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Seeking the Beijing Consensus in Asia:

An Empirical Test of Soft Power

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Abstract

The empirical study of soft power presents a challenge for social scientists. Conventional wisdom asserts that China's soft power is growing alongside its hard power, but few scholars have been able to demonstrate this phenomenon empirically. This paper represents a first-cut effort at operationalizing and measuring the so-called Beijing Consensus (or China Model), a form of state capitalism which some see as an ideological alternative to the Washington Consensus and a challenge to American soft power. Using public opinion data from the Asian Barometer Survey, I attempt to empirically demonstrate the appeal of the Beijing Consensus in Asia. I operationalize the Beijing Consensus both directly, by establishing the relationship between a respondent's attitude towards Chinese influence and his/her preference for China as a model of development, and indirectly, by measuring attitudes towards China's influence and attitudes towards democracy. I find that in the Asian countries represented by the ABS, affinity for Chinese influence had negligible impact on the respondent's desire to adopt the China Model. Furthermore, no relationship could be found between favorable attitudes towards China and preference for democracy. My research shows that those who portray China as an ideological threat to the United States have dramatically overstated their case and must substantiate their position with further evidence.

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“American fears and fantasies about China reveal a great deal about the interests and ideals that shape the American political landscape. They do not, however, teach us much about the real China. Romanticizing and demonizing China, furthermore, dangerously distorts our understanding of Chinese foreign policies.” - Peter H. Gries, *China's New Nationalism*

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the founding of the United States, Americans have worried about the decline and stagnation of their country.¹ We now live in another cycle of perceived American decline.² As China's influence grows globally and regionally, Americans have anxiously devoted increasing attention to the various benchmarks with which to measure its progress. Joseph Nye provides us with a comprehensive framework with which to assess China's rise. He conceptualizes power in the 21st century as a three-dimensional chessboard. In Nye's model, the top board represents military power; the middle board, economic power; and the bottom board, soft power (Nye, 2002).

China as a Hard Power Threat

The story on the top and middle boards needs only a brief summary. The growth in Chinese economic and military power, its hard power, has long been evident. However, the same indicators suggest that the United States remains dominant on both of these dimensions. The measures we have to track military and economic power are well established; these power resources are tangible and can be quantified with relative ease

¹ See James Fallow's discussion of the American jeremiad in "How America can Rise Again." *The Atlantic* (January 2010).

² See Fareed Zakaria's "Are America's Best Days Behind Us?" *TIME* (March 2011).

and accuracy. Chinese Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has grown at an average annual rate of ten percent for the past thirty years and has increased more than fiftyfold since 1980. Similarly, China's military modernization can be measured fairly easily in terms of expenditure. The U.S. Defense Department estimated China's total military-related spending for 2007 to be between \$97 billion and \$139 billion, which accounts for about 2% of its GDP. Of course, there are many problems with these measures due to China's lack of transparency, but overall they indicate a clear trend: Chinese hard power is growing. China's ability to coerce and induce other states has increased as its economic and military power has increased. While it is easy to be dazzled by China's numbers, one should keep these figures in perspective. On the economic board, the United States remains the largest economy in the world by far, with a GDP of \$14.12 trillion (nearly triple the size of China's GDP), and it is growing at a healthy pace of 2-3% annually. China might surpass the U.S. by mid-century if the current projections are true, but forecasting has historically been a tricky business. In terms of military issues, American dominance is even more apparent. The U.S. accounts for 40% of the world's military expenditures: it has a nuclear arsenal of 5000 warheads (compared to the 100-400 in China's arsenal); and it has 12 carrier battle-groups (China is in the process of building its first). The U.S. is the only country that can project power to all corners of the globe. An inventory of America's hard power assets should quell some fears about China's reemergence.

China as a Soft Power Challenge

While the scrutiny of China's tangible power assets is nothing new, scholars are also paying increasing attention to China's intangible power resources--to its soft power. The study of soft power proves to be more challenging because attraction and culture are more difficult concepts to operationalize and measure than coercion. Current conventional wisdom asserts that China's soft power is growing alongside its hard power. In the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis, those who view China not only as an economic competitor but an ideological competitor as well have found a larger audience. The China Model, we are warned by pundits, has found receptive audiences around the world, particularly among developing countries.³ However the empirical evidence to back these claims remains scarce and the theoretical analysis is nonexistent. This paper represents a first-cut effort at conceptualizing and measuring the so-called Beijing Consensus using rigorous social scientific methodology. This research will add to the growing literature on Chinese soft power. The central question of this paper is simply: Is there an emerging Beijing Consensus and how do we measure it?

Relevance to Current Debates

This research not only contributes to the political science literature on soft power but also advances a hotly contested topic in contemporary foreign policy. The ways in which China is perceived to be a strategic competitor to the United States have enormous policy implications for both nations. Unlike the Soviet Union, China has become a rival power to

³ See "A Future Without the West" in *The National Interest* and "China's Illiberal Challenge" in *Democracy*.

the U.S. while playing by the same rules. China's willingness to integrate into an American-centric economic order based on free market capitalism allowed it to prosper (Steinfeld, 2010). China does not want to be seen as a revisionist power and has therefore pursued a grand strategy of reassurance in order to create economic space for development, and Chinese leaders have been adamant in maintaining their satisfaction with the status quo (Shambaugh, 2005). Under Deng Xiaoping's foreign policy principle of *taoguang yanghui* (keep a low profile and bide one's time while getting something accomplished), Chinese leaders have actively avoided being seen as an ideological threat to the United States and the West.

Nevertheless, as China's economic and military power continues to grow, discussion about China's soft power has entered into the public discourse in both the US and China. Mainstream Chinese scholars and strategists tend to see soft power as defensive--a way to counter the prevailing China-threat theory--and have urged for a policy of soft power aggrandizement. (Yu 2008, Qiao 2008, Fang 2007, Shi 2007, Cheng 2007, Li 2004) China's establishment of more than 400 Confucius Institutes across the world and its much lauded 45 billion Yuan (6.8 billion U.S. dollars) for *waixuan gongzuo* (global media drive) has sparked debate on both sides of the Pacific about the future of Chinese soft power. The so-called China Model or Beijing Consensus has become a favorite among China wonks in the United States and has spurred a cottage industry of literature on the subject (Halper, 2010; Barma & Ratner, 2006; Kurlantzick, 2007; Yu, 2006; Huang & Ding, 2006). This ideological challenge to the Washington Consensus has been discussed in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Research Design

This paper first reviews the sparse scholarly literature that studies the Beijing Consensus and establishes its relationship to soft power. Most of this literature anecdotally illustrates that Chinese soft power is increasing but fails to operationalize the concept for empirical analysis. Avoiding the methodological pitfalls of previous research on this topic, I advance my own definition of the Beijing Consensus and attempt a good-faith effort to empirically demonstrate its effect by using public opinion as a proxy for soft power. The Beijing Consensus questions the assumption made in the Washington Consensus that economic freedom must be accompanied by political freedom and government non-interference, and presents an alternative form of state capitalism in which economic freedom and state intervention go hand-in-hand and political freedom is sidelined.

This paper focuses on the effect of the Beijing Consensus on the democratic societies of Asia. I use survey data from the Asian Barometer Survey (ABS) to empirically demonstrate the effect of the Beijing Consensus in Asia at the mass level. I measure the impact of the Beijing Consensus both directly, by establishing the relationship between attitudes towards China's influence and preference for the China Model, and indirectly by establishing the relationship between attitudes towards China's influence and preference for democracy. The survey data for non-democratic masses are also available through the ABS, however the sensitivity of the questions coupled with the lack of protection for free speech have resulted in large non-response biases in these samples.

Finally, I examine the country-level data in the ABS survey and construct three case studies: Taiwan, Philippines, and Mongolia. All three countries are third wave democracies but provide my study with variation on factors like economic development, security relations with great powers, and geography. The large-n analysis along with the three case studies will allow me to assess whether increasing Chinese influence in Asia correlates with increased affinity for the Beijing Consensus. The fundamental question this paper seeks to address is does Chinese soft power have any independent effect on the preferences of the Asian public.

II. THEORIZING THE BEIJING CONSENSUS

Despite the increasing prominence of the Beijing Consensus or China Model in media and policy circles, the theoretical literature on the subject remains limited. This limitation stems in part from the lack of agreement over the existence of such a model or consensus. The term Beijing Consensus was coined in 2004 by Joshua Cooper Ramo, Time Magazine's former foreign editor, playing on the idea of a declining Washington Consensus. Though the term quickly became popular in Western public discourse, scholars and officials in China itself remained divided over whether there is in fact a China Model or Beijing Consensus⁴ (McGiffert, 2009). International mega-events like the Beijing Olympics and the Shanghai World Expo intensified the debate because they were perceived by domestic and foreign observers to represent opportunities to improve Chinese national image and bolster

⁴ I will use the two terms interchangeably in this paper

Chinese soft power. Nevertheless, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was itself diffident about laying claim to any development model that other countries might emulate.⁵

Even after setting aside the debate over the existence of the Beijing Consensus, one must confront the tricky problems of definition and measurement. Joshua Ramo originally used the term Beijing Consensus to describe China's unique model of development (Ramo, 2004). Ramo simultaneously argues that the Beijing Consensus is both groundbreaking and difficult to define. He notes that the Beijing Consensus will replace the Washington Consensus, turning ideas about privatization and free trade on their heads, but adds that it is "flexible enough that it is barely classifiable as a doctrine" (Ramo, 2004, p. 5). At the heart of his argument lies the idea that the Beijing Consensus is something new and different from the Western discourse of development, and whatever it is, this Beijing Consensus will have a tremendous impact outside of China. He writes, "China's new ideas are having a gigantic effect outside of China. China is making a path for other nations around the world who are trying to figure out not simply how to develop their countries, but also how to fit into the international order in a way that allows them to be truly independent" (Ramo, 2004, p. 5).

Ramo's initial formulation did not focus on authoritarian capitalism nor did it relate the concept to Chinese soft power; rather, he defined the Beijing Consensus in terms of innovation with cutting edge technology, chaos management through equitable and sustainable development, and an emphasis on self-determination for other countries vis-à-vis the United States. He does not advance a formal of the Beijing Consensus in the sense

⁵ See "The Beijing Consensus is to keep quiet." *The Economist* (May 2010).

that his definition not only lacks parsimony but also is non-falsifiable. In fact, Ramo cautiously hedges against potential criticism towards his formulation of the Beijing Consensus, noting that China's path to development is "unrepeatable in any other nation," but goes on to claim that "elements of the country's rise have engaged the developing world," and that "China is in the process of building the greatest asymmetric superpower the world has ever seen... [leading] by the electric power of its example and the bluff impact of size" (Ramo, 2004, p. 5). Though Ramo was himself careful not to over-specify the Beijing Consensus or over-state its applicability to other countries, the phrase became wildly popular in media and policy circles. Ramo's formulation has been roundly criticized by Chinese and American scholars as not capturing the Chinese experience (Huang Y. , 2011; Kennedy, 2008; Meng). The popularized discourse on the Beijing Consensus has since focused less on China's unique developmental model but rather concentrated on how China's success may present an ideological threat to the West and to the liberal democratic world order.

In the recent discourse, the Beijing Consensus is understood to be at discord with the Washington Consensus's liberal dimension after all, China has made great strides to liberalize its economic system; instead, the emphasis has been placed on China's challenge to democracy. In their 2006 article Barma & Ratner, then PhD candidates at UC Berkley, warn of illiberal challenge of the China Model, an argument they would expand upon in their 2007 essay in *The National Interest*. They use the term China Model instead of the Beijing Consensus, but refer to the same threat to the liberal democratic foundations of the Washington Consensus. They argue that the China Model powerfully combines two

components: illiberal capitalism, the practice and promotion of a governance strategy where markets are free but politics are not; and illiberal sovereignty, an approach to international relations that emphasizes the inviolability of national borders in the face of international intervention (Barma & Ratner, 2006). They claim that China's rise presents a successful and, in many nations' eyes, increasingly legitimate model for national development--one that poses a distinct alternative to Western-style democratic liberalism. They warn that "the spreading of Chinese illiberalism could set scores of developing nations away from the path of liberal democracy" (Barma & Ratner, 2006). They also allude to China's soft power, arguing that though China is not actively exporting its illiberal model it is seducing illiberal regimes into its orbit through foreign assistance and private investment free of good governance. More recently, Stefan Halper, senior fellow at the Cambridge Centre for International Studies, captures the popularized contemporary definition of the Beijing Consensus in his 2010 book *Beijing Consensus: How China's Authoritarian Model will Dominate the World*. His work deals with the threat posed by China's market-authoritarian model, which provides rapid growth, stability, and the promise of better life at the expense of liberal democracy. He writes, "Of immediate concern is that China's governing model is more appealing to the developing world and some of the middle-sized powers than America's market-democratic model. Given the choice between market democracy and its freedoms and market authoritarianism and its high growth, stability, improved living standards, and limits on expression – a majority in the developing world and in many middle-sized, non-western powers prefer the authoritarian model" (Halper, 2010). Where Ramo remained cautiously circumspect about the Beijing Consensus, Halper holds no doubt

about the phenomenon and the strategic challenge it poses. As a growing number of countries embrace relationship with China, “It is making the West irrelevant in world affairs. In effect, China is shrinking the West” (Halper, 2010). Halper focuses on Chinese expansionism in pursuit of resources, and its appeal to Latin American and African countries, and advocates for containing its impact, “if it is not met in the decade ahead, the United States will be left in a world unsympathetic to the democratic values and principles that have guided Western progress for more than two centuries” (Halper, 2010). To Halper, the Beijing Consensus represents something simpler and more corrosive to Western preeminence than Ramo’s original definition. By defining the Beijing Consensus as a non-democratic challenger to the liberal capitalism of the Washington Consensus, Halper frames China as an ideological competitor to the United States.

Contests of ideology are fought in the realm of soft power, and therefore to formally define and measure the Beijing Consensus, one must first operationalize the concept of soft power. Soft power, a phrase coined by Joseph Nye, has become one of the most popular conceptualizations in foreign policy throughout the world. Nye defines soft power as a country's ability to persuade others to do what it wants by attraction or example (Nye, 2004).

Nye contrasts soft power with hard power, which includes the traditional measures of national power, namely military and economic power. Whereas hard power is measured in material terms, soft power is measured in intangible terms. A country’s soft power rests on its culture, its ideology or political values, and its ability to shape international rules and

political agendas. It is important to also note that Nye concedes that states have much less control over soft power than hard power, but still prescribes that America should rely more on its soft power than on its hard power. However, its appeal as a concept has been tempered by criticism that its effects are too hard to measure and evaluate. Nye does not provide the reader with a mechanism for how states produce attraction or how one state's attraction may cause another state to alter its policy. Kazuo Ogoura has argued that, "seen from the viewpoint of the party being influenced by the power, the question of whether accepting the power accords with this party's own interests is likely to be a far more important consideration than the attraction of the power" (Ogoura, 2006). Indeed, if we assume that states operate in accordance with their own interests, no matter how attractive *State A* may appear, we should not expect *State B* to agree to restrict its freedom of action or neglect its economic interests as a result of attraction to *State A*. Despite its limitations, the concept of soft power has become wildly popular in international affairs.⁶

A recent work that links the idea of the Beijing Consensus to soft power was Joshua Kurlantzick's *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*. Kurlantzick, a journalist and fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, began this book project by examining the expansion of Chinese influence into Southeast Asia. He details the

⁶ Major policy think tanks such as CSIS and RAND have all produced reports of American Soft Power. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Secretary of State Hilary Clinton have both spoken repeatedly of rebuilding American Soft Power in their speeches. Hu Jintao told China's 17th Party Congress that China needed to increase its soft power.

tools of Chinese soft power, ranging from diplomacy, trade incentives, cultural and educational exchange opportunities, to aid and investment patterns. A key purpose of his book is to contrast the growth of Chinese soft power with a perceived vacuum of American soft power in Asia. In essence, he writes about the same phenomena that concern Ramo and Halper: the increasing appeal of the China Model at the expense of the West. These concerns correspond to a growing consensus that soft power matters in international affairs and foreign policy. The *charm offensive* elaborates upon the mechanisms through which China is exporting the Beijing Consensus and growing its soft power around the world. The definition of soft power that Kurlantzick adopts is admittedly broader than Nye's formulation. He writes, "[for the Chinese] soft power means anything outside of the military and security realm, including not only popular culture and public diplomacy but also more coercive economic and diplomatic levers like aid and investment and participation in multilateral organizations" (Kurlantzick, 2007). Though this definition conflates elements of hard and soft power, it reflects the messy application of this term in the policy world.

Another noteworthy volume studies soft power in the Chinese context. Sheng Ding proposed the power conversion model in his book, *The Dragon's Hidden Wings: How China Rises with its Soft Power*. He notes that no adequate or persuasive empirical connections have been established between Nye's soft power concept and the case study of China. The book expands upon a journal article co-authored with Huang Yanzhong in which the authors rely primarily on public opinion surveys but supplements this measure with statistics about the number of foreign students and tourists (Huang & Ding, 2006). However, even the use of multiple indicators is not sufficient in the Chinese context because it is difficult to

distinguish the effects of hard power and soft power in a country that is experiencing miraculous economic growth. Economic prowess contributes not only to wealth but also to reputation and attractiveness. He cautions the readers of the difference between inducement and seduction. Inducement (e.g., the lure of trade and market) is an exercise of hard power in that it takes preferences as given and acts directly on behavior, whereas seduction implies the use of soft power in that a reward is offered for the purpose of changing behavior via a change of preference.

A country's economic clout reinforces its soft power if others are attracted to it for reasons beyond trade, market access, or job opportunities. The authors attempt to get around this problem by examining soft power resources and outcomes. They identify Chinese soft power resources as measured by the number of students studying Chinese language, the number of Confucius institutes established, China's compliance with international regulations, and the popularity of China in public opinion surveys in the developing world (Ding, 2010). Other scholars have attempted to quantify soft power using public opinion surveys by using comparative analysis of the US and China. For example, Zixiao and Zweig used survey data to test whether soft power was a zero-sum game (Yang & Zweig, 2009).

The literature on how to effectively operationalize soft power remains very sparse and much of it is written in the context of foreign policy and has limited theoretical utility. Nye himself does not provide a formal model to explain how states convert their soft power resources into desired policy outcomes. The concept is difficult to quantify because the

major components that go into soft power are inherently intangible: culture, ideology, and institutions are much harder to measure than tangible resources of economic and military strength. We see from the limited existing literature that public opinion surveys are the best measures we have for soft power. Nye himself arrives at this conclusion at the end of his book, concluding that the relationship between public opinion and soft power is the same as that between a thermometer and body temperature: it is an indicator (Nye, 2004).

The best way to empirically test the existence of the Beijing Consensus lies in measuring Chinese soft power through regional public opinion surveys. Halper and Kurzanzik's books provide a first cut at the question of whether a Beijing Consensus is, in fact, emerging. Both authors fall into the trap of conflating soft power and hard power factors in their analysis. Ding's book better theorizes soft power in the Chinese case and attempts to distinguish the effects of inducement (hard power) and seduction (soft power). Nevertheless his array of scattered evidence lacks parsimony and fails to establish a cohesive model of soft power.

III. THEORY AND METHODS

Building upon earlier work while avoiding their methodological pitfalls, this paper represents a first-cut attempt at studying the Beijing Consensus empirically rather than anecdotally. I use public opinion surveys and country-specific secondary literature to isolate and measure the influence of the Beijing Consensus in Asia. In this chapter, I discuss the theoretical approach taken to measure soft power independent of hard power, illustrating

the methodological merits of national surveys of public opinion in quantifying soft power. I then define the scope of my project and defend my decision to focus on studying third wave democracies using the Asian Barometer Survey data. Next, I present my definition of the Beijing Consensus and operationalize it on two dimensions: respondent preference for development and for democracy. The methods used to develop variables to measure respondent preference on these two dimensions will also be discussed, with the variables, *devpref* and *dempref*, as my dependent variables. I then present my independent variables and outline my hypotheses. Finally, I explore alternative explanations and establish controls before concluding the chapter with a discussion of the methods used for my quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Why Surveys?

As discussed earlier in the literature review, it becomes incredibly difficult to disentangle inducements, a form of hard power, from attraction, soft power. In many cases China achieves the policy outcomes it desires because it offers deals that the local elites cannot refuse. Previous discussion of Chinese soft power often fails to distinguish hard and soft power, with scholars viewing policy outcomes as a way to evidence soft power. This criteria, for example the number of exchange students, are not good measures of soft power. A student may study in China because he/she is attracted by China's soft power or simply because better economic opportunities exist in China than at home, which is a factor of hard power. In other words, these measures of policy outcomes fail to distinguish attraction from inducements. I conceptualize the Beijing Consensus as an ideological

phenomenon, thus a pure test of Chinese soft power. It measures attraction directly by quantifying the desire of respondents to emulate the China Model.

The advantage of studying this concept through public opinion surveys is that it isolates soft power by removing the confounding effects of policy outcomes. By operationalizing attraction through ratings of favorability, measured in surveys, I have developed a measure of Chinese soft power that has a high degree of internal validity. The advantage of using nationally representative public opinion surveys is that they enable a high degree of external validity to the results. National surveys have been long used as a proxy for soft power, but no attempts have been made to study whether soft power has any relationship to other preferences.

Why East Asia?

Having established public opinion survey as the best way to measure the effect of Chinese soft power on respondent preferences, I chose East Asia as the region to put this approach to the test. Due to the region's proximity to China, East Asia represents the easy case for the Beijing Consensus; if the Beijing Consensus fails in China's sphere of influence, it is unlikely to succeed elsewhere in the world.

As Kurlantick points out in his book, China seems to have created a systematic, coherent soft power strategy and a set of tools to implement this strategy. "It is in Southeast Asia where one can most easily notice Beijing's new soft power. Beijing first concentrated its charm on the region, before broadening its efforts to Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East" (Kurlantzick, 2007). He makes a comparison between China's behavior

in its nearest neighborhood and the invocation of the Monroe Doctrine by the United States in the Western Hemisphere. What goes for Southeast Asia also goes for Northeast Asia; Japan, Korea, and Mongolia all share historical ties with China and have benefited tremendously from economic exchange with China in recent years. Additionally, existing literature suggests that, perhaps due to their proximity to China, East Asian democracies were at risk of backsliding (Chu, Diamond, Nathan, & Shin, 2008). Chu et al. argue that these third wave democracies are in turmoil because nostalgia for the authoritarian past undermines democratic legitimation. The successful example of China's state capitalism can be expected to sway public opinion against their dysfunctional democratic governments. These two factors combine to make Asia the easy case for the Beijing Consensus.

These assumptions limited, however. Critics will point out that the security dimension and great power relations in East Asia complicate the measure of soft power. Two fault lines exist in Northeast Asia that can spark conflict, one being the Korean peninsula and the other being Taiwan, where both the US and China hold considerable stakes. The network of US military alliances, which includes five formal treaty allies (Japan, South Korea, Australia, Philippines, and Thailand) may temper the effect of Chinese soft power. The intervening role of the United States plays in Asia might mean that Africa would be a better place to test my theory. However, due to the availability of data, Asia will be the focus of this project. The fact that Asia represents an arena of struggle between the Beijing Consensus and the Washington Consensus, the interaction between the two only make the policy implication of this study more relevant. Of course, the Afrobarometer would be the

next most logical place to test the effect of the Beijing Consensus, however that data is not yet available.

Why ABS?

The availability of data weighed heavily in my decision to test my theory in East Asia. I had the opportunity to work with the 2010 Asian Barometer Survey (ABS) and developed my research design around this data. The ABS uses standard questionnaire containing a core module of identical or functionally equivalent questions. The Asian Barometer Survey is part of a network of Global Barometer Surveys⁷, which require all country teams to comply with the research protocols that the Global Barometer network has developed, tested, and proven as practical methods for conducting comparative survey research on public attitudes. It is administered by national teams who train their own fieldworkers according to a standardized week-long training program. The consistency of questions and methodology also allow for cross comparison between various countries. A model Asian Barometer Survey has a sample size of 1200 respondents, which allows a minimum confidence interval of plus or minus 3 percent at 95 percent probability.

In multilingual countries, considerable attention is given to the vexing challenge of questionnaire translation. Local language translations are prepared with the goal of accommodating every language group whose members constitute at least 5 percent of the population. To check for accuracy, the local language versions are screened through blind back-translation by a different translator and any discrepancies are corrected. Interviewers

⁷ Ongoing project started by Ronald Inglehart at Michigan with the expansion of the European Values Study into the World Values Survey

are required to record contextual information on the situations encountered during the interview (ABS Website).

The ABS uses national probability samples that give every citizen in each country an equal chance of being selected for interview. The methods used to obtain nationally representative samples vary from country to country. Sometimes the results are achieved by using census household lists; at other times multistage area approach is used. The method for selecting sampling units, however, is always randomized. The samples may be stratified, or weights applied, to ensure coverage of rural areas and minority populations in their correct proportions. As such, Asian Barometer samples represent the adult, voting-age population in each country surveyed (ABS website).

Beginning in 2010, the ongoing third wave of the ABS project has conducted surveys in Mongolia, Philippines, Taiwan, Singapore and Vietnam. It will eventually include data from Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, Japan, China, Hong Kong, and Cambodia. The survey includes questions on 22 topics (see Appendix A). My analysis use data from three national surveys: Taiwan, Philippines, and Mongolia. I made this methodological decision for two reasons. The first reason is convenience; these three national surveys were the first to be completed and was available for use when I began this project. The second is that once more data became available, namely the Singapore and Vietnam national surveys, I found the data hard to use due to large number of omissions. This is unsurprising given the non-democratic nature of these two regimes and the unwillingness of participants to give their honest opinion on potentially sensitive issues. Thus, though it would have been ideal

to compare against democratic and non-democratic countries, the non-response bias made this inoperable. If I do not have data about the respondent's opinion towards China's influence or their honest opinion towards democracy, then it would be difficult to test my hypotheses.

Defining the Beijing Consensus

I abide by Halper's definition of the Beijing Consensus--the appeal of authoritarian capitalism at the expense of Western values of liberal democracy--rather than Ramo's less parsimonious original definition. Halper asserts that China's influence will result in the adoption of the China Model and reduced preference for democracy, leading to a Beijing Consensus that displaces the Washington Consensus. I primarily focus on the effect of the Beijing Consensus at the mass level; I do not have the requisite data to examine its impact at the elite level. In an ideal scenario, I would be able to conduct a survey with the same question wording that target the elites (policymakers, businessmen, professors etc.) of the ABS countries. However, in the absence of that, secondary literature and policy analysis provides some insight into elite attitudes and behavior vis-à-vis China and will be included in the case studies.

The reader should be alerted that I did not attempt to construct a formal model for the effect of the Beijing Consensus. I am skeptical of the theoretical foundations of the claim that China's soft power is growing in the region and that this represents an ideological challenge to the United States. This paper represents a good-faith empirical test of the Beijing Consensus on its own terms, as presented by Halper and others. Using ABS survey

data I demonstrate both the extent of China's influence in Asia and the relationship between attitudes towards China and respondent preferences. I operationalize the Beijing Consensus on two dimensions: Development Preference and Democracy Preference.

1. Development Preference

I constructed the *devpref* variable as a direct measure of the Beijing Consensus. Devpref was constructed from the variable *q159*, which asks the open-ended question, "Which country should be a model for our own country's development?" I created a simple dichotomous scale of preferences: China model vs. not China model. I coded "1" if the respondent believed their country should follow China as a model and collapsed all other responses to "0". The *devpref* variable represents one of my two dependent variables. I am interested in whether varying perceptions of Chinese influence will change respondent preference towards China vis-à-vis the United States as a model of development. Thus I also created another dichotomous variable, *devpref2*, which I coded "1" if the respondent named the US as a model for development and "0" for all other responses. *Devpref2* will test for my model's internal validity.

2. Democracy Preference

I constructed the *dempref* variable as an indirect measure of the Beijing Consensus; it attempts to measure the ideological challenge to democratic values posed by China's rise. According to Halper, we would expect that as China's influence in the world grows, so does the ideological threat the Beijing Consensus poses to the Washington Consensus.

The conventional wisdom warns that the developing world will see the success of China's state capitalist model and turn their backs on democracy. Since one of the key differences between the Beijing Consensus and the Washington Consensus lies in their evaluation of democracy in the process of development, measuring attitudes towards democracy serves as an indirect proxy for the effects of the Beijing Consensus. I create two versions of the *dempref* variable, a one-measure form and a four-measure form. The one-measure variable simply uses *q126*, which asks respondents, "If you had to choose between democracy and economic development, which would you choose?" And then codes responses on a 4-point scale from "definitely economic development" (1) to "definitely democracy" (4). This question matches the mechanism advanced in the Beijing Consensus literature that China's success will tempt more countries to make the devil's bargain between development and democracy. I also develop a more comprehensive scale for democratic preference using four questions taken from two batteries in the ABS survey:

i. *q89: On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way*

democracy operates in your country? [4 point scale, from "very satisfied" (1)

to "not at all satisfied" (4)

ii. *q91: Compared with other systems in the world, would you say our*

government [4 point scale, from "it works fine". (1) to "should be replaced"

(4)]

iii. *q132: We should get rid of elections and have experts make the decisions,*

agree or disagree? [4 point scale, from “strongly approve” (1) to “strongly disapprove” (4)]

iv. *q126: If you had to choose between democracy and economic development, which would you choose?* [4 point scale, from “definitely economic development” (1) to “definitely democracy”(4)]

These questions assess the respondent’s satisfaction with the state of democracy in their country as well as their preferences towards democracy more generally. The reader may notice that in the first two questions, “1” represents the strongest support for democracy and “4” represents the weakest, but this is reversed in the second two questions. To correct this, I reversed the scales of *q89* and *q91*. I then collapsed each into a dichotomous scale, with “1-2” recoded as “0” and “3-4” recoded as “1”. Finally, I took the sum of the four variables and created a new dichotomous measure as a rough measure for favorability of democracy, in which strong support for democracy (3) was coded as “1” and weak support (1 or 2) was coded as “0.”

Thus I have two versions of my dependent variables, *devpref* and *dempref*, which I use as proxies for the Beijing Consensus. They represent the two dimensions of the concept that emerges from the recent literature. *Devpref* assesses the relative influence of the China model while *dempref* offers a way to measure the ideological challenge of the Beijing Consensus to democratic norms.

The independent variables I use were constructed from questions from the section of the ABS survey on international relations, which asks respondents to evaluate China's influence. The first independent variable, *chinainf*, is constructed by combining the results of *q157* and *q157a*. It measures the respondent's views towards China's influence in the region, ranging from "much more good than harm" (1) to "much more harm than good" (4). My second independent variable is taken directly from the survey. *Q161* asks, "Generally speaking, the influence China has on our country is:" with responses ranging from positive (1) to negative (4). My final independent variable, *change*, seeks to measure the perceived shift in power over the next ten years. It takes the difference between *q156* which is an open-ended question asking respondents to name which country currently has the most influence in Asia, and *q158*, which asks respondents to name which country will have the most influence in Asia in ten years. Thus *change* is a categorical variable ranging from "-2 to 2", with "-2" meaning the respondent switched their answer from China to U.S., and "2" meaning the respondent switched their answer from U.S. to China.

Hypotheses

This paper tests two sets of hypotheses. The first is meant to be a direct measure of the Beijing Consensus (Is the Beijing Consensus poised to gain popularity? Are respondents who view China positively more likely to adopt the China Model?), and the second as an indirect measure (Should we be worried about the Beijing Consensus as an ideological threat? Are respondents who have warmer views towards China more likely to have colder views towards democracy?):

H1a: Those who perceive China's influence in the region as positive are more likely view China as a model for their own country's development. (chinainf & devpref)

H1b: Those who perceive China's influence on their country as positive are more likely view China as a model for their own country's development. (q161 & devpref)

H1c: Those who perceive China's influence as growing are more likely view China as a model for their own country's development. (change & devpref)

H2a: Those who perceive China's influence in the region as positive are less likely to favor democracy. (chinainf & dempref)

H2b: Those who perceive China's influence on their country as positive are less likely to favor democracy. (q161 & devpref)

H2c: Those who perceive China's influence as growing are less likely to favor democracy. (change & devpref)

Each of the three independent variables corresponds to a plausible causal mechanism that links attitudes towards China to preferences for development or democracy. First is a measure of respondent perceptions of China's influence on the region (*chinainf*), which assumes that the respondent pays the most attention to China's soft power in the region and that those who see China's role in the region as positive will be more receptive to the China Model. The second variable represents respondent attitudes toward China's influence on their country (*q161*). This assumes that the respondent pays attention to what China is doing in his/her country and if they believe that China's influence is positive, they will

emulate China's best practices. The third variable is a measure of power transition, and deals with the projected change in China's influence vis-à-vis the U.S. over the next ten years. I recode *q156*, which asks which country currently has the most influence in Asia, such that "-1" is the United States, "0" is any other nation, and "1" is China. I applied the same coding scheme to *q158*, which asks which country will have the most influence in ten years. I subtract *q156* from *q158* to generate the change variable, which ranges from "-2 to 2", with "-2" meaning that the respondent switched their answer from China to the US, "0" meaning their answer remained the same, and "2" meaning they switched from US to China. This measure is designed to approximate the perceived shift in China's influence. I am specifically interested in whether those who changed their answer from the US to China feel warmer towards China's development model or are less supportive of democracy.

Alternative Explanations

1. Education

Education is not only a good indicator of socioeconomic status, but may also directly intervene in the preference formation towards development model and towards democracy. In all three regions surveyed, public education infrastructure provides primary and secondary education to the majority of citizens. Thus, without researching the curriculum of these schools, one must assume that some ideological rhetoric about democracy or development is communicated through the public schools. Thus education must be included in the model to eliminate it as spurious. Education was coded in the survey as total years of education (ranging from 0 to 30), and I created a new variable, *educat*, which collapses

these measures into a five point scale with “0” signifying no education, “1” signifying primary education (1-5), “2” signifying secondary education (6-11), “3” signifying tertiary education (12-16), and “4” signifying an advanced degree (>16).

2. Nationalism

Preference for the China Model could also be tempered by nationalism. Highly nationalistic individuals may hold biases towards China and its form of government. A nationalist may defend his country’s form of government despite its flaws. The variable *q154* offers a direct measure of nationalism, asking respondents how proud they are of their country on a scale from “1” to “4.”

3. Income

Income represents a common measure in the comparative politics literature about factors that should influence the creating of democracies. Support for democracy and developmental model should theoretically vary along class lines. The assumption is that after individuals acquire sufficient wealth to guarantee a secure livelihood they will demand for increased participation in politics. Thus, support for democracy should be stronger in higher income brackets. The income variable was created from a question which sorts respondents into five income brackets, with “1” being the lowest and “5” being the highest. Thus it is comparable across country lines.

Statistical Models

To systematically test the relationships between affinity towards China and preference for the China model and between affinity towards China and preference for democracy, I employ two types of statistical models—logit and probit. I test my first hypothesis via the logit model because the development preference variable is dichotomous, coded as China Model (0) or not China Model (1). I test my second set of hypotheses with an ordered probit model because the democracy preference variable is an ordinal measure. Each model is tested with three independent variables, which attempt to measure affinity towards China in different ways, and three control variables. I use these two statistical models to assess the sign, significance, and fit of my dependent variables. In addition to finding significant results, I am also interested in robustness as measured by percentage of variance explained and consistency between different versions of the dependent variables.

Methodological Limitations

A critic would note at this point that I have failed to present mechanism relating the independent variables to the dependent variables. The aim of my research design is not to demonstrate the existence of the Beijing Consensus, but merely to empirically test the claims that proponents of the theory make about its policy implications. Even though I am skeptical that such a relationship exists, I construct my statistical tests as a good-faith test of the Beijing Consensus using its assumptions to empirically evaluate the conventional wisdom. Thus, I permit myself to black-box the mechanism of how affinity towards China

might increase preference for the China Model or decrease preference for democracy. Because I chose to use survey data to isolate the impact of soft power from hard power, I cannot determine causal relationships between my variables. There is an inherent endogeneity problem in using survey data because it is impossible to determine the direction of the causal arrow between two responses. However, I do not need to demonstrate causation, but only significant correlation. If the dependent variables and independent variables consistently hang together, then that would be sufficient evidence for the existence of a Beijing Consensus and necessitate more sophisticated tests (survey experiments) to determine causation. However, if the variables are not significantly or consistently associated with each other, the burden of proof shifts to the proponents of the Beijing Consensus to produce better evidence to substantiate their theory.

Another set of criticisms suggests that the validity of the variables I use to measure the core concepts may be problematic. Because the Asian Barometer Survey was not designed as a measure of soft power, the survey questions were all designed with other very specific purposes in mind. Some questions ask respondents to objectively assess phenomenon while others draw on their subjective attitudes. Particularly the variables used to measure preference for democracy come from two separate batteries, one asking respondents to objectively assess the performance of democracy in their country and another asking for their subjective preference for democracy. A similar critique can be leveled against the independent variables, arguing that these ask for objective assessments of China's influence and do not tap into respondent subjective preferences for China. My response is that many other traditionally accepted measures of soft power, such as the

feeling thermometer of the dichotomous favorable-unfavorable question, do not do a better job of measuring the concept than my independent variables. The only exception is the Chicago Council on Global Affairs' soft power survey, which created five indices to comprehensively measure soft power (Whitney, 2008). However, given the limitation of resources, I used the best proxies for Chinese soft power and democracy that I had available to me in the Asian Barometer survey.

IV. RESULTS

I constructed a pooled ABS dataset, which I believe captures a representative slice of Asia to allow for generalizable results, to test my hypotheses. I combined the Taiwan survey (1592 samples), the Philippines survey (1200 samples), and Mongolia survey (1210 samples) into one STATA file consisting of 4002 observations to run my analysis. The unit of analysis is the individual respondent. Because I use pooled data, I subscribed to a conservative estimate of degrees of freedom based on the number of countries and not the number of observations. In this section, I provide a descriptive account of my data to contextualize my statistical models. I then use a logit model to test for the effect of attitudes towards China on preference for the China model. Next, I use an ordered probit model to test for the effect of attitudes towards China on preference for democracy. Finally, I reran my results by country and see if the model works in individual cases.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis of the ABS data reveals that China's influence now outstrips the US in Asia and is projected to grow over the next ten years. Interestingly, the Philippines expressed a significantly higher assessment of US influence vis-à-vis China's influence than Taiwan or Mongolia. However, the overall preference for the China model is shockingly low; it comes in as the fifth most popular model behind Singapore and Japan.

Despite China's growing influence in Asia, the so-called China Model does not hold very much appeal for Asians. When asked, "Which country should be a model for our own country's future development?" the vast majority of respondents still responded "the United States" (see *Figure 5*). Japan was another popular choice as was "our own model." The China model came in fifth place, behind Singapore. Though I used the ABS survey to directly measure China's soft power, my findings are consistent with the 2008 CCGA study of Soft Power in Asia, which found that the US maintains considerable soft power in Asia. They measure soft power through an index that accounts for its economic, cultural, human capital, political, and diplomatic power.

Figure 1 here

Figure 2 here

Figure 3 here

Figure 4 here

Figure 5 here

Of all respondents, only 6.77% chose China as a model of development for their country. By contrast, 31.33% chose the United States as a model of development and 21.31% chose Japan. By these metrics, the Beijing Consensus pales in comparison to the Washington Consensus in these Asian countries. Of those who believed that China will be the most influential country in Asia by 2020, only 8.74% (189/2162) believed that China should be the model for their country's development. By contrast, 18.41% (398/2162) felt that their country should follow the US model of development. The most appealing model among those who believe that China will become the most influential nation in Asia by 2020 is actually Japan (24.00%), followed by "own" (21.46%). Clearly, a direct measure of the appeal of the China model shows that Asian publics have little desire to emulate China despite their acknowledgement of China's success and their expectation of growing Chinese influence. However, a more important question is: "Are those who evaluate China's influence on their country as positive more likely to favor the China model?"

Similarly, the descriptive results cast doubt on whether China's influence erodes support for democracy. Those who believe that China exerts a great deal of influence on their country (56.6%) are more satisfied with the level of democracy in their country than those who believe that China has no influence at all (40.6%). Perception of Chinese influence does not negatively correlate with satisfaction in democracy. This is the opposite finding to what would be found if a Beijing Consensus was accurate: suggesting that growing Chinese influence may actually be positively associated with support for democracy. Those who felt that China's influence on their country was positive (57.5% satisfied vs. 42.5% unsatisfied) were more satisfied with the level of democracy than those who felt that

China's influence on their country was negative (49.6% satisfied vs. 50.4% unsatisfied).

Again this is the opposite of what one would expect if a Beijing Consensus were emerging in Asia. The question remains, "is there is an underlying relationship between attitudes towards China's influence and a more comprehensive measure of democracy that was not picked up in cross-tabulations?" To give the Beijing Consensus the best chance, it will be tested with two statistical models.

Statistical Analysis

A logit model was used to test the first set of hypotheses about the effect of affinity towards China and the appeal of the China model. A logit model is appropriate because the dependent variable was collapsed into dichotomous categories: China model and non-China model.

Table 1 here

Table 2 here

These results are very telling; even though the model shows a statistically significant relationship going in the right direction for China, it accounts for very little of the variance. The R^2 value remains consistently 2%, which means that the model accounts for less than 2% of the variance observed. The test of the US model confirms the weakness of this model. Statistically significant coefficients were observed for the country influence (*q161*) and future influence (*change*) variables, even though these relationships are logically inconsistent with expectations. It is difficult to come up with a plausible explanation for why

increasing affinity towards China would increase both the appeal of the US model and the China model, especially since these two options are mutually exclusive in the survey itself. My first set of hypotheses cannot be supported by the data and must be rejected. The expectation that high affinity towards China should be correlated with preference for the China model was disconfirmed. The results show that no matter how affinity towards China is defined, regional influence, country influence, and future influence, the correlation with preference for the China model remains weak. The burden of proof falls upon those who warn of a growing Beijing Consensus in Asia; they must demonstrate that increases in Chinese soft power have a consistent and substantive effect on the development preferences of individuals.

Table 3 here

Table 4 here

Table 3 and Table 4 present a series of ordered probit analyses for democracy using the pooled country data. I test the relationship of three independent variables measuring respondent attitudes towards China (*chinainf*, *q161*, and *change*) to the dependent variable, preference for democracy (large and small). I include three control variables that were believed to have affected the dependent variables (*nationalism*, *income*, and *education*). My results show that two of my independent variables have statistically significant relationships to the dependent variable in both the large and small versions of *dempref*. However, the results are inconsistent because the coefficients have different signs. For the output of the large version, the dependent variable was an index of four questions

measuring satisfaction and preference towards democracy, and shows that increased affinity towards China had a positive effect on preference for democracy. This is inconsistent with the expectation of the Beijing Consensus that affinity towards China should decrease preference for democracy. The small version, where the dependent variable is a single question asking for preference between democracy and development, shows the opposite effect. A statistically significant positive relationship was observed between decreasing affinity towards China and preference for democracy. Though this is logically consistent with the expectations of the Beijing Consensus, it contradicts the results of the large version, which measures the same concept. Also, the first cut is not statistically significant and addresses the most interesting section: those who choose development over democracy and that doesn't correlate with attitudes of warmth towards China. As with the first model, R^2 values are very low, none of the models explain more than 3% of the variance observed.

Thus the results of my ordered probit analysis fail to provide support for my second set of hypotheses. I find no support for the claim that the Beijing Consensus threatens democratic norms. Those who perceive China's influence in the region as positive do not have significantly different preferences towards democracy as those who held negative views. Those who perceive China's influence in their country as positive do not have significantly different preferences towards democracy as those who do not. Finally, those who perceive China's influence as growing over the next ten years do not have different preferences towards democracy than those who do not.

Country-Level Variance

After finding insufficient evidence to support the Beijing Consensus at the aggregate level, I proceeded to test my hypotheses at the individual country level. Running the logit model to assess development preference by country does not generate any remarkable results. All the relationships observed at the aggregate level remained significant at the country level, and none of the signs change direction. The model's fit at the country level was no better than at the aggregate level. The amount of variance that can be explained by the model remained under 5%. Running the ordered probit model to assess democracy preference by country, however, did yield interesting results. When the model was run with aggregate data, positive assessment of China's regional influence (*chinainf*) had a statistically significant positive relationship with preference for democracy. However, when run country by country, this statistically significant relationship drops out. None of the three countries individually produced statistically significant results.

When run by country, positive assessment of China's influence on the country (*q161*) loses significance in the Mongolia and Philippines sample, but remains statistically significant in Taiwan. Of course, running the model on a smaller sample reduces significance and casts doubt on the results of the external validity of the aggregate model; with such poor fit and with the mixed country level findings, it is difficult to gage whether the observed statistical significance is meaningful.

Summary

The fact that the Beijing Consensus failed direct and indirect measures bode poorly for the appeal of the China Model elsewhere in Asia and in the world. The statistical analysis of the pooled data and the country-level data suggest that a different set of variables outside the scope of the Beijing Consensus is operating in each of the countries that accounts for the variation in respondent preferences for development and democracy. The dependent variables included in my statistical model were only able to explain a negligible amount of the variance, meaning that despite their statistical significance, they fail to capture the bigger story of what is going on in these countries. Either the tests I used were unfair tests of the assertions of the Beijing Consensus, or the evidence for such a phenomenon is extremely weak.

Though conventional wisdom suggests that growing acceptance of Chinese influence is detrimental to American influence, my findings suggest that this may not be the case. My case studies will reveal that the two are, in fact, not mutually exclusive. Additionally, the fear that the China model is gaining popularity seems exaggerated, at least in Asia. The ABS survey shows that Asians have a limited affinity for China's model of development. My results also show that support for democracy is weakly associated with affinity towards China at best. It may very well be that people can feel affinity towards China but have no desire to emulate it economically or politically. Another point that will be discussed in greater detail in the case studies is the potential effects of an important intervening variable, security concerns, which was not included in the model and which may actually account for

much of the variation in Asian public opinion towards China. One potential problem of testing the theory in Asia is that almost all neighboring states have some sort of security concern vis-à-vis China, so it was not possible to include a control for this in the model. I explore the implications of security concerns in my case studies.

V. CASE STUDIES

Taiwan

The Taiwan case is a hard case for the Beijing Consensus given the unique nature of cross-strait relations. Though an argument can be made that Taiwan's cultural and linguistic similarities with China--the dissatisfaction with democracy after the scandal ridden years of the Chen Shui-bian administration, as well as the growing economic ties with China--opens Taiwan somewhat to influence by China. This concern has been voiced by some western commentators and Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) partisans in the debate over the Economic-Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA). However the empirical evidence in support of any sort of Chinese soft power influence on Taiwan remains weak. The Taiwanese public is quite ambivalent in their attitudes towards China; according to the ABS survey data slightly less than half of Taiwanese believe China's influence on Taiwan as positive and slightly more than half of Taiwanese believe China's influence on Taiwan as negative. This finding is highly correlated with the blue-green division in Taiwanese domestic politics and reflects the complex dynamic of cross-strait relations. On the one hand Taiwan has profited greatly from economic relations with China; the terms of the ECFA

favor Taiwanese businesses by reducing tariffs on 539 categories of imports worth \$13.8 billion a year, and many Taiwanese business people have significant investments and work on the mainland. On the other hand, security concerns still plague cross-strait relations. Issues like US arms sales to Taiwan and Chinese ballistic missiles deployed against Taiwan remain a source of tension. The recent arrest of a Taiwanese general accused of being a Chinese agent in March 2011 serves as a stark reminder that a competitive dimension still exists under the framework of cooperation emphasized by President Ma Yingjeou and the KMT. One way to characterize the evolution of cross-strait relations in recent years is that the soft elements have gotten softer while the hard elements have gotten harder. China's charm offensive on Taiwan has not meant a relaxation of its coercive tactics. The total result of China's Taiwan policy under Hu Jintao is inconclusive. What is clear is that despite the economic success of China and the increasing level of interdependence across the strait, the majority of Taiwanese have no desire to emulate China and wish simply to maintain the status quo. The ABS survey reveals that there's little desire to adopt the China model in Taiwan; less than 5% of the respondents named China as a model for Taiwan's development. Taiwanese are proud of their own development model and if they were to emulate another model, a plurality picked Japan.

China's success has even less effect on Taiwanese attitudes towards democracy. Even though public support for democracy remains fragile and the island has been rocked by corruption, Taiwanese are not going to give up their hard-won democracy and adopt a China-based system. To the contrary, a paper by Emerson Niou indicates that the only condition upon which Taiwanese public would accept reunification with China is if the

mainland became more democratic (Niou, 2004). Certainly the CCP subscribes to the idea of economic and soft power inducements will move Taiwan towards reunification, however all indicators show that Taiwanese are very proud of their system of government and are not inclined to adopt the China model or abandon democracy. Even though a large majority of Taiwanese expressed distrust for the key institutions of representative democracy, support for the continued democratization remains strong. The ABS results show that Taiwanese placed their current government at 6.7 on a scale of 1-10 (10 being the most democratic) and want their government to be 8.2 ten years in the future. The distrust in government institutions is fueled by perception of corruption in all levels of government (ex. Chen Shui-bien's trail) and by perception of deteriorating governance (ex. Mishandling of the 2009 landslides). Earlier scholars have expressed doubts about Taiwan's ability to consolidate democracy and are concerned over lingering attachments to authoritarianism (Chu, Diamond, Nathan, & Shin, 2008). However, Taiwan's love-hate relationship with democracy is not at risk of backsliding because of ties with China. The Beijing Consensus fails in the Taiwan case. If anything, Taiwanese are probably more proud of their democracy when contrasting it to China's authoritarian government than when evaluating it against their own experiences.

China's soft power in Taiwan remains fairly limited and it is almost impossible to access its impact independently of China's hard power. China's economic gravity has a large inducement effect on Taiwan, but the Taiwanese are not seduced by the China model. It is important to note that those who favor China and believe it has a positive influence on the region are focusing on the economic benefits that Taiwan can derive from working with

China. My experiences conducting focus groups in Taiwan reveal that if primed to think about cross-strait relations in economic terms, public opinion tends to be fairly positive, but if primed to think about the relationship in security terms, public opinion tends to be very negative towards China.⁸ This case illustrates the problems with attributing public opinion to soft power when hard power factors, be they economic or military concerns, play a large role in shaping preferences. The statistical model has a difficult time capturing the conditional nature of Taiwanese preferences.

Philippines

The Philippines represents a fragile democracy that should be a relatively easy case for the Beijing Consensus. The Philippines exhibited the lowest level of nationalism and the least pride in their system of government; in stark contrast to Taiwan and Mongolia, not one Filipino responded that their country should pursue its own model of development. Interestingly, the Philippines also had the lowest ratings of Chinese influence in Asia and high ratings of the United States; 61% of Filipinos believe the U.S. to be the most influential country in Asia currently. Somewhat surprisingly, the Philippines also had the most positive opinion of Chinese influence in the region. Despite its territorial dispute with China, 62% of Filipinos believed China's influence in the region is positive. These seemingly counterintuitive findings seem to be the consequence of the U.S. security umbrella protecting the Philippines; shielded from security concerns vis-à-vis China, Filipinos are

⁸ I received a grant from the Asian Pacific Studies Institute in the summer of 2009 to conduct case studies examining Taiwanese public opinion in the aftermath of the Financial Crisis. This experience provided me with a more nuanced understanding of the balance between the hard and soft dimensions of cross-strait relations.

more disposed to focus solely on the more positive, economic dimension of Chinese influence.

Secondary literature supports this interpretation that Filipinos feel secure in US military presence and can benefit from economic ties with China. When presented with a choice between two visions of China, a small majority (56%) said it is “a peaceful country that is more interested in economic growth than in military adventures.” 35% chose the alternative view of China as “an expansionist power that is building up its military to enforce its claims to sovereignty in the South China Sea.” (Medieros, 2008) Evan Medieros, a senior political scientist at the RAND Corporation, argues that a key determinant of the Philippines’ response to the rise of China is the nature of the state, specifically its relative internal instability. Domestic political instability combined with the prospect of China-oriented economic growth has “produced a policy of general accommodation toward China—an orientation that is likely to continue” (Medieros, 2008). Unsurprisingly, the majority of Filipino respondents believed China’s influence in the region and in their country was positive. However, preference for China as a model for development is dwarfed in the Philippines by the legacy of U.S. colonial rule.

Positive assessment of China also does not correspond to a decrease of support for democracy in the Philippines. This too is unsurprising. Ample evidence exists to suggest that the Philippines is ripe for the Beijing Consensus to take hold. The Philippines has one of the highest incidents of poverty in the region; the failure of democratic regimes to deliver economic prosperity resulted in one of the lowest commitments to democracy in countries

surveyed in 2002 (Chu, Diamond, Nathan, & Shin, 2008). The 2010 ABS data supports this finding. When asked to choose between economic development and democracy, 74% of Filipinos elected economic development. The level of satisfaction for democracy in the Philippines, at 45%, is the lowest of the three countries surveyed. However, with the legacy of “people power,” the commitment to the principle of democracy remains strong in the Philippines despite the crisis of legitimacy that the democratic regime faces. Filipinos evaluated their current Aquino administration to be a 5.7 on a 1-10 scale of democracy and would like to see an increase in democracy to 7.8 over the next ten years. The positive affinity for China does not translate into preference for the China model or a desire to emulate China’s state capitalist model. The challenges to democracy in the Philippines come from within, from unconstitutional challenges to politics, and not from the Beijing Consensus.

Mongolia

Mongolia is a young democracy that shares a long, porous border with China and is highly dependent on China economically. One would expect that given its economic backwardness and the fragility of its democratic government, Mongolia should represent the easiest case for the Beijing Consensus. Yet we observe quite the opposite story; Mongols are very proud of their own model of development and government and have the most negative attitudes towards China in the entire sample. In stark contrast to the Philippines, Mongolia evaluated China’s influence in the region and their country both as high. However, a majority of respondents (61%) believed China’s influence in Asia to be

negative, and an even larger majority (68%) felt that China's influence on Mongolia was negative. Despite its low level of development, Mongols showed the highest level of support (28.2%) for their own model of development. The next most popular model was the U.S. model at 21.6%. Only 9.6% of Mongols saw China as a model for their country's development. These results are unsurprising given the high degree of nationalism exhibited by Mongolian respondents; 72% declared that they were very proud to be citizens of Mongolia. A strong majority (90%) also agreed "we should defend our way of life instead becoming more like other countries." The nationalism of the Mongolian people has in fact been a source of tension in Sino-Mongolian relations since the 1990s. The Pan-Mongolism movement to unite Inner Mongolia with Mongolia and Mongolian Buryatskaya is viewed by China as a separatist movement (Jamestown Foundation). From the perspective of Mongolians, Sinification is seen as a threat to the national heritage of the Mongol nation. Mongolians view Chinese with suspicion and believe that the PRC harbor intentions to recapture Mongolia. Given this independent nature of Mongolians and their suspicion of China and Chinese culture, it is unsurprising that the China model holds so little appeal. Without the security guarantee of the United States or Russia, Mongolians are keenly aware of the precariousness of their security environment. Hard power defines the China-Mongolia relationship, and Chinese soft power may play a secondary role in mitigating Mongol fears about China's intentions but cannot be expected to alter their economic or political preferences.

Mongolian attitudes towards democracy must be understood within the historical context of the country's double transition. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Mongolia

simultaneously underwent the democratization of the communist one-party rule into a multiparty competitive system and a transition from a planned economy to a free market economy (Chu, Diamond, Nathan, & Shin, 2008). These double transitions are particularly difficult because the economic costs of market reform and the repression of civil society under totalitarian rule pose special obstacles to democratic consolidation. Mongolia lacked the checks and balances necessary for constitutional rule, but democracy was still introduced without these institutions (Chu, Diamond, Nathan, & Shin, 2008). Hence it is unsurprising that widespread corruption and political paralysis ensued. In 1999, three members of the Mongolian parliament, all members of the Democratic Coalition, which unseated the Communist Party from power just years earlier, were convicted in a high profile corruption scandal. The former Communist Party, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) returned to power in 2004 through the electoral process and remains dominant. Protesters sacked the MPRP headquarters in 2008 after the Democrats accused the MPRP of election fraud and five protesters were killed. Because it depended on Soviet assistance throughout the Cold War, Mongolia experienced negative GDP growth and deep recession after the collapse of the Soviet Union (CIA Factbook). In 2002, Mongolia had a per capital purchasing power parity GDP of a mere \$1770 compared to \$4600 for China. Not until the 2000s did the country begin experiencing positive economic growth as a result of the global commodities boom. Today, the per capital PPP GDP has increased to \$3300 compared to \$7400 (CIA Factbook).

Despite the economic turmoil and political instability of the late 90s, Chu et. al found in their 2002 survey that Mongolians expressed satisfaction with the performance of their

current system, were committed to democracy, and believed that the regime would become more democratic in the future (Chu, Diamond, Nathan, & Shin, 2008). Mongolians showed fairly robust support for democracy, but they tended to support it as a political ideal rather than political practice. A large majority of Mongolians expected democracy to develop and consolidate in the next ten years; they were among the most optimistic citizens in Asia. In the 2010 study, Mongolian support for democracy remained strong. Mongolians are ambivalent in their satisfaction towards their government; about half are satisfied and half unsatisfied. Mongolians put their present level of democracy at 5.1 out of 10 and put their future expectation for democracy at 9.6. Even though their democratic government made no progress by this metric since 2002, Mongolians remain optimistic that democracy should develop and consolidate in the future. This support for democracy coupled the legacy of one-party rule with a suspicion of China to create the opposite effect of what the Beijing Consensus predicts. Mongolians reject authoritarian rule even though they see serious problems with their own form of government. China's economic success does not move Mongols to emulate China. Quite the contrary, China's success prompts more Mongolians to fear the Sinification of their country.

Verdict on the Beijing Consensus

The case studies reveal that concerns over the Beijing Consensus were overstated and reflect a misunderstanding of the complex dynamics of Asian politics and the uniqueness of each nation. Even though the Philippines and Mongolia seem to represent easy cases for the Beijing Consensus, local dynamics contradicted the assumptions made

about the preferences of the citizens of those countries. The case studies reveal that simply looking at trends in public opinion tells us very little about the realities in Asia. My analysis also reveals the impossible task of separating hard power and soft power in the Asian context; military and economic matters provide the backdrop for public opinion and soft power. Discussion of China as an ideological challenge to the U.S. therefore does not add much to the discourse about China's rise and that the concerns over China's illiberal challenge misrepresent the reality of regional politics.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

This paper attempts an empirical study of soft power by testing the claims made about the emergence of the Beijing Consensus and its ideological challenge to the West. I sought to measure preferences and not outcomes to avoid the conflating of hard and soft power in previous studies. I measured attraction directly using survey data from the 2008 Asian Barometer Survey and used this proxy for public opinion as my independent variable. I tested the relationship between these measures of affinity towards China and respondent preferences towards development and democracy. I understand that this approach cannot determine causal linkages, but I argue that a strong correlation must be established in order to validate the Beijing Consensus. I provided both quantitative and qualitative tests of the theory in three Asian democracies: Taiwan, Philippines, and Mongolia. In other words, I attempted a good-faith test of the Beijing Consensus in the easy case of East Asia. If the theory fails in China's sphere of influence then it is unlikely to succeed elsewhere. My

analyses show that the Beijing Consensus is unlikely to find traction in Asia's democracies. The results of my statistical model suggest that no robust relationship exists between affinity towards China and preference for the China model. In fact, the China model performed poorly in competition with other models of development, and the US model remained the most popular in Asia. Furthermore, my statistical model could not find a robust relationship between affinity towards China and preference for democracy. Those who saw China's role in the region and in their countries as positive were no less likely to support democracy than their counterparts who evaluated China's role as negative. The Beijing Consensus does not perform better at the individual country level or in the qualitative case studies. The citizens of Asia may embrace China's influence in the region, possibly as a potential counter-weight against US influence, but are not ready to remake their nations in China's image. The burden of proof weighs heavily on the pundits who subscribe to the ideas of the Beijing Consensus to demonstrate its empirical existence and present a model for how it can alter the preferences of respondents. China has been explicit that it does not wish to export its form of government to other countries and that its institutions should not be replicated. If those who argue that China represents an ideological challenge to the United States cannot provide evidence to support their claims, then it appears the quote with which I opened this paper rings true. Concerns about China's ideological challenge to the U.S. reveal more about the insecurities that plague the Americans after the Global Financial Crisis than they do about Chinese realities.

Theoretical Implications

I believe the implications of my project on theory and policy are as follows. Theoretically, this paper reveals the difficulty in operationalizing soft power and the near impossibility of isolating soft power from hard power. At the very least my project has provided me with a framework with which to analyze the full set of ABS data when it becomes available. I hope that my first-cut attempt at this problem can push the literature towards more rigorous tests of the slippery concept of soft power. I maintain that surveys are the best instrument to study this subject, but a better survey than the ABS must be constructed which can deliberately evaluate the various dimensions of soft power. My case studies reveal that in foreign policy, it is not useful or feasible to distinguish hard and soft power. Countries will act according to their interests and desire to maintain their autonomy. China's soft power has been dramatically exaggerated. By playing on the fears of American about decline authors have managed to sell books where the ideological threat of China looms large. In reality, the concept itself has limited utility. At best it is a good concept that has been extensively misapplied, and at worst it is not a very useful formulation in international affairs. Soft power is the velvet glove covering the iron fist of hard power; China's influence around the world is growing not because of its charm offensive but because of its economic gravity. Additionally, the case studies reveal that underlying concerns about security seem to weigh heavily in respondent affinity towards China.

The Philippines, which has a territorial dispute with China, show higher affinity towards China but also high assessment of US regional influence. Mongolia, which has no

territorial dispute with China, shows a much lower affinity towards China and a much lower assessment of US regional influence. Taiwan falls somewhere in the middle. One potential explanation for this trend is that because the Philippines has a security guarantee from the United States, it can focus on China as an economic opportunity. Mongolia, however, which does not have a security guarantee from the US, views China as a security threat. Because of the uncertainty of US security guarantees for Taiwan and the lure of China's economic inducements, Taiwanese public opinion towards China remains ambivalent.

Policy Implications

The policy implications of this paper flow from the theoretical implications. With regards to China, it seems a tremendous waste of national resources for China to invest so heavily in soft power promotion. It is unclear to me what policy outcomes such a campaign will bring about. With regards to the US, I hope my paper can calm some of the fears about China as an ideological challenge. Such Cold War era strategic thinking reveals an ignorance about China and the contemporary world. Let us return to Nye's three-dimensional game of Chess. My research shows that China's soft power in Asia is quite limited and more a factor of its hard power than an independent phenomenon. The liberal democratic norms championed by the US seem to prevail on the bottom board. Since China has largely conceded the military board to the United States, the last remaining board, economics, is where China is furiously competing with the United States.

However, we know that economic competition is not a zero-sum game, and that competition can push both players to perform better than they otherwise would. This is the

most hopeful scenario for the future of US-China relations--for the two powers to continue as friendly rivals. China does not export ideology in the way the Soviet Union did. It is playing by the rules of the game established by the United States. Though China is a convenient scapegoat, US policymakers must quit crying foul and get their heads back in the game. In an age where GDP matters more than force (Gelb 2010), they must tackle the structural problems that threaten the long-term health of the American economy rather than shadow boxing against the China threat.

Future Research

In future extensions of this project, I hope to address some of these concerns, acquire better data, and advance my methodology. Survey data from authoritarian countries was unreliable because of censorship. Respondents chose not to answer politically sensitive questions and this non-response bias made it impossible to assess attitudes towards China. A different set of tests and procedures must be developed to operationalize the theory in these relevant cases. Testing the Beijing Consensus in Africa would certainly make for the most relevant test of the theory from a policy perspective. Another area of improvement could be the adoption of elite surveys to assess China's soft power influence on elites and on decision-making. Though this data would be hard to acquire, it would be invaluable in elucidating the mechanisms through which soft power influences the policy making process. Better measures of soft power could also be built into the ABS survey by using questions such as, "Where would you like to live other than your own country?" or, "Which country do you admire most and why?" Finally, more advanced statistical models could be employed to better assess the data I have already collected. A hierarchical model may be

used to assess country-level variance while allowing me to bring non-individual level variables into the model. Rather than collapsing categories into potentially problematic dichotomous scales, multinomial models can be used to test these cases. Overall, the study of dyadic relationships and in-depth case studies seem to be a more feasible way forward than a model that can explain variance in the aggregate data.

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Appendix A

1. Economic Evaluations	What is the economic condition of the country and your family; now, over the last five years and in the next five years.
2. Trust in Institutions	How trustworthy are public institutions, including government branches, the media, the military, and NGOs.
3. Social Capital	Membership in private and public groups, the frequency and degree of group participation, trust in others, and influence of guanxi.
4. Human Security	How safe is living in the town/city; ever been a victim of any crime.
5. Participation in Elections	Voting in the last election, specific voting patterns and participation in campaigns, advocacy for certain candidate or party, and perception of the fairness of the last national election.
6. Access to Public Service	How easy or difficult it is to obtain public services, such as healthcare, identity document, help from the police, and enrollment in public school.
7. Psychological Involvement and Partisanship	Interest in politics, perception of present political situation, and frequency of discussion on politics, main source of political news, impact of government policies, and party allegiance.
8. Traditionalism	Importance of consensus and family, role of the elderly, face, and attitudes towards relationship, private interests/liberties vs. social

	order, and respect of procedures by political leaders.
9. Globalization	Frequency of utilizing Internet, following major events in foreign countries, traveling abroad, and contact with foreigners.
10. Political Participation	Contact with government and elected officials, political organizations and NGOs. Fulfillment of citizen duties and active participation in the political process as well as demonstration or protest march.
11. Meaning of Democracy	Meaning of democracy and characteristics of democracy.
12. Satisfaction with Government and Democracy	Satisfaction with how democracy works, democratic ranking of present and previous regimes, and expected ranking in the current regime. Suitability of democracy in the country.
13. Important Problems to be Addressed	The most important problems that the government should address, such as economy, education, government services etc. How likely it is that the government will solve the most important problem.
14. Quality of Governance	Perception of state affairs, corruption, accessibility to and accountability of political system, and transparency and responsiveness of the government.
15. Democratic Legitimacy and Preference for Democracy	Preference for democracy, compared with different regime types and economic development.

16. Citizen Empowerment, System Responsiveness and Political support	The ability of people to influence the government. Trust in local government officials, and the unity of the nation.
17. Authoritarian vs. Democratic Values	Level of education and political equality, government leadership and superiority, separation of executive and judiciary.
18. Ideological Cleavage	Ownership of state-owned enterprises, national authority over local decisions, cultural insulation, social justice, and self-sufficiency.
19. Citizenship	Identity between citizen and ethnic group, equality, and loyalty to the country.
20. International Relations	Awareness of other governmental organizations and impression of other countries.
21. Socio-economic Background Variables	Gender, age, marital status, education level, years of formal education, religion and religiosity, household, income, language and ethnicity.
22. Interview Record	Gender, age, class, and language of the interviewer, people present at the interview. The attitudes and emotions of the respondent, the language or dialect spoken in interview, and was an interpreter present.

Appendix B

Figure 1 Most Influential Power in Asia in 2010

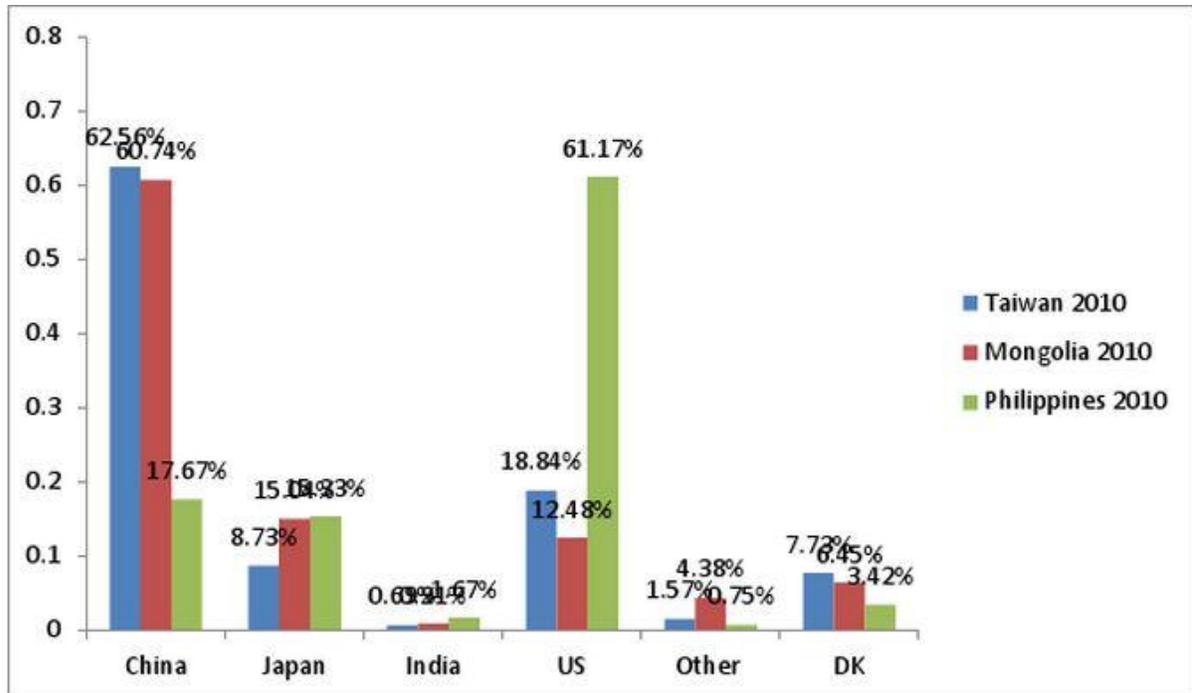


Figure 2 Most Influential Power in Asia in 2020

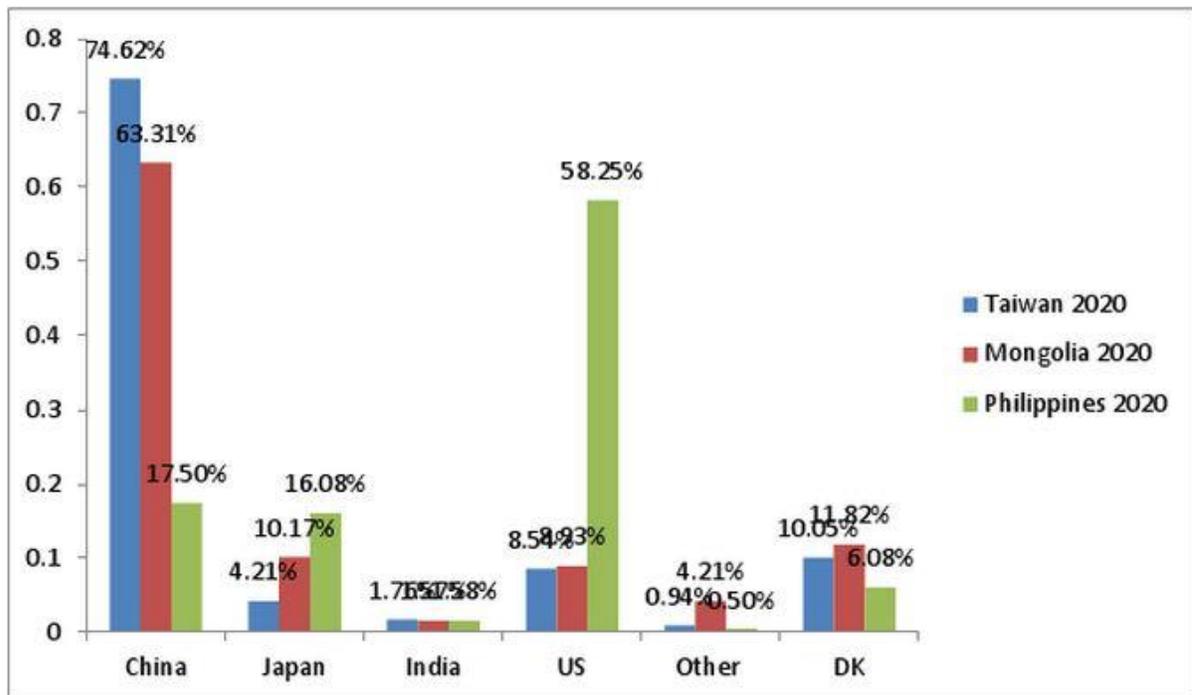


Figure 3 Attitude towards China's Influence in the Region

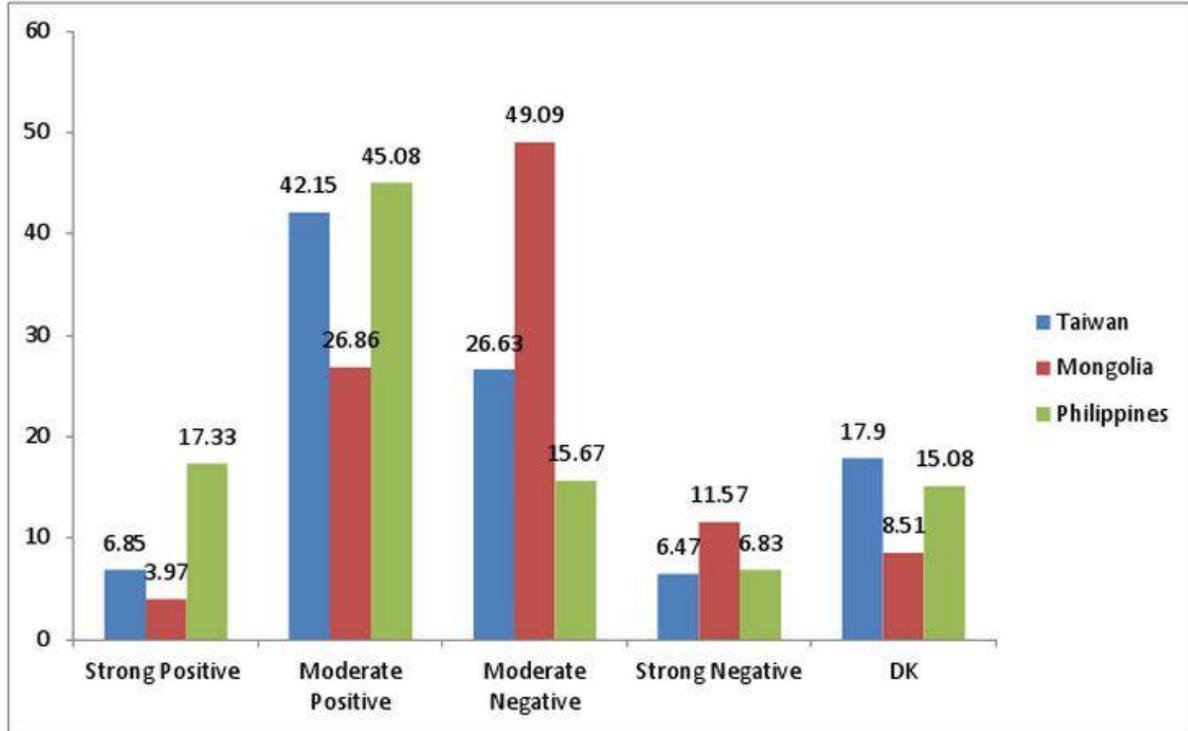


Figure 4 Attitudes towards China's Influence on the Country

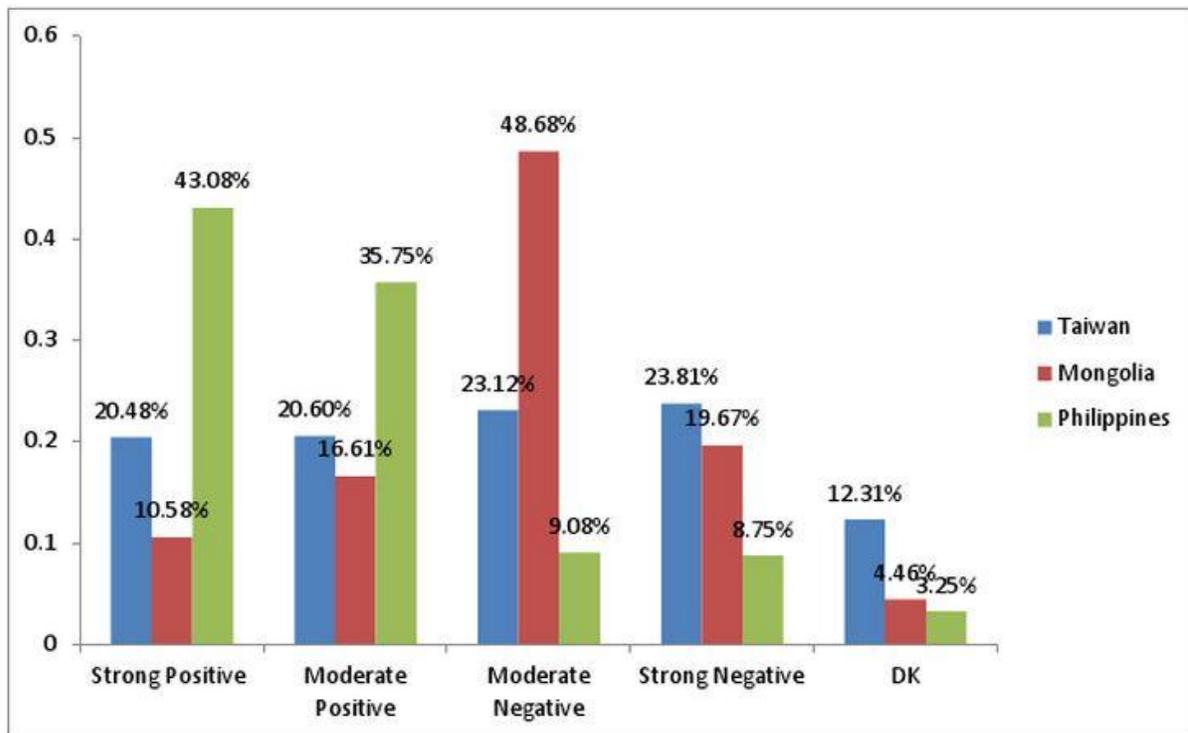


Figure 5 Preferred Model of Development

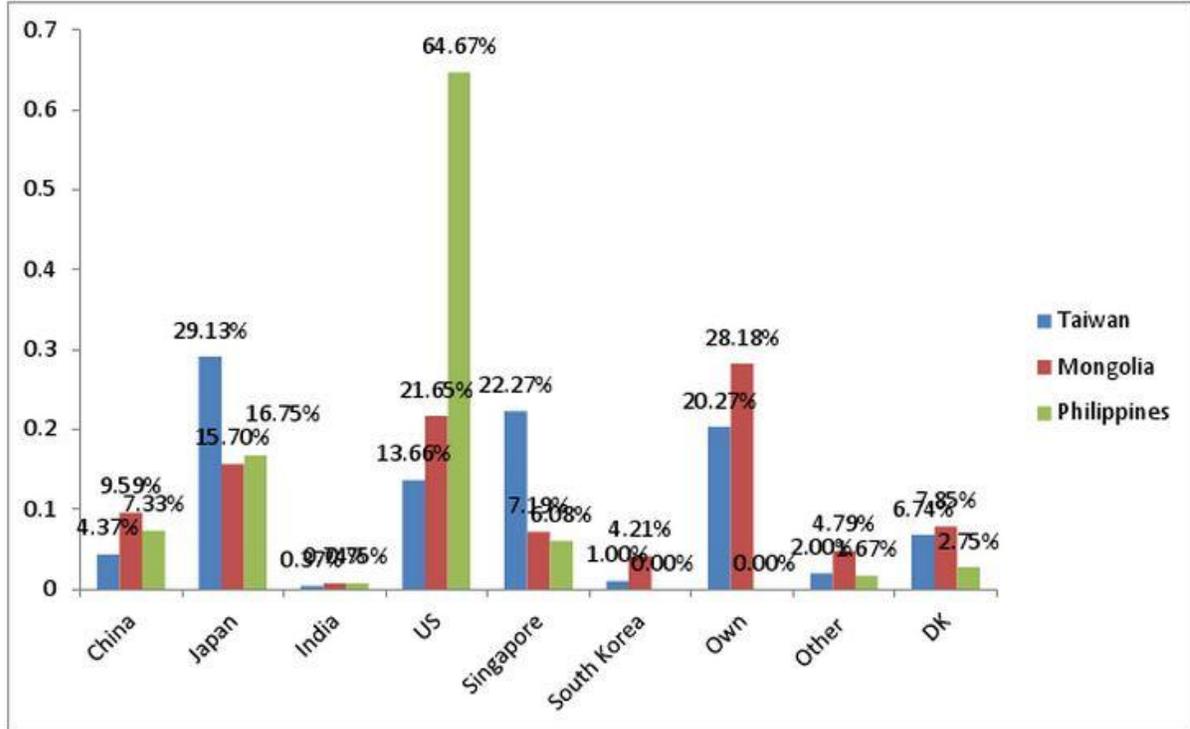


Table 1: China vs. Non-China					Table 2: US vs. Non-US				
EQUATION	VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	EQUATION	VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)
		Development Preference	Development Preference	Development Preference			Development Preference	Development Preference	Development Preference
Development Preference (Far China Model)	Regional Influence	0.478*** (0.0893)			Development Preference (Far US Model)	Regional Influence	0.0476 (0.0486)		
	Nationalism	0.0453 (0.0796)	0.0148 (0.0767)	0.125* (0.0746)		Nationalism	0.435*** (0.0461)	0.450*** (0.0449)	0.507*** (0.0430)
	Education	0.0642 (0.0916)	0.102 (0.0880)	0.0620 (0.0845)		Education	-0.488*** (0.0535)	-0.437*** (0.0508)	-0.383*** (0.0479)
	Income	-0.00211 (0.0630)	-0.0134 (0.0610)	0.00746 (0.0597)		Income	-0.168*** (0.0379)	-0.181*** (0.0367)	-0.180*** (0.0356)
	Country Influence		0.412*** (0.0661)			Country Influence		0.266*** (0.0359)	
	Future Influence			0.0339 (0.0800)		Future Influence			-0.115** (0.0453)
	Constant	-1.741*** (0.385)	-1.507*** (0.373)	-3.114*** (0.287)		Constant	-0.209 (0.219)	0.452** (0.215)	-0.761*** (0.156)
	Observations	3,276	3,545	3,777		Observations	3,276	3,545	3,777
	Standard errors in parentheses					Standard errors in parentheses			
	*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1					*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1			

Table 3 : Large Democracy					Table 4 : Small Democracy						
EQUATION	VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	EQUATION	VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)		
		Democracy Preference	Democracy Preference	Democracy Preference			Democracy Preference	Democracy Preference	Democracy Preference		
Democracy Preference (4 variable)	Regional Influence	0.0907*** (0.0269)			Democracy Preference (1 variable)	Regional Influence	-0.0824*** (0.0248)				
	Education	0.104*** (0.0289)	0.102*** (0.0278)	0.0940*** (0.0271)		Education	0.0551** (0.0262)	0.0564** (0.0252)	0.0687*** (0.0245)		
	Income	-0.0298 (0.0198)	-0.0351* (0.0192)	-0.0463** (0.0187)		Income	-0.00149 (0.0181)	0.0129 (0.0175)	0.0198 (0.0171)		
	Nationalism	0.0698*** (0.0249)	0.0686*** (0.0243)	0.0807*** (0.0233)		Nationalism	-0.0488** (0.0230)	-0.0434* (0.0224)	-0.0556*** (0.0215)		
	Country Influence		0.0705*** (0.0197)			Country Influence		-0.0690*** (0.0181)			
	Future Influence			0.0129 (0.0250)		Future Influence			-0.000356 (0.0230)		
	cut1	Constant	-1.445*** (0.125)	-1.512*** (0.122)		-1.287*** (0.0931)	cut1	Constant	-0.00394 (0.112)	0.0983 (0.109)	-0.113 (0.0823)
	cut2	Constant	-0.000476 (0.122)	-0.0633 (0.119)		0.146 (0.0901)	cut2	Constant	0.933*** (0.113)	1.025*** (0.110)	0.819*** (0.0830)
	cut3	Constant	1.659*** (0.112)	1.740*** (0.112)		1.530*** (0.0854)	cut3	Constant	1.659*** (0.115)	1.740*** (0.112)	1.530*** (0.0854)
	Observations	3,087	3,328	3,509		Observations	3,143	3,393	3,589		
Standard errors in parentheses				Standard errors in parentheses							
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1				*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1							