

**Discussion Paper No. 18**

**Greeks Bearing Consensus**

An Outline for Increasing Greece's Soft Power in  
the West

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**The Hellenic Observatory**

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London School of Economics & Political Science

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An Outline for Increasing Greece's Soft Power in the West**

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On July 1, 2003, Greece suffered a dramatic loss in power. In a matter of minutes, it went from one of Europe's more influential states to just another European Union (E.U.) nation. What happened? Did it lose precious territory? Did it squander enormous economic resources? Did it dismantle key weaponry? The answer to all of these questions is "no." The reason for the abrupt change in power is much simpler: Greece transferred its Presidency of the E.U. to Italy. At first, this might seem like an inescapably losing situation. After all, every rotating E.U. Presidency holder must cede its position after six months. Indeed, Italy and Ireland suffered similar fates on January 1 and July 1, 2004, respectively.

Recent events—leading Europe through a showdown over Iraq and successfully staging the Olympics—have provided Greece with an exceptional opportunity, nevertheless, to continue increasing its power and influence. This paper presents an outline for enhancing Greece's relative position in the international system, particularly within the Western alliance and the E.U., over the next decade. To accomplish this, Greece must promote soft power strategies. Ideally, countries want to have enormous material resources at their disposal. Few countries, however, are ever in such a position. For the less endowed states, the only two options are to cultivate non-material power bases or to accept a low placement in world politics. Realizing Greece's limitations, this paper offers an outline for the former: developing Greece's soft power.

This paper begins with an overview of the changing nature of power in world politics. This is followed by an assessment of the distribution of power in the current international system. The options available to states in terms of strategic alignments and frameworks in the present system are then weighed. Armed with this background, the paper goes on to assess how Greece, specifically, can take advantage of its recent status and unique experiences to increase its relative power in such a way that could help safeguard its long-term national interests.

## The Soft Side of Power

Scholarly discussions of international relations highlight the centrality of power. Indeed, one of the concepts that every prominent school of thought in the field highlights is power.<sup>1</sup> Few serious students of politics would quibble with the thesis that power is vital to the protection and promotion of national interests.

Traditionally, power has been viewed as emanating largely from material capabilities.<sup>2</sup> During the Cold War era, this was frequently expressed using Mao Tse-Tung's famous dictum, "Power comes out of the barrel of a gun." While this might be a bit too simple to capture the complexities of world politics, when it comes to safeguarding countries' most vital interests—state survival and self-defense—world leaders have discovered that relative advantages in military armaments and economic fortunes are important elements of national power.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>From Realism, see, e.g., Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, fifth edition (New York, Knopf, 1973); Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979); and Robert Gilpin, *War & Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981). From Liberalism, see, e.g., Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, third edition (New York: Longman, 2001); Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic, 1990); and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). From Structuralism (a.k.a. Marxism), see, e.g., Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004); and Christopher K. Chase-Dunn and Thomas D. Hall, *Rise and Demise: Comparing World-Systems* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997). From Constructivism, see, e.g., Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); and Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>2</sup>Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; and William C. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World," *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 5-41.

<sup>3</sup>For a historical perspective that highlights the importance of material elements to world leaders' calculations, see Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers: Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987).

Still, in recent decades, most students of international relations have come to understand that there is far more to power than mere material resources. In fact, a whole new school of thought has emerged in the past fifteen years, premised on the point that ideational components of power are just as important, if not more important, than material capabilities.<sup>4</sup> This paper is grounded in this growing perspective that power is best understood as involving material and ideational elements: hard and soft power.<sup>5</sup>

The E.U. Presidency offers proof that power not only emanates from material resources and capabilities; what some scholars call “hard power.” The power that the E.U. Presidency confers is one of authority and identity; “soft power.” Joseph Nye has been instrumental in flushing out differences between the two types of power:

Hard power is the ability to get others to do what they otherwise would not do through threats or rewards. Whether by economic carrots or military sticks, the ability to coax or coerce has long been the central element of power. . . .

Soft power, on the other hand, is the ability to get desired outcomes because others want what you want. It is the ability to achieve goals through attraction rather than coercion. It works by convincing others to follow or getting them to agree to norms and institutions that produce the desired behavior.<sup>6</sup>

Power through attraction, as opposed to power through coercion, has different bases. The ability to coerce effectively relies greatly on the material capabilities to punish or reward plus the will to carry through declared actions. The ability to attract other governments to accept one’s

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<sup>4</sup>See, e.g., Wendt, *Social Theory*.

<sup>5</sup>Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004). The conceptualization of soft power is fairly recent development, undertaken largely by Joseph Nye. As such, this section draws heavily on Nye’s work.

<sup>6</sup>Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “Power and Interdependence in the Information Age,” *Foreign Affairs*, 77, no. 5 (September-October 1998), 86.

platform or agenda, however, rests on the appeal of one's values, flavored with legitimacy.<sup>7</sup> "Soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others."<sup>8</sup> As such, whereas the currency of hard power is largely tangible, the currency of soft power is largely ideational in that it involves "an attraction to shared values and the justness and duty of contributing to the achievement of those values."<sup>9</sup> Joseph Nye conceptualizes these differences as resting along a spectrum ranging from command power to co-optive power (see Table 1).<sup>10</sup>

**Table 1. The Spectrum of Power**

	Hard Power		Soft Power	
Spectrum of Behaviors	Coercion	Inducement	Agenda Setting	Attraction
	Command < -----> Co-Opt			
Most Likely Resources	Force Sanctions	Payments Bribes	Institutions	Values Culture Policies

[Reproduced from Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004), 8].

Soft power is fundamental to the conduct of international relations for four reasons. First, hard power alone often fails to produce commensurate outcomes. As Nye observes, "When

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<sup>7</sup>Legitimacy is an important element of soft power in international politics. As Nye observes, "If you believe that my objectives are legitimate, I may be able to persuade you to do something for me without using threats or inducements. It is possible to get many desired outcomes without having much tangible power over others." *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>10</sup>As Nye writes, "Command power—the ability to change what others do—can rest on coercion or inducement. Co-optive power—the ability to shape what others want—can rest on the attractiveness of one's culture and the values or ability to manipulate the agenda of political choices in a manner that makes others fail to express some preferences because they seem to be too unrealistic." *Ibid.*

people define power as synonymous with the resources that produce it, they sometimes encounter the paradox that those best endowed with power do not always get the outcomes they want.”<sup>11</sup> For instance, the relative material capabilities of the Soviet Union were far superior to those of Afghanistan in the 1970s and 1980s. Still, the Soviet Union was not able to defeat *mujahadeen* guerrilla forces in the decade-long Afghan conflict. To understand this shortcoming, one has to recognize that more than just hard power was at play during the Afghanistan War.

Second, actors with little hard power still carry enormous influence in international affairs. For example, in the Middle East, Jordan remains one of the most influential states despite having relatively fewer military, economic, and energy capabilities than many of its neighbors, especially Israel and Saudi Arabia. Perhaps a more prominent example of a small state with tremendous clout is the Holy See. The Pope has no army. He has no weapons of mass destruction. He has no oil. He has few citizens. And all of his state’s territory is isolated, surrounded by the city of Rome. Yet, the Vatican is an influential state in international affairs. In fact, the case of the Pope is instructive. The Pope is a sovereign. But his power seems to emanate more from his moral authority than his sovereignty. The implication is that even private individuals can wield influence in world politics if they develop their soft power. Just look at Bono, George Soros, Nelson Mandela (before becoming an elected official), Bishop Desmond Tutu, and the late Mother Teresa. These people teach us that soft power need not necessarily be based on hard power nor need it emanate directly from government. As Nye reminds us, “Soft power does not belong to the government in the same degree that hard power does.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 14.

Third, the employment of soft power is, generally, less costly than the utilization of hard power, which means that soft power generates better pay-offs. As Nye points out, “Hard power can rest on inducements (‘carrots’) or threats (‘sticks’).”<sup>13</sup> In either case, producing desired outcomes comes at a particular cost. Often the cost is acceptable, such as when the United States, in 1994, forced a military junta in Haiti to abdicate its rule and go into exile. In this case, the stick was an invasion followed by either capture or death, and the carrot was that the junta would not get the stick. Despite the junta eventually fleeing Haiti, the United States could not avoid incurring costs. American forces still had to land in Haiti as part of a peace operation. The bigger problem, though, is when the costs of wielding hard power become intolerable, such as in the Vietnam War. Soft power offers a means that can, in some instances, avoid the costs associated with hard power. As Nye writes, “If I can get you to want to do what I want, then I do not have to use carrots or sticks to make you do it.”<sup>14</sup> If sticks (along with stones) break bones and carrots break banks, soft power increases the odds of keeping bones and banks intact.

Fourth (and arguably most important of all), soft power is vital to global affairs because the information revolution and globalization have transformed the nature of international relations, creating issue-areas best addressed with soft power. In fact, Nye suggests that, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, world politics is best conceptualized as a three-dimensional playing field:

The agenda of world politics has become like a three-dimensional chess game in which one can win only by playing vertically as well as horizontally. On the top board of classic interstate military issues, the United States is indeed the only superpower with global military reach, and it makes sense to speak in traditional terms of unipolarity or hegemony. However, on the middle board of interstate economic issues, the distribution

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 5.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 6. Nye notes that this is the cost effective route: “When you can get others to admire your ideals and to want what you want, you do not have to spend as much on sticks and carrots to move them in your direction.” Ibid., x.



of power is multipolar. The United States cannot obtain the outcomes it wants on trade, antitrust, or financial regulation issues without the agreement of the European Union, Japan, China, and others. It makes little sense to call this American hegemony. And on the bottom board of transnational issues like terrorism, international crime, climate change, and the spread of infectious diseases, power is widely distributed and chaotically organized among state and nonstate actors. . . .

If you are in a three-dimensional game, you will lose if you focus only on one board and fail to notice the other boards and the vertical connections among them.<sup>15</sup>

Regardless of whether or not you are persuaded by the 3-D game analogy, states must work with state and non-state actors on nearly every imaginable issue-area, including the traditionally “high politics” issue-area of security. In such a context, soft power becomes critical.

Indeed, Nye hints that each level of issue-areas privileges a distinct type of power respectively: military, economic, and soft (see Table 2).<sup>16</sup> While each type of power is useful and utilized on each “board” of the game, the importance of each type of power varies by level. Because attraction and agenda setting are extremely important in addressing transnational issues that frequently involve non-state actors and global public opinion, and because such issues are growing in prominence, soft power also proportionally increases in significance:

Hard power is relevant to getting the outcomes we want on all three chessboards, but many of the transnational issues . . . cannot be resolved by military force alone. Representing the dark side of globalization, these issues are inherently multilateral and require cooperation for their solution. Soft power is particularly important in dealing with the issues that arise from the bottom chessboard, transnational relations.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 4-5, 137.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 30-32.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 137.

**Table 2. The Three Types of Power**

	Behaviors	Primary Currencies	Government Policies
Military Power	Coercion Deterrence Protection	Threats Force	Coercive Diplomacy War Alliance
Economic Power	Inducement Coercion	Payments Sanctions	Aid Bribes Sanctions
Soft Power	Attraction Agenda Setting	Values Culture Policies Institutions	Public Diplomacy Bilateral Diplomacy Multilateral Diplomacy

[Reproduced from Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004), 31].

While soft power can be thought of as simply non-material, a more accurate conceptualization requires an understanding of its depth and complexity. There are, in essence, three types of soft power: normative, practical, and authoritative (see Table 3). Normative soft power is perhaps the most commonly recognized form of soft power. Normative soft power rests on the attractiveness of one's values. It can emanate from something as simple as the appeal of a country's commercial culture (e.g., McDonald's, Levi's, and Coca Cola). But there is far more to normative soft power than just commercialism.<sup>18</sup> For instance, during the Cold War, some of the cultural elements of the United States that appealed to Soviets included freedom of speech, religious tolerance, open press, civil liberties, and open and competitive elections. The norms a country promotes can leave an enormous impression on others. While the values might be complex, the dynamic by which they convert into soft power is actually simple. Leaders or citizens of one country are swayed by the appeal of another country just as fans are swayed by

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 11-13.

idols. If what a country stands for is appealing, then others will frequently give in to such values, ideals, and norms. It is merely a matter of promoting norms and ideologies that are alluring and seductive.

**Table 3. The Categories of Soft Power**

	<b>Normative</b>	<b>Practical</b>	<b>Authoritative</b>
<b>Basis</b>	Values	Practices	Roles
<b>Elements</b>	Cultural, Social, Economic, Legal, and Political Ideals	Historical Endeavors and Current Policies	Governing Institutions and Legitimate Organizations
<b>Exercise</b>	Ideology and Norm Promotion	Domestic and Foreign Policy	Agenda Setting

Practical soft power is similar, albeit slightly different, than normative soft power. Practical soft power is rooted in the historical practices and current policies of a particular state. It is one thing to advocate human rights in speeches. It is quite another to promote human rights in practice. Again, returning to an example involving the United States, America has long been on record as wanting the world to be a better and more humane place. But desires alone do not make the world better. Action is needed. When a country like the United States actually assists in the delivery of humanitarian relief in Somalia or when it intervenes militarily to prevent ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, it increases its power and prestige internationally. People often judge states based on their foreign policies. By undertaking actions that appeal to others, thus earning a degree of admiration, countries inescapably increase their soft power—allowing them to exert even greater influence in the near future.

The third type of soft power is less related to the first two. Authoritative soft power, unlike either normative or practical soft power that results from the values and policies a state promotes in word and deed, is more of a conferred form of influence. Whereas the first two types of soft power are more active, authoritative soft power is more passive. Authoritative soft power emanates from holding a certain position that confers power and influence. In other words, it is a by-product of being authorized to undertake certain roles and functions. Quite frequently, such positions are institutionalized. For instance, the E.U. Presidency, while temporary, is nonetheless a conferred source of power—conferred by an agreement among 25 nations, and exercised through a legitimate international institution. The rotating Presidency of the United Nations Security Council is a similar form of soft power. But authoritative soft power is not necessarily temporary. Russia, China, France, the United States, and the United Kingdom all have a unique form of authoritative soft power that is permanent: they each have veto power on the U.N. Security Council. This institutional power allows them to set and drive the agenda regarding international security matters—and to do so with legitimacy.<sup>19</sup>

While both types of power, hard and soft, are hardly new, soft power has taken on a different stature that mirrors the increasing prominence of institutions and information—and world leaders are accepting its increasing significance. “This political game in a global information age suggests that relative importance of soft power will increase.”<sup>20</sup> In this new era where soft power is becoming hard power’s significant other, new opportunities are arising for

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<sup>19</sup>As Nye argues, “Institutions can enhance a country’s soft power. . . . When countries make their power legitimate in the eyes of others, they encounter less resistance to their wishes. . . . If a country can shape international rules that are consistent with its interests and values, its actions will more likely appear legitimate in the eyes of others. If it uses institutions and follows rules that encourage other countries to channel or limit their activities in ways it prefers, it will not need as many costly carrots or sticks.” *Ibid.*, 10-11.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 31.

states that have traditionally been unable to influence international politics for lack of enough material capabilities. In such a context, states can develop (and exploit) soft power niches. The E.U. Presidency is an example of a rotating—thus temporary—soft power niche. The holder of the Presidency is conferred with a unique authority to further its particular agenda with the assistance of 24 of the world's most advanced and materially well endowed states—and to do so with institutional legitimacy. Thus, countries as tiny as Luxembourg and Malta, when they hold the E.U. Presidency, become some of the most influential states in the international system, even if for only six months.

If a country can increase its soft power by holding the E.U. Presidency, then shouldn't it be possible to establish other niche positions which permit the exercise of soft power to influence global events? In fact, don't such niches already exist? If so, a country that is seen as providing a unique and vital function within a political system should be able to increase its relative standing in world politics—and to attract other states towards its policy positions.

History, to be sure, is replete with examples of niches. The most obvious is the hegemon. Hegemony is a niche that is highly valued, yet only a few states are ever in a position to serve this function. In fact, hegemony is arguably the most important niche in international relations because it helps promote international order and secure collective goods. While states can compete for this coveted title, moreover, only one ever reigns supreme as the international system's hegemon. In today's world, the hegemon is the United States. Another example of a prominent international relations niche is the off-shore power balancer, a niche filled by Great Britain in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Of course, both of these niches are solo performances that are largely dependent on great power material resources.

But not all niches are strictly limited to one state at a time. Some niches can have more than one state “specialist.” Nor do all niches have a prerequisite of a mammoth material resource endowment, as “soft power does not depend on hard power.”<sup>21</sup> Peace-keeping is an excellent example. In the post-World War II world, this niche has been held by such nations as Canada, Togo, Pakistan, Austria, and Australia. Humanitarian needs have often been well addressed by Switzerland and Austria. And, in the field of human rights promotion and protection, the Holy See, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Spain have recently begun carving out niches.

Returning to the case of Greece, it is true that overnight, on July 1, 2003, it suffered a relative power loss. However, with some cultivation, Greece can seize on the turmoil in the current Iraq War era and build on its post-Olympiad prominence to create an identity that, over the long-term, confers a unique status and role within the Western bloc, thus increasing its soft power and international influence.

### **The Current Distribution of Power**

Power is never distributed evenly in political systems. The international system is no exception. Structural Realists have been at the forefront of studying the implications of different international power structures. According to Kenneth Waltz, the international political system is always anarchic (i.e., absent world government) and always composed of functionally-similar units (i.e., sovereign states). So how do international political systems change? Only in terms of the distribution of capabilities.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 9.

<sup>22</sup>Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 100-101.

Regardless of whether or not one subscribes to Structural Realism, it is hard not to conclude, as Waltz does, that the distribution of power is a useful concept for characterizing international politics during any given era. The consensus is that three general types of power distributions can exist: unipolarity, bipolarity, and multipolarity.<sup>23</sup> In today's world, the structure of the system is generally considered to be unipolar.<sup>24</sup> Unipolarity is a distribution of power whereby one preponderant state or security bloc is militarily unchallenged and endowed with tremendous hard and soft capabilities to sustain its pre-eminence. No other counter-weight exists.<sup>25</sup>

As this definition states, for a pole to exist in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it must have tremendous hard and soft power at its disposal. Prior to World War II, most poles were measured strictly in terms of hard power material resources. During the Cold War, when the international system transformed from multipolar to bipolar, and the two superpower poles vied for "hearts and

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<sup>23</sup>Polarity is a concept that represents the concentration of power within a system. Unipolarity means power is concentrated in one pole (i.e., political entity). Bipolarity means power is concentrated in two poles. Multipolarity means power is concentrated in three or more poles. Randall Schweller argues that tripolarity (a system with three poles) needs to be treated differently from what he calls multipolarity (a system of four or more poles). See, Randall L. Schweller, *Deadly Imbalance: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998). While I find Schweller's argument persuasive, it is not necessary to address it for purposes of this article.

<sup>24</sup>Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 1 (Winter 1990/1991), 23-33; Wohlforth, "Stability of a Unipolar World," 5-41; Ethan B. Kapstein and Michael Mastanduno, eds., *Unipolar Politics: Realism and State Strategies After the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Kenneth N. Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War," *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Summer 2000), 5-41; Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, "American Primacy in Perspective," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 4 (July/August 2002), 20-33; Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment Revisited," *National Interest*, No. 70 (Winter 2002/2003), 5-17; and Louis Klarevas, "Is the U.S. Still Number One? Unipolarity after the Iraq War," European Institute Working Paper, London School of Economics (forthcoming).

<sup>25</sup>Klarevas, "Is the U.S. Still Number One?"

minds” in addition to military and economic superiority, soft power began to grow in prominence. But even during this nuclear age, hard power remained the gauge by which polarity and system structure were assessed. In other words, the history of international relations is one in which, to return to Nye’s three-dimensional chessboard analogy, the top level of military-security affairs has always been privileged. As such, hard power—and in particular military power—has historically been considered the most valuable form of power.

With the end of the Cold War, the world was left with one superpower. As the threat of a bipolar nuclear showdown disappeared almost overnight, a host of non-traditional issues managed to muscle their way to the top of the international agenda. With the new challenges came new approaches and understandings, one of which was the belief that soft power was just as important, if not more important, for addressing these “transnational issues.” Therefore, in the post-Cold War era, calculations of the distribution of power in the international system are expanding to include soft power alongside hard power.

So where is this concentration of hard and soft power located in today’s post-Cold War world? In a U.S.-led Western bloc.<sup>26</sup> After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States emerged as the only remaining superpower in the world. The end of the Cold War, the demise of the East Bloc, and the exercise of American power in the Persian Gulf War of 1991, left observers with little doubt that the early post-Cold War era would be a period of American primacy.<sup>27</sup> In the words of Charles Krauthammer, the 1990s marked the start of the “unipolar moment,” a world where the “center of world power is the unchallenged superpower, the United

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<sup>26</sup>Krauthammer, “The Unipolar Moment”; and Klarevas, “Is the U.S. Still Number One?”

<sup>27</sup>See, e.g., Robert Jervis, “International Primacy: Is the Game Worth the Candle?” *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Spring 1993), 52-67; and Samuel P. Huntington, “Why International Primacy Matters,” *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Spring 1993), 68-83.



States, *attended by its Western allies.*”<sup>28</sup> Krauthammer seemed to accept the preponderance argument of Realists when he observed, “There is but one first-rate power and no prospect in the immediate future of any power to rival it.”<sup>29</sup> But he went further, suggesting that blocs can be important to assessing poles. Currently, the only pole in the system is “a single pole of *world* power that consists of the United States at the apex of *the industrial West.*”<sup>30</sup>

On September 11, 2001, the United States suffered through the deadliest attack against its homeland since World War II. Despite the occasional—premature and misguided—commentary that the era of American primacy had passed, immediate worldwide reaction reflected the centrality and pre-eminence of the United States.<sup>31</sup> A vast majority of countries expressed support for American efforts to organize a global war against terrorism. Of particular noteworthiness, every single major power, including Russia and China, offered some form of support to the United States. As if this show of unity was not enough, the United States led a coalition of forces into Afghanistan, toppling the Taliban regime with unprecedented speed and precision.

When the United States turned its sights onto Iraq, though, allies in the war on terror parted ways. Divisions arose as to whether or not toppling the regime of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein was necessary—or even wise. For the first time since the end of the Cold War, cracks

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<sup>28</sup>Krauthammer, “Unipolar Moment,” 24; emphasis added.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid. Krauthammer goes so far as to provide a standard for how to judge preponderance in practice: “American preeminence is based on the fact that it is the only country with the military, diplomatic, political and economic assets to be a decisive player in any conflict in whatever part of the world it chooses to involve itself.” Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.; emphasis added.

<sup>31</sup>See, e.g., Steve Smith, “The End of the Unipolar Moment: September 11 and the Future of World Order,” Social Science Research Council *After September 11* Essays, available at: [www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/smith\\_text\\_only.htm](http://www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/smith_text_only.htm).

were visible in the Western bloc. With France and Germany leading the charge against American strategy, some commentators began declaring that unipolarity was over. For instance, John Gray proclaimed, “a multipolar world is already a reality.”<sup>32</sup> Andrew Moravcsik, too, has argued that the world is no longer unipolar. “The good news after Iraq is that we live in a bipolar world after all,” he declares—with two superpowers: the U.S. and the E.U.<sup>33</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein has gone as far as to declare, “the eagle has crash landed.”<sup>34</sup>

But strategic decision-makers in world capitals should be wary of such one-sided arguments. Instead, they have an obligation to be mindful of five important trends in world politics. First, the U.S. is continuing to grow in relative hard power vis-à-vis other major powers. When compared to other *potential* major power challengers France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Russia, Japan, and China, the U.S. dominates them in nearly every key indicator of hard power: gross domestic product; military expenditures; strategic weaponry (including nuclear weaponry and aircraft carrier task forces); military satellites and intelligence capabilities; international assistance; energy production; market capitalization; royalty income; hi-tech exports; internet users, servers, and hosts; and research and development expenditures.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>John Gray, “For Europe’s Sake, Keep Britain Out,” *New Statesman*, May 19, 2003, 21. Gray believes that even in military affairs, the failure of the U.S. to secure cooperation from traditional ally Turkey during the Iraq War signals a significant decline in American power. Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Andrew Moravcsik, “The World Is Bipolar After All,” *Newsweek*, May 5, 2003, 37. Moravcsik makes his assertion based on three factual claims: the E.U. is the largest trading entity in the world economy; the E.U. states account for over half of the civilian assistance disbursed internationally; and the E.U. states provide more peace-keepers than the U.S. Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Eagle Has Crash Landed,” *Foreign Policy*, No. 131 (July/August 2002), 60. Wallerstein believes that “Pax Americana is over” because the United States is “a lone superpower that lacks true power, a world leader nobody follows and few respect, and a nation drifting dangerously amidst a global chaos it cannot control.” Ibid., 60, 63.

<sup>35</sup>Klarevas, “Is the U.S. Still Number One?”

Even when the E.U. is treated as a uniform political entity, the indicators tell the same story. Moreover, the U.S., despite a few rough years economically, has either maintained or increased its dominance in most of these areas since the mid-1990s.<sup>36</sup> Even the fall of the dollar, which some cite as evidence of American decline, can be seen as reflecting the power and flexibility, in circumstances of low growth and inflation, to control one's short-term economic destiny.<sup>37</sup>

Second, the U.S. is, however, squandering its soft power, in large part as a result of its troubled and unpopular invasion of Iraq. The proposed end-game behind toppling the regime of Saddam Hussein was supposed to be the development of a Western-friendly democracy. While the U.S. might have sought to win the hearts and minds of the Arab world, many in the Arab world have interpreted the invasion as a stab in the heart and an abuse of the mind. Indeed, the Iraq War has managed to turn many in the Middle East who once held favorable attitudes of the U.S. against America and its coalition partners, serving as a counter-productive rallying call to Islamic extremists to unite in an effort to bring violence directly to Americans. But the negative outcomes of the Iraq War reach far beyond the Middle East. All over the world, citizens and leaders have expressed disdain over the policies of the U.S. As Joseph Nye observes, "Despite its impressive resources, the attractiveness of the United States declined quite sharply in 2003. In the run-up to the Iraq War, polls showed that the United States lost an average of 30 points of support in most European countries."<sup>38</sup> These trends have led one commentator to conclude that "the lesson of Iraq is that the U.S.'s soft power is in decline."<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid. The declining dollar vis-à-vis the Euro, if nothing else, has helped the U.S. reduce its trade deficit.

<sup>38</sup>Nye, *Soft Power*, 35.

<sup>39</sup>Paul Kelly, "Power Pact," *Australian*, July 26, 2003, 1.

Third, the E.U., on the contrary, is increasing its soft power. “The idea that war is now unthinkable among countries that fought bitterly for centuries, and that Europe has become an island of peace and prosperity creates a positive image in much of the world.”<sup>40</sup> Indeed, there are many aspects of a uniting Europe that others find seductive. The E.U. promotes attractive economic market forces (the “four freedoms,” cutting-edge telecommunications, integrated transportation networks, and a powerful common currency), domestic policies (environmental protection, socio-economic welfare, human rights, and the rule of law), foreign policies (peace-keeping, development assistance, nation building, and multilateral preferences), and cultural projects (tourism, film, music, and literature).<sup>41</sup> Parag Khanna believes that these qualities “combine the coercive strengths of Mars and the seductive wiles of Venus,” blending substance with style.<sup>42</sup> As a result, Europe is transforming the nature of world politics:

[B]y cleverly deploying both its hard power and its sensitive side, the European Union has become more effective—and more attractive—than the United States on the catwalk of diplomatic clout. Meet the real New Europe: the world’s first metrosexual superpower. . . .

Stripping off stale national sovereignty (that’s *so* last century), Europeans now parade their “pooled power,” the new look for the geopolitical season. . . .

Expect *Bend It Like Brussels* to play soon in capital cities worldwide.<sup>43</sup>

As Khanna suggests, in the present Iraq War era, the E.U. arguably wields more soft power than any other political entity—and its soft power continues to grow.

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<sup>40</sup>Nye, *Soft Power*, 77.

<sup>41</sup>As Nye argues, “A measure of the E.U.’s emerging soft power is the view that it is a positive force for solving global problems.” *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>42</sup>Parag Khanna, “The Metrosexual Superpower,” *Foreign Policy*, No. 143 (July/August 2004), 66.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, 66-68; emphasis in original.

Fourth, the E.U., though, is hardly united on foreign policy, and certainly not set on a uniform course of challenging the U.S. The supposed “counterweight” to American hegemony, the European Union, remains split over how to address major international policy matters. This became evident during the Iraq crisis. During the build-up to the war, Europe had a chance to check American assertiveness. It failed because it was divided over whether or not its future involves a strategic alliance with the U.S. Many in Europe believe the Iraq War shows how different Europe is from America. Obviously, perspectives differ depending on which coast of the “great pond” one is located. But the dispute over Iraq also reveals how much disunity exists among Europeans. Arguably, the division of greater magnitude is not trans-Atlantic. It is intra-European. Here are just a few important issues that produced disagreement beyond the “Old” and “New” Europe divide that resulted in the now famous “gang of eight” letter and the French scolding it prompted: Eurocorps and European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP); farm subsidies (which is a major point of contention along the Franco-German axis); immigration policy; and investment fund management and regulation.<sup>44</sup> In the coming years, two matters are likely to place the future of European unity on a major fault line—with either tectonic plate capable of causing a collapse of European structures. All eyes will certainly be focused on deliberations in non-Euro Zone countries over whether or not to convert to the Euro. Recently, the Euro has made a strong showing—dominating the dollar in foreign exchange. Still, there are signs that in some smaller E.U. states conversion has come at a price. And in Berlin, there are some who question how long Germany can keep playing the “bank” role. Should the United Kingdom continue foregoing the Euro, it might not only encourage Sweden and Denmark to also keep passing on the Euro Zone, but it might discourage efforts to continue stringent reforms in

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<sup>44</sup>Louis Klarevas, “Not a Divorce,” *Survival*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (Winter 2003), 232.

the economies of the 10 new E.U. members (most of which are former East bloc states).<sup>45</sup> The other key test will be how E.U. countries receive the proposal for a new E.U. constitution. Should Europe adopt a strong Convention on the Future of Europe, it will place the continent on the road to superpower status. But the odds are against the ratification of a new constitution that creates a United States of Europe, as sovereignty still has guardians in Europe.<sup>46</sup>

Fifth, the Western bloc remains the “sole pole” in the current unipolar system—although there is no guarantee that unipolarity will last beyond the next decade.<sup>47</sup> Those like French President Jacques Chirac, who believe that Europe is a global power in a “multipolar” world, perhaps need a reality check. If nothing else, as we just saw, Chirac’s references to a European “counterweight” raise an interesting question: which Europe exactly? N.A.T.O.? The E.U.? Old Europe? New Europe? The more accurate description is that the U.S. has traditionally partnered with its formal transatlantic allies (including Canada) to promote common interests. And these allies will continue to partner to promote common interests in the near future. But what is important to note is that the interests they share have changed. Of course, this change has led Robert Kagan, who sees Euro-American differences as running much deeper than differences between Bush and Chirac, to assert that “Americans are from Mars and Europeans from Venus.”<sup>48</sup> The problem with Kagan’s perspective, though, is that trans-Atlantic interests

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<sup>45</sup>The worst case scenario, though, is that opinions within Euro Zone states begin to shift, creating domestic pressures for re-conversion to national currencies.

<sup>46</sup>Klarevas, “Is the U.S. Still Number One?”

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Knopf, 2003), 3-4. Another problem with this analogy is that, as Khanna argues, Europe arguably blends “the coercive strengths of Mars and the seductive wiles of Venus.” Khanna, “Metrosexual Superpower,” 66.

remain—and grow. The trans-Atlantic agenda indeed has broadened to include economic, social, and humanitarian interests alongside security interests. President Bush, for instance, went to Evian, France for a meeting with G8 leaders (six of whom are formal U.S. allies) at the height of the feud over the Iraq War. Why? Because they need each other’s help to promote a common agenda. The U.S. may be the world’s most influential country, but that does not mean it wants to, or can, do everything on its own. It seems that the trans-Atlantic partners still prefer each others help—perhaps not on everything, but on most things. Whether fighting AIDS and improving living conditions in the Third World, or countering nuclear proliferation and combating terrorism, Americans and Europeans continue to believe that their interests will be better served if they act in consortium. Those who primarily see ebbs in transatlantic ties seem to discount this. These common interests and the ties they promote suggest that, while people writing obituaries for the West might one day be lauded for their forecasts, right now they are perhaps better characterized as a bit premature.<sup>49</sup> After all, some American soldiers might have refused to call fried potatoes “French Fries” following the fall-out over Iraq, but they still drank Evian spring water while eating their potatoes because Evian remains the official bottled water of the U.S. Army.<sup>50</sup> For this reason, it remains safe to continue speaking of a Western pole.

This is the current context in which all Western countries find themselves. The post-Iraq War era is one of a dominant and assertive America—joined by some European allies, shunned by others—in a global campaign to project its power and protect its primacy. The setting is

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<sup>49</sup>For an article that raises the question of the end of the Western bloc, see Ivo H. Daalder, “The End of Atlanticism,” *Survival*, 45, no. 2 (Summer 2003), 147-166. For a different perspective, more akin to the one presented in this study, see James B. Steinberg, “An Elective Partnership: Salvaging Transatlantic Relations,” *Survival*, 45, no. 2 (Summer 2003), 113-146.

<sup>50</sup>Elaine Sciolino, “Evian Offers Its Magic by Tubful,” *New York Times*, May 31, 2003, A9.

marked by divisions in the Western bloc: a trans-Atlantic rift between the United States and a non-uniform Europe. Fissures in the American-led pole obviously present difficult challenges to overcome for the Western allies, some of whom may not wish to overcome them. But at the same time, they also present numerous opportunities for less partisan Western governments (e.g., the current New Democracy government in Greece) to exercise power and improve their relative standing within the bloc and globally.

### **Developing Soft Power Strategic Options**

Whether its Bush's reference to "coalitions of the willing" or Chirac's reference to "multipolar counter-weights," Realism continues to dominate discourse and strategy in the Western world.<sup>51</sup>

Realism informs us that states usually pursue one of three general strategies for improving their relative standing in international relations. The three strategies are Realism's Three Bs:

balancing, bandwagoning, and buckpassing. As Robert Powell writes, "When one state threatens another, a third state has at least three options. It can align with the threatened state, align with the state making the threat, or try to avoid taking part in the conflict by waiting."<sup>52</sup> Powell's statement implies that a threat must be present. But, as states anticipate the behavior of other states, Powell's statement extends to include reactions to potential threats as well as opportunities for exploitation.<sup>53</sup> Obviously, strategy then becomes dependent on a state's

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<sup>51</sup>Louis Klarevas, "One Culprit for the 9/11 Attacks: Political Realism," *Harvard International Review*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Fall 2004). For Realist references by Bush and Chirac, see respectively, "Bush Vows to Confront Iraq, N. Korea," Agence France Presse, January 7, 2003; and "When France Became, Briefly, a World Power Again," Deutsche Presse-Agentur, December 16, 2003.

<sup>52</sup>Robert Powell, *In the Shadow of Power, States and Strategies in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 149.

<sup>53</sup>Schweller, *Deadly Imbalance*, 59-91.



subjective interpretation of “threat”—actual and potential. However, as the developer of balance-of-threat theory notes, one of the more concrete factors that affects such an assessment is aggregate hard power.<sup>54</sup> As a result, these three options represent responses to threats or potential threats arrived at based, in part, on assessments of the distribution of hard power.<sup>55</sup> In today’s world, the distribution of power is one where the U.S. is behind the steering wheel of a unipolar vehicle, but with many Western back-seat drivers screaming conflicting directions, as shown in the previous section.

For the United States and some of its Western allies, like the United Kingdom and Italy, the greatest threats are rogue states and the networks they promote. For other Western states, though, the graver threat is an assertive America unbound by checks and balances. For states in the E.U., this situation presents at least three choices according to Realists: they can attempt to break-away from their traditional ties to the U.S. and attempt to provide a hard power counterweight against American assertiveness with their fellow European allies (balancing); they can support U.S.-led strategies against global threats, anticipating greater hard payoffs from siding with the most powerful country in the world (bandwagoning); or they can eschew the dilemma by sitting on the sidelines, neither opposing nor supporting the United States (buckpassing).

The Three Bs emanate from what is the dominant paradigm of International Relations: Realism. Tracing its origins back to Thucydides’ masterwork, *The History of the Peloponnesian Wars*, Realism posits: (1) the primary agents in international politics are states, especially major

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<sup>54</sup>Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).

<sup>55</sup>As Powell suggests, it is important to recognize and understand “the relationship between a state’s alignment decisions and the distribution of power among states.” Powell, *In the Shadow of Power*, 152.

powers; (2) states selfishly pursue their national interests, the most vital being national security; (3) the most important resources in the pursuit of national interests are material capabilities, especially offensive military capabilities; and (4) international politics is distinct from domestic politics because the former is anarchic. In such a setting, non-state actors are discounted, unilateralism trumps multilateralism, military force is a privileged means to an end, and international law and human rights are expendable because morality is never universal. In this grim view, world politics is a state of war among states.<sup>56</sup>

In recent years, other schools of thought have begun challenging the strict teachings of Realism. For scholars subscribing to these schools, Realism is a worldview ill-equipped to deal with the security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Instead, they have proposed that: (1) international politics involves a variety of agents, including states (big and small), organizations (inter-governmental and non-governmental), groups (transnational and domestic), and even individuals (public and private); (2) agents pursue interests—selfish and collective—through an international agenda that includes economic, environmental, developmental, and cultural matters, in addition to security matters; (3) the exercise of power involves a variety of hard (material) and soft (ideational) resources; and (4) laws and institutions (both domestic and international as the line is blurred)—based on principles, norms, morals, and rules—play the vital function of providing order in the international system. In this world, a rock star like Bono can have just as much impact as a politician like Russian President Vladimir Putin. As a result, poverty in Africa might receive as much attention as arms control in central Europe. Hope tends to trump despair in this paradigm which holds some moral standards as universal. The international community can improve the world and promote justice through cooperation— especially in international

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<sup>56</sup>Klarevas, “One Culprit.”

institutions, as multilateralism is a preferred approach to global problems. If, as Thomas Hobbes once suggested, force and fraud are the two principal virtues of Realism, law and legitimacy can be seen as principal counter-virtues.<sup>57</sup>

Certainly, these competing schools raise important questions that urge scrutiny of our openness to Realist teachings. One inevitable consequence is to accept Realism's conceptualization of the international political system with a large degree of skepticism. For Structural Realists, at least, the international system is conceptualized as: (1) anarchic as a result of all states being sovereign; (2) the game of like-units (functionally indistinguishable—converging states); and (3) altered only according to the distribution of material capabilities (i.e., hard power, especially military power).<sup>58</sup> In other words, since the system is always anarchic and states are always like-units, the focus of our attention should center on the distribution of hard power because it is the only thing that changes.

What if the Realists, though, are wrong? What if the world is more complex than this simple model? What if sovereignty is transferred a bit via institutions? What if states are differentiated by function? What if power includes more than hard material resources?

Just suppose that a smaller country is able to utilize institutions to exercise what Joseph Grieco calls “voice opportunities”—in other words, small and medium size countries have to be heard in institutions whereas they do not necessarily have to be heard bilaterally.<sup>59</sup> Just suppose that some countries take on specific functions—becoming good at them—and therefore

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

<sup>58</sup>Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 100-101.

<sup>59</sup>Joseph M. Grieco, “The Maastricht Treaty, Economic and Monetary Union and the Neo-Realist Research Programme,” *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (January 1995), 34.

developing a niche that can be used as leverage. Just suppose that power involves ideational aspects that promote prestige and allow the exercise of attraction in addition to coercion.

There is no need to theorize about this. As we saw above, states less-endowed in terms of material resources do receive tremendous benefits from multilateral institutions. States provide unique niche functions in the international system. And soft power matters. Think of it this way: Luxembourg gets to voice its opinion to the U.S. via N.A.T.O.—otherwise it would not have much say at all. Pakistan gets to force concessions out of the U.S. and others because, in international relations, they have developed a niche for peace-keeping. And soft power increases a non-military power's prestige in international relations (as in the case of civilian powers Japan or Canada).<sup>60</sup>

In such a re-conceptualization of world politics, states without overwhelming material capabilities can still exert influence and power by: (1) utilizing institutions to press particular agendas; (2) exploiting niches that in turn give them leverage; and (3) exercising soft power to bring other states into sharing their promoted objectives. If the international system is re-conceptualized in manner contrary to Structural Realism's basic tenets, then this, in turn, raises questions regarding the Three Bs, which are strategies derived from Realism's grim worldview that privileges relative material capabilities as the most important variable in understanding world politics.

The problem with strategizing in world politics is that, for a long time, Realism's Three Bs have been the focus of many statesmen, including in the current Bush administration.<sup>61</sup> The

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<sup>60</sup>On the topic of civilian powers, Hanns W. Maull, "Germany and Japan: The New Civilian Powers," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 69, No. 5 (Winter 1990-1991), 91-106; and Tom Dyson, "Civilian Power and 'History-Making' Decisions: German Agenda-Setting on Europe," *European Security*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Spring 2002), 27-48.

<sup>61</sup>Klarevas, "One Culprit."

Realist view of the system and the strategic options available (Realism's Three Bs) over-emphasize hard power to the unfortunate discounting, if not outright exclusion, of soft power.<sup>62</sup> However, international relations in the present era are far more complex than Realism's parsimonious hard power picture. The good news, however, is that Realism's challengers provide a more optimistic outlook, wherein states can still secure their interests, but do so in a manner that does not require distasteful strategic choices. And one possible strategic endeavor that is encouraged by the above re-conceptualization of world politics, which is not necessarily consistent with Realism's narrow hard power view, is a fourth B: brokering.<sup>63</sup>

Realism's Three Bs require a state to pick sides between two sides in a potential conflict, or in the alternative, to sit on the sidelines. Such strategies are rooted in a pessimistic view of a conflictual international political system, where hard power is privileged. The problem, though, is that more cooperation occurs in the system than does conflict. And if states lock-in to one of the Three Bs, they run the realistic risk of missing important opportunities to advance their standing and to promote and protect their national interests in a cooperative and mutually benefiting manner.

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid. In all fairness, buckpassing is less of a hard power strategy than balancing and bandwagoning, since it is a hands-off approach. However, even here, the Realist literature presents it in a manner which explains the motive as avoiding physical harm from others' hard power while simultaneously conserving one's hard power resources. See, e.g., Paul Schroeder, "Historical Reality v. Neo-Realist Theory," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), 108-148; and John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001).

<sup>63</sup>Given space constraints, this paper only develops one alternative strategy to Realism's Three Bs: brokering. This is meant in no way to suggest that brokering is the only alternative that exists. Alternative strategies that eschew Realism's pessimistic worldview for a more positive-sum outlook, based on promoting cooperation and privileging soft power, are certainly pursuable.

One strategy which eschews Realism's dark tunnel vision is the strategy of brokering. Brokering does not require states to take sides in disputes like balancing and bandwagoning do. Nor does it keep states from seriously interacting with other states as buckpassing does. Brokering instead calls for an active intervention that brings parties to a dispute closer together. It is based on the premise that, no matter which party is the most important or powerful outside the mediation room, inside the mediation room, the mediator is the most significant and powerful actor. And just as mediators are highly valued in domestic society, so too can brokers be valued in international society. What makes them valuable? Is it their hard power? No. It is their role which involves practices, values, legitimacy, and credibility. In other words, it is their soft power.

But there is a tremendous difference between an individual mediator and a state broker. The former usually is called on for one dispute. Once that dispute is settled, it is likely that the mediator will not interact with the parties again. So the mediator only obtains benefits (if any) from his or her one-shot iteration. A state that serves as an international broker in disputes between other states, however, is constantly going to be involved with those states in future interactions and relations. This provides numerous opportunities to exploit situations to the relative advantage of the broker in such a benign way that is amiable to all the parties involved. After all, soft power is what brings status to the broker state. And through this soft power, the broker state can get other states to agree to want what it wants. For this, the broker state needs to attract other states to its agenda—and then get them to cooperate in the pursuit of such mutually agreeable norms and goals.

Brokering, then, is premised on the view that all the parties to a dispute, including the broker, are significant actors, with the potential for short-term or long-term benefits depending

on the circumstances and any future controversies that might arise. Thus, whereas Realist strategies are based on a zero-sum outlook where the goal is to take sides in an effort to receive hard power pay-offs in a conflict, brokering is a positive-sum strategy, encouraging cooperation through soft power, where everyone stands a chance of a positive pay-off in terms of both hard and soft power. In the present post-Iraq War era, where the unipolar, U.S.-led Western bloc is showing signs of fissure, the time is ripe for the emergence of just such an intra-bloc broker.

### **An Outline of a Soft Power Strategy for Greece**

Success in world politics is preconditioned on an understanding that power is both hard and soft. Hard power remains an important resource for commanding, coercing, and inducing other states into accepting your positions and demands. But hard power often fails to generate outcomes that are commensurate with material resources, making its exercise costly and problematic. Soft power is a critical means to getting other states to want what you want. In an age when non-state actors are important players in the game of world politics and transnational issues are important to all tiers of the international agenda, soft power becomes a much more benign and effective means to an end. On any given day in the international political system, the odds are that you will get more from attraction than coercion.

Once upon a time, scholars and statesmen alike accepted, as gospel, Kenneth Waltz's dictum that "the theory, like the story, of international politics is written in terms of the great powers of an era."<sup>64</sup> This is no longer the case. Now, a non-state terrorist network like al-Qaeda is arguably just as important in international affairs as is India (which has the second largest population and nuclear weapons). This is good news for countries less endowed in terms of

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<sup>64</sup>Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 72.

hard material resources. Players are no longer measured strictly in terms of weapons, citizens, and dollars. Values, practices, and roles are also vital to assessing an agent's potential. As such, states can pursue strategies other than just Realism's Three Bs for engaging other state and non-state actors, including major powers, and for increasing their relative standing in world politics.

This brings us to Greece. Greece is too poorly endowed in terms of resources and capabilities to significantly affect the distribution of material power by itself. The bottom line is that, on its own, it cannot balance the dominant power forces today, which are U.S.-led coalitions. Overt attempts right now would be futile, as they would incur American ire. Greece can obviously join a European counter-weight—but this also involves two large risks. First, any European counter-weight that can be mustered will be too weak to check a U.S.-led coalition. Second, the formation of a counter-weight runs the risk of alienating Greece from its other E.U. partners that side with the U.S. Moreover, there is always the risk of abandonment. Nor is bandwagoning necessarily the best bet. Certainly, this carries a likelihood of rewarding Greece with increased influence and maybe even spoils. Yet, it also runs the risk of alienating some of Greece's anti-U.S. E.U. partners and undercutting a stronger European Union. Buckpassing seems like a less risky strategy, but it also provide less payoffs. If Greece does not actively participate in security deliberations, it might be seen as either indifferent or, worse, a free-rider.

So, what else can Greece do? In the past two years, Greece has lived through two unique experiences—guiding the E.U. through the Iraq War and staging the first post-September 11 Olympics—which have put the country under the global spotlight, providing it with an opportunity to increase its international position and influence.

First, Greece presided over the E.U. during the run-up to the Iraq War. A tough job for any state, Greece managed to hold the E.U. states together as best as any E.U. President could



have during this time of diplomatic turbulence—and to do so in a way that did not alienate the U.S. Here, then, is an interesting question: Is Greece part of Old Europe or New Europe? There is no clear cut answer to this question. And this works to Greece's advantage! The bridging of "Old" and "New" Europe explain why former Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis received phone calls from both French President Jacques Chirac and U.S. President George W. Bush praising Greece for its role in the diplomacy surrounding the onset of the Iraq War.<sup>65</sup>

Greece can take its recent experiences and the reputation it has started to create for itself and build on them. Greece received enormous praise for how it handled its E.U. Presidency during the Iraq Crisis. It pursued a policy where, internationally, its stated goal was to promote a uniform E.U. position on the crisis. While it failed, it was not for lack of trying. This is why Greece received praise from both camps. And this is why Greece is not easily pegged into the camp of either "Old" or "New" Europe.

Greece was an active broker, encouraging consensus, during a difficult security and identity crisis within the Western bloc. Some people might argue that Greece was only able to play this role because it held the E.U. Presidency. But holding the E.U. Presidency does not make a government a successful broker. Just look at what happened when Greece turned over the reigns of the E.U. to Italy. Italy managed to offend a variety of the major players in international security affairs.<sup>66</sup> If Greece was the broker, Italy was the badger.

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<sup>65</sup>Louis Klarevas, "The Greek Bridge between Old and New Europe," *National Herald*, February 15-16, 2003.

<sup>66</sup>Stephen Castle, "Berlusconi Puts E.U. Presidency in Turmoil with Nazi Insult," *Independent*, July 3, 2003, 1; and Stephen Castle, "Berlusconi Commits Europe's Fastest Political Suicide," *Independent*, July 3, 2003, 12.

Brokering is not a role easily filled by any Western state. At present, it seems as if it cannot be undertaken by a large state.<sup>67</sup> The E.U.'s big five took firm sides during the Iraq showdown.<sup>68</sup> The five small states of the "gang of eight" also cannot easily fill this largely neutral role. Nor are the two small anti-Iraq War Benelux states well positioned to take on this function. And the ten member states that joined the E.U. in 2004 are too new to receive the full trust of all their more senior E.U. partners. This leaves Greece as one of the few states that can emerge from the Iraq War showdown as being in a position to broker intra-Western disputes.<sup>69</sup>

Second, while Greece's E.U. Presidency during the Iraq crisis made Greece a point of focus, Greece's successful staging of the first post-September 11 Olympic Games allows Greece to remain in a position of Western prominence—if it chooses to remain so. Early assessments of the Games—"unforgettable dream Games," in the words of the President of the International Olympic Committee—are certainly casting Greece in an unprecedented positive light.<sup>70</sup> The

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<sup>67</sup>If the challenge were to mediate only between large powers, than a large state could fill this role. The case of Austria during the Concert of Europe is instructive on this point. See Henry A. Kissinger, *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh, and the Problems of Peace, 1812-1822* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1957). But there are arguably too many middle- and small-power Western states that would consider a large-power broker as disadvantageous to their concerns and interests in today's world.

<sup>68</sup>Canada too is not likely an ideal candidate.

<sup>69</sup>There are of course other potential neutral European brokers. Norway has traditionally been a reliable and trusted broker of disputes. Its recent cooperation with the U.S. over Iraq, nevertheless, has tarnished its neutral reputation. Austria is another potential candidate to fill such a valued niche. Given Austria's recent excursion into extremist politics, culminating in the election of Jorg Haider, European elites might be hesitant, however, to empower Austria with such a niche—at least for the near future. Finland, Iceland, or Ireland could also serve as possible brokers, although to date, each of these states has kept a relatively low profile in intra-Western disputes and in international security affairs.

<sup>70</sup>Quoted in Susan Sachs, "For Greece, Olympics Leave Pride, Relief and a Huge Bill," *New York Times*, August 30, 2004, A1. By most standards, the Athens Games were an overwhelming success. For instance, the sale of over 3.5 million tickets surpassed ticket sales for both the Seoul and Barcelona Games. Moreover, television ratings surpassed ratings for the

Olympics are also changing Greeks' perceptions regarding their nation's potential. As one commentator observed, "This is a new mentality, a newly discovered self-confidence. It is this momentum that Greece has won and which will carry it over many obstacles in the future."<sup>71</sup>

The current Prime Minister, Kostas Karamanlis, understands that Greece is in a unique position to increase its global presence: "Greece also had the golden opportunity to get the rest of the world to know her in her modern nature."<sup>72</sup> The next step is to maintain the momentum:

We must prove that this great Greek summer was not a parenthesis. We must prove that the success of such a great and complicated undertaking is not limited to two weeks of celebrations. It is a watershed of the new era. It is an investment in the new period that Greece is beginning. It is capital for the years that are coming.<sup>73</sup>

To reap benefits from such capital, Joseph Nye advises:

The countries that are likely to be more attractive and gain soft power in the information age are those with multiple channels of communication that help to frame issues; whose dominant culture and ideas are closer to prevailing global norms (which now emphasize liberalism, pluralism, and autonomy); and whose credibility is enhanced by their domestic and international values and policies.<sup>74</sup>

Being an open society strategically located to serve as a hub between Western and Eastern societies, a popular culture well admired, and a system of governance finally showing signs of political maturity, Greece is situated for a positive change in relative international standing. As

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highly applauded Sydney Games by over 15 percent. Nikos Kostandaras, "The Games of Athens," *Kathimerini*, online edition, August 30, 2004.

<sup>71</sup>Kostandaras, "The Games of Athens."

<sup>72</sup>Quoted in Sachs, "For Greece, Olympics Leave Pride."

<sup>73</sup>Quoted in "Greece Looks Ahead," *Kathimerini*, online edition, August 31, 2004.

<sup>74</sup>Nye, *Soft Power*, 31-32.

Greece increases its soft power, it will simultaneously increase its status and prestige which, in turn, makes it a more attractive candidate to fill the role of broker. And it is a positive cycle. As long as Greece successfully brokers disputes, it will continue to increase its soft power. So the critical question is: What general strategies can Greece begin to pursue in order to increase its soft power, while maintaining its impartiality within the West, thus allowing it to become the bloc's broker? While space constraints prohibit this study from offering a comprehensive and definitive answer to this question, a brief outline of a strategy can be proffered revolving around the three categories of soft power: normative, practical, and authoritative.

Greece is arguably best suited for increasing normative soft power. Greece is one of the birthplaces of Western civilization—the cradle of democracy. The principles reflected in Greek history and culture are some of the most appealing values of the Western world. But alluring Hellenic ideals extend much further than antiquity. Greece, today, is an E.U. success story, overcoming its 20<sup>th</sup> century authoritarian tendencies to become a beacon of democratic values. One of its most successful normative endeavors has been to encourage an Olympic Truce—a cessation of hostilities and fighting during Olympiads, allowing citizens from all over the world to pause and appreciate international athletic competition in a manner that promotes respect, sportsmanship, and fairness.<sup>75</sup> Even the lighter side of Greek culture, captured by its famous nightlife and slogans like “Ouzo Power,” promotes Greek soft power, for it speaks to a happy, open, and free society—a society experienced by many visitors, as Greece is the 15<sup>th</sup> most popular tourist destination in the world.<sup>76</sup> In a way, Greek culture exudes the metrosexual

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<sup>75</sup>George Papandreou, “An Olympic Truce,” *Washington Post*, September 9, 2000, A21. See, also, Nikos Konstandaras, “Life and Games,” *Kathimerini*, online edition, September 4, 2004.

<sup>76</sup>Mark Wilson and Richard Askwith, “Archimedes to Zorba with a Drop of Ouzo,” *New Zealand Herald*, August 13, 2004. Greece currently welcomes between 13 and 15 million

image—“muscular but suave, confident yet image-conscious, assertive yet clearly in touch with their feminine sides”—that is now sweeping Europe, allowing “Brand Europe” to take over.<sup>77</sup>

In terms of practical soft power, nevertheless, Greece has significant room for improvement. On the international front, Greece pursued a decade of foreign policies in the 1980s that alienated its allies more than supporting them. In the 1990s, Greece tried to bridge those gaps, but its disputes with Turkey, its opposition to Balkans interventions, and its clash with Macedonia bred distrust of Greece within the Western alliance. More recently, Greece has corrected its foreign policy shortcomings, becoming an advocate of Turkey’s membership into the European Union, a leader in the reconstruction of the once war-torn Balkans, and Macedonia’s leading trade partner.<sup>78</sup> But perhaps its most conciliatory gesture came this past year when the government of Kostas Karamanlis went out on a political limb and cautiously endorsed the controversial Annan Plan for the settlement of the Cyprus problem.<sup>79</sup> While the Plan was rejected by Greek Cypriots, the risky position taken by Greece sent a clear message to the international community that Greece wants a friendlier, more Kantian world in the Eastern Mediterranean—and that it is willing to be a leader in promoting such an enterprise.

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tourists annually. The Athens 2004 Olympic Games have, however, increased expectations for the near future. A recent Alpha Bank study anticipates between 18 and 20 million visitors annually by the decade’s end. “Benefits of Olympic Games Will Far Exceed Costs, Alpha Bank Study Says,” *Kathimerini*, online edition, September 3, 2004.

<sup>77</sup>Khanna, “Metrosexual Superpower,” 66-67.

<sup>78</sup>“Greek Premier Renews Support for Turkey's Bid to Join the E.U.,” Associated Press, September 10, 2004; and “Press Conference with the Prime Minister of Greece Konstandinos Karamanlis,” Washington D.C., Federal News Service, May 20, 2004.

<sup>79</sup>“Greece Urges Greek Cypriots to Vote ‘Yes’ to U.N. Plan,” Deutsche Presse-Agentur, April 23, 2004.

While Greece has come a long way in its international affairs in just a short amount of time, on the domestic front, Greece still has great strides to make. Its discrimination against Muslims, especially Turks and Albanians, have led various human rights groups to lamb-baste Greece as a hypocritical champion of Western norms.<sup>80</sup> Along these lines, despite being bound to respect E.U. laws and regulations, Greece continues to face criticism for failing to comply adequately or quickly enough with all European Commission and European Court of Justice rulings, especially in areas of subsidies, taxation, and environmental protection.<sup>81</sup> According to one newspaper report, Greece has the “worse record [of E.U. compliance] in proportion to [its] size and economic diversity.”<sup>82</sup> The state also remains a bastion of nepotism and corruption, still filling its government bureaucracy with the age old practice of *rousfeti*.<sup>83</sup> Although partly required by Olympic preparations, Greece moreover has raised economic concerns in Europe as a result of its spendthrift fiscal policies and policy procrastinations that increased public works costs.<sup>84</sup> All of these practices continue to cast doubts on Greece’s willingness and ability to be a

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<sup>80</sup>See, e.g., the 2004 Amnesty International Annual Report’s section on Greece, available at: <http://web.amnesty.org/report2004/grc-summary-eng>. See, also, the plethora of material available on the Greek Helsinki Monitor’s website: <http://www.greekhelsinki.gr>.

<sup>81</sup>See, e.g., George Parker, “Blair Seeks Crackdown on Nations Breaking E.U. Law,” *Financial Times*, November 28, 2002, 12; Paul Meller, “Europe Sues Greece Over Airline Subsidy,” *New York Times*, April 24, 2003, W1; Daniel Dombey, “Commission Warns Over Dividend Tax,” *Financial Times*, January 9, 2004, 22; Lea Paterson, “Court Case Casts Shadow Over Stability Pact,” *Times*, July 12, 2004, 21; and “E.U. Ratchets Greek Deficit Figures Up,” *Kathimerini*, online edition, September 22, 2004.

<sup>82</sup>Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, “French Under Fire for Shunning E.U. Law,” *Daily Telegraph*, May 6, 2003, 25.

<sup>83</sup>“Enduring Virtues,” *Economist*, October 10, 2002; and “Nepotism Scandal Snowballs,” *Kathimerini*, online edition, September 25, 2004.

<sup>84</sup>Antonis Karakousis, “A Look Ahead at the Greek Economy After a Successful Olympic Games,” *Kathimerini*, online edition, September 1, 2004; Kerin Hope, “Greece Says Deficit Set To Hit 5.3%,” *Financial Times*, September 13, 2004, 4; “E.U. Ratchets Greek Deficit

full and collaborative partner in the European integration experiment. On domestic policies, Greece must make greater efforts to comply with obligations and eschew political favoritism in an effort to earn the trust and respect of its European partners.

With regard to authoritative soft power, medium- and small-sized states have fewer options available to them. Greece, however, can pursue a three-prong strategy to increase its functions within the international community. First, Greece can encourage more international collaborative projects and working groups. In particular, Greece can continue to build on its efforts to promote economic and socio-cultural ties in the Balkans, the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Black Sea region. Being at the forefront of such endeavors also translates into a tacit conferral of authority to set and drive the agenda for regional politics. Second, Greece can aggressively pursue seats and roles in inter-governmental organizations, especially in the three prominent organizations of which Greece is a member: the E.U., N.A.T.O., and the U.N. More positions mean more control over particular issues affecting the international community, especially the Western bloc. Third, as this study advocates, Greece can create unique niches within the international system, allowing it to drive policy outcomes in a manner respectful of its long-term national objectives. Without question, becoming the West's consensus broker will increase Greece's soft power and preserve both Greek and Western interests.

To this end, Greece should pursue a two-track course. First, Greece should think globally, act regionally. There are numerous problems affecting the region, and Greece can play a leadership role in addressing some of these. For instance, Greece can continue to broker

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Figures Up," *Kathimerini*, online edition, September 22, 2004; "E.U. to Probe Accounts," *Kathimerini*, online edition, September 24, 2004; "Greece in Bad Books," *Kathimerini*, online edition, September 25, 2004. One study, nevertheless, argues that long-term economic benefits are within Greece's grasp as a result of the recent Olympic Games. "Benefits of Olympic Games Will Far Exceed Costs, Alpha Bank Study Says," *Kathimerini*, online edition, September 3, 2004.

reconciliation in the Balkans, especially through cooperative economic and socio-cultural projects. In particular, Greece can encourage European investment to alleviate some of the conditions affecting economically-lagging Albania and Kosovo. Second, Greece must make its service available when intra-Western disputes arise. Of course, this will require that Greece avoid taking sides in trans-Atlantic and intra-E.U. rifts, unless its vital national interests (i.e., Greco-Turkish issues) are at stake. Until recently, criticizing its allies has been a practice that Greece was unable to resist. But a successful broker must learn to rise above intra-alliance quarrels if it is to be entrusted with the task of building consensus.<sup>85</sup> Taking such outgoing actions is a recipe for enhancing Greece's prestige and position in the international community.

### **Conclusion**

The U.S. is still the world's most dominant power. Moreover, the E.U. is not a counter-weight to American primacy, nor will it be in the near future given the divisions within it. Instead, the E.U. remains part of the American-led unipolar Western camp. What has started to change in recent years, though, is that the Western camp has begun showing signs of fissure. This creates opportunities for confrontation and conflict among the Western allies. Yet, it also creates opportunities for bringing the Western allies closer together. As such, a niche can be developed that would help re-unite and strengthen Western camp. The strategy for accomplishing this objective is not one of Realism's Three Bs (balancing, bandwagoning, or buck-passing), but rather the strategy of brokering. Given its recent historical experiences, Greece is in a historically unique position to fill this niche and pursue this strategy of brokering.

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<sup>85</sup>As Newt Gingrich argues, in the present era, "The real key is not how many enemy do I kill. The real key is how many allies do I grow." Quoted in Nye, *Soft Power*, ix.



States that serve unique but important functions need not be large countries, they need not have tremendous resources, and they need not have superior military capabilities. They just need to provide their services well, with integrity, legitimacy, and credibility. In doing so, they take on niche identities—identities that, in and of themselves, become a significant source of soft power.

Greece presently finds itself in such an exceptional position amongst its Western allies. Greece was forced to deal with one of the largest rifts between European member states over a pressing global security issue. Rather than side clearly with one camp or the other over the war in Iraq, Greece instead maintained a balanced stance, often utilizing its position as E.U. President to promote a policy of consensus. This approach built on a consistent stance, in effect since 1999, of actively promoting cooperation in often discordant international relationships: Turkish-E.U. relations, Black Sea and Balkan regional politics, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. As a result, Greece has begun developing an identity as a consensus-broker.

Greece is also currently riding a wave of prestige related to its successful staging of the Olympic Games. As one commentator observed, the Olympics presented “an unprecedented challenge, a unique opportunity to ‘upgrade’ [Greece’s] image and its influence on the international stage. And it achieved this.”<sup>86</sup> The objective now is to sustain these pay-offs. As John Ross notes, “It is too soon to know where these will take Greece, but they do provide a solid basis of better infrastructure, international good will and visibility that can be used, with enough vision, in some powerful and enduring ways.”<sup>87</sup> So far, the indications are that Greece’s political leadership is aware of the prospects for international advancement. As Prime Minister

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<sup>86</sup>Stavros Lygeros, “Critical Distinctions,” *Kathimerini*, online edition, September 1, 2004.

<sup>87</sup>Quoted in “Greece Looks Ahead,” *Kathimerini*, online edition, August 31, 2004.

Kostas Karamanlis recently stated, “we proved that we are ready to turn the page. A new chapter has begun for our society.”<sup>88</sup>

Should Greece continue along this path, at least within an intra-Western forum, it will increase its power and influence, for Greece will be in a position of serving a distinctive purpose amongst its allies: credible consensus-broker. This is a remarkable shift in its external profile: from the awkward partner of the 1980s to the median position of broker. Already, Greece is faced with unforeseen opportunities to make a name for itself in foreign affairs.<sup>89</sup>

Establishing and maintaining such a niche will be a Herculean task, but it will also be a defining moment for Greece. There is a window of opportunity that has not appeared before and could easily be lost. Missing the chance could leave Greece as a follower from the fringe or, worse, incurring unacceptable costs from being forced to “play the game” confined to one of Realism’s Three Bs. Seizing the occasion, however, will involve a sustained effort of producing cumulative gains. The key question now is: Does Greece have the clarity of purpose and the degree of commitment to achieve these goals and secure its niche in the West?<sup>90</sup>

As Greeks wrestle with this question, perhaps they would benefit from the wisdom of one of their ancient compatriots. In his famous Funeral Oration, Pericles observed:

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<sup>88</sup>John Ross, “An Olympic Riddle,” *Kathimerini*, online edition, September 3, 2004.

<sup>89</sup>One area where Greece can launch a new initiative and promote concerted Western action, for example, is in crafting a united plan for ending the war in Iraq while winning the peace there. In particular, Greece can draw on its own experiences in the reconstruction of the Balkans to promote the successful development of the Gulf area into a region that matches some of the West’s interests and identities.

<sup>90</sup>In general, Greek leaders choosing to pursue a strategy of soft power accumulation should be mindful of Nye’s admonishment: “Government policies can reinforce or squander a country’s soft power. Domestic or foreign policies that appear to be hypocritical, arrogant, indifferent to the opinion of others, or based on a narrow approach to national interests can undermine soft power.” Nye, *Soft Power*, 14.

Our form of government does not enter into rivalry with the institutions of others. Our government does not copy our neighbors', but is an example to them. . . . Because of the greatness of our city the fruits of the whole earth flow in upon us; so that we enjoy the goods of other countries as freely as our own. . . . Our city is thrown open to the world, though and we never expel a foreigner and prevent him from seeing or learning anything of which the secret if revealed to an enemy might profit him. We rely not upon management or trickery, but upon our own hearts and hands. . . . In doing good, again, we are unlike others; we make our friends by conferring, not by receiving favors. . . . We alone do good to our neighbors . . . in the confidence of freedom and in a frank and fearless spirit. . . . Any one can discourse to you for ever about the advantages of a brave defense, which you know already. But instead of listening to him I would have you day by day fix your eyes upon the greatness of Athens, until you become filled with the love of her; and when you are impressed by the spectacle of her glory, reflect that this empire has been acquired by men who knew their duty and had the courage to do it. . . .

This famous funeral oration is a reminder that the ancient Greeks were some of the first people to recognize that influence and prestige often emanates from soft power. The goal for modern Greeks today is to draw on the wisdom of their Hellenic ancestors and the experiences of their Western brethren to expand their soft power, allowing them to bear the Olympic torch of prominence and power well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.