to portray China's point of view to the world but also works to combat the negative image of China as painted by the Western media. The primary four media agencies used by the Chinese Communist Party (China Central Television (CCTV), China Radio International (CRI), Xinhua News Agency and the China Daily newspaper) have all had recent major makeovers, intending to give a less propagandistic face to the world, which has previously come under intense scrutiny. In the government's recent "upgrading" efforts, foreigners now anchor news broadcasts, op-ed pages are becoming more serious, radio programs are more diversified, Web sites are more informative, and newspapers are publishing more investigative stories.<sup>192</sup> There have even been major breakthroughs in the Chinese movie industry. In April of this year Chinese Movie Channel, which is overseen by the Chinese government, signed a deal with Paramount Pictures and Jiaflix Enterprises to help on the production of "Transformers 4," the next installment of the popular blockbuster franchise. Chinese Movie Channel will help select filming sites in China as well as work with the filmmakers on casting Chinese actors in the movie.<sup>193</sup>

As China deepens its understanding about the processes and functions within U.S. politics, it has changed from focusing all of its soft power efforts on the American public to becoming increasingly engaged at the center of U.S. policy making—Congress. Although Chinese firms with registered lobbyists are still few in number compared with other foreign countries, China is increasing its presence in Washington and the wealthy Communist

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192 (Shambaugh, 2010)

193 (The Associated Press, 2013)

government is becoming more acceptable in the eyes of U.S. lawmakers, thanks both to lobbying efforts and to the large amounts of cash Chinese firms are willing to invest.

While Chinese soft power emphasizes the education of foreign masses as to Chinese culture and China's point of view on world affairs, there is also another important element encompassed within these recent efforts: reassurance. China knows that the world eyes its growing economic and military capability with suspicion, and actions taken in Congress have reflected this element of mistrust. Due to the critical speculations and concerns following China's rise in power, another principal goal of Chinese soft power diplomacy is to reassure the world of its peaceful rise. Despite the massive outpour of resources and money into soft power diplomacy, in 2010 a BBC/Globescan poll of 28 nations showed that China's global image still remains mixed. In Africa and Pakistan it is consistently positive, while in Asia, North America, and Latin America it is neutral to poor. Across Europe it is strongly negative.<sup>194</sup> In efforts to raise China's global profile and improve its image abroad, the CCP has been investing in a broad range of activities and institutions. A new Office of Public Diplomacy was established in the Foreign Ministry, while the State Council Information Office coordinates China's media and exchange organizations to "go out" and establish a foothold in the international media environment and think-tank world.<sup>195</sup>

Despite recent efforts and noticeable successes in China's public diplomacy engagement within the United States, the country still has a long way to go in wooing the American public. Since the Chinese Communist Party chased out the Nationalist Party in 1949, Americans have continually held China in a negative light for a wide array of reasons. The governments of China and the U.S. also have a number of contentious issues that impedes a more cooperative

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194 (Shambaugh, 2010)

195 (Shambaugh, 2010)

relationship, including controversies over trade, exchange rates, hacking, Tibet, Taiwan, and the U.S. condemnation of China's domestic record on human rights, rule of law, political freedom, corruption, and export product safety.<sup>196</sup> In spite of the many differences between the culture, politics, and histories of the two nations, China and the United States have been actively working to facilitate a more mutually beneficial relationship. For example, the two sides have signed the Agreement on Cultural Cooperation, Agreement on Educational Cooperation and China-U.S. Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology, and set up a number of dialogue forums including the Joint Commission on Science and Technology Cooperation, and China-U.S. Cultural Forum.<sup>197</sup>

The Chinese Communist Party has spent vast amounts of money and effort in reaching out to the American public, but many agree that the current minimal success of China's overseas soft power pushes boils down to one issue: the CCP itself. The Chinese Communist Party's strict control over public diplomacy efforts and over all media, including Chinese media overseas, hampers China's ability for more effective results and its ability to gain the necessary respect from the public. Movie content censorship has many movie directors and actors frustrated. One such movie director, Feng Xiaogang, stated, "In the past 20 years, every China director faced a great torment, and that torment is censorship. Many times, when the censors' orders arrive, you feel they are ridiculous, and don't know whether to laugh or cry."<sup>198</sup> Movie producers blame the lack of success at the box office on the CCP, who strictly regulate the content of movies and forbid heavy violence or sexual content, all of which are prevalent in Western blockbusters. Many online corporations are also frustrated at China's hypocritical method of blocking foreign websites and media influence, while at the same time using Chinese websites to spread

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196 (Bergsten, Freeman, Lardy, & Mitchell, 2008)

197 (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, 2012)

198 (Zhou, 2013)

propaganda overseas. The Chinese government's "great firewall" blocks most overseas Chinese-language websites and numerous foreign-language overseas sites, and local internet companies must vigilantly screen and censor sensitive content.<sup>199</sup> In fact, the Internet is a powerful tool that has not and will not reach its full potential in the facilitation of people-to-people communication between the two countries as long as it has such restrictions. The CCP blocks its citizens from accessing popular sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and the New York Times, inhibiting communication between Chinese and foreigners over cyberspace.<sup>200</sup> While Chinese firms and agencies with overseas influence all own some form of Facebook or YouTube account, the important aspect of people-to-people contact is neglected by the inability of the two peoples to connect on a common online platform.

Technically speaking, "soft power" is still a relatively new term in China's vocabulary, and the nation is continuously learning, reforming, and improving its soft power diplomacy methods. The new leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and the U.S. have repeatedly highlighted the importance of the bilateral relationship. The two countries are cooperating together on issues in the areas of economy, trade, people-to-people ties, climate change and international and regional hotspots. In a recent meeting between Chinese ambassador to the U.S. Cui Tiankai and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, Ambassador Cui stated that the China-US relationship is now at a new historical start and faced with important opportunities for further development. China is committed to working with the US to push forward the China-US cooperative partnership based on mutual respect and mutual benefit.<sup>201</sup> China and the United States will continue to work together to improve cooperation between the two countries, but cooperation does not stop at the government level. Success must come from all aspects of

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199 (Garnaut, 2010)

200 (Keck, 2013)

201 (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, 2013)

bilateral relations, including the public-to-public collaboration and mutual understanding. Still facing an American populace that views China as a threat and competitor, the Chinese Communist Party will need to continue increasing its efforts in shaping and influencing American public opinion, engaging with and reaching out to Americans through spreading cultural influence, media campaigning, and Congressional lobbying. Reaching out to the American people is an essential move China must take to gain respect and support, continue the development of its economy, and facilitate bilateral relations. As the most important bilateral relationship in the world today, it will be up to China and the United States to effectively collaborate with one another to shape the global community and confront international issues.

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