

BUILDING SOFT POWER: CHALLENGES OF PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN CULTURAL POLICY AND THE WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

This paper undertakes a critical analysis of the dialectics of soft power in the current interstate system. It puts forward the concept of the cultural ecosystem consisting of a broad array of interconnected cultural institutions as the domestic infrastructure of soft power building. A dynamic foreign cultural policy, based on the successful pursuit of the cultural interests of a nation, depends on the high domestic performance and internationalization of the national cultural ecosystem. Pakistan lacks this approach. Development of cultural ecosystem and cultural value creation and linking them to different types of relevant diplomacy is proposed as the way forward. The article 'Emergence of Cyber Militia: Time to Revisit undertakes a critical analysis of the dialectics of soft power in the current interstate system. It puts forward the concept of the cultural ecosystem consisting of a broad array of interconnected cultural institutions as the domestic infrastructure of soft power.

Keywords: Soft Power, Cultural Interests, Cultural Value Creation, Cultural Production, Quintuple Helix-based Cultural Ecosystem.

Introduction

The relationship between power, politics, national interest, foreign policy, and diplomacy is an old one. All politics, whether domestic or international, has been and will continue to be a struggle for power involving competition and cooperation based upon mutual accommodation and negotiation of interests (Morgenthau 1993). On the spectrum of political power, non-coercive persuasion exists at one end, and the exertion of violent coercive power at the other end. (Morgenthau 1993). The space on the spectrum between these two poles is

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inhabited by various combinations involving differing proportions of these two polar power types. Power manifests itself in the realm of domestic and international politics in the form of the relentless pursuit of interest, which typically becomes national interest in the arena of international politics (Morgenthau 1993). National interest is a composite term comprising different types of interests which a nation and its state considers central to its survival, such as security interests, economic interests, commercial interests, financial interests, political interests, social interests, cultural interests, and ecological and environment interests, (Xuetong 2002). All these interests, which are supposed to be safeguarded and pursued internationally, first find their concrete expression and development in the domestic domain, and tend to be associated there with concrete activities and outcomes in different sectors of state, society, economy, and culture. Depending upon the overall level of material, ideological, and technological development and sophistication of the state in question, the pursuit of national interest is either formally codified or tacitly understood as a common set of principles and objectives, which a certain state will defend at any given time, regardless of the specific social composition of its domestic society. This codified or tacit strategy, whatever the case may be, is known as the state's foreign policy, and is formulated and led by the political leadership of the state in a competitive world in which other states are also seeking to maximise their relative power (Saran 2017; Mearsheimer 2001). A state's foreign policy will normally and generally be endorsed by more or less the whole nation, regardless of the specific structural composition of its domestic society. When this is not the case, the foreign policy will be inefficiently and ineffectively executed, and the domestic society of the state in question will be prone to chronic social conflict, socioeconomic inequality, and disintegration (Turchin 2007). Just as national interest can be disaggregated into various types, so foreign policy itself can be divided into various sub-categories corresponding to the types of national interests. Foreign policy of a country is manifested in its diplomacy, which is the instruments, techniques, and tools by which foreign policy is implemented in international relations (Saran 2017). In other words, national interest is the overarching objective of the state's survival in the global interstate system, foreign policy is the strategic end to be realised based on this overarching objective, and diplomacy is the practical means by which the strategic end is to be achieved.

In the pursuit of its various interests, a state typically pursues two types of power, namely, hard power and soft power (Nye 2004). Hard power consists of the coercive instruments of influence like economic heft, financial capacity, and military strength, while soft power, also called 'attractive power', is 'the ability to

get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies' (Nye 2004 p. x). The distinction between hard and soft power is intriguingly reminiscent of the Gramscian distinction between consent and hegemony as two strategies of social domination by elite social groups (Gramsci 1992). In terms of its genealogy, the theoretical construct of soft power is rooted in neoliberal thinking with close correspondence to the prior concept of 'complex interdependence' which sought to highlight the conditions in which interstate relations and exchanges could be characterised not by the realist concerns of survival, force, and security, but by the multiplicity of channels connecting societies, non-hierarchical organization of issues and interaction, and low prioritization of military force. (Keohane & Nye 2012, pp. 20-21).

In the interstate system, different types of national interests, foreign policy, and diplomacy correspond to the pursuit of either hard power or soft power as well as different combinations and calibrations of these two forms of power. Economic interests, security interests, political interests, financial interests, and trade interests, together with their corresponding types of foreign policy and diplomacy, are based on the pursuit of the hard power. On the other hand, cultural interests and social interests, pursued chiefly by foreign cultural policy and various associated types of diplomacy such as public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, science diplomacy, knowledge diplomacy digital diplomacy, and city diplomacy, are based on the pursuit of soft power. It must be pointed out that hard power and soft power, including their associated types of interests, foreign policy and diplomacy, are not mutually exclusive. They rather function coherently in a strategic universe which presupposes ceaseless interactive flows between them. While foreign policy in general can be deemed a matter of intercultural communication understood as attempts to communicate across two cultures in an interstate context, foreign cultural policy is the special province dealing with 'transborder cultural communication' (Reimann 2004) and material and ideational cultural exchange to increase the interstate appeal of the national, regional, or local cultures existing within the national territory of the state. Two exceptions to this proviso of the existence of two different cultures in an interstate context are the two situations, seen quite frequently in the real world, when two different cultures inhabit the same national space, or when the same culture straddles the state's international borders. While the former may be dealt with by means of the domestic cultural policy, the latter will fall within the scope of the foreign cultural policy of a state.

As mentioned above, different types of diplomacy, rather than just cultural diplomacy dealing primarily with arts, crafts, and heritage, are involved in the implementation of foreign cultural policy. This multiplicity of types is inherent in the very concept of culture covering a vast domain of diverse functions, activities, and resources. Culture, considered by Nye (2004) as the primary asset of attraction, represents the 'set of shared practices and beliefs that are at a society's heart', and forms the sum total of its practices like 'customs, rituals, dress, food, music, routines, symbols, and the language ... subtle gestures, manners and communications', together with its beliefs that include 'its political and social values, views about morality and religion and stories about its histories', and 'civil institutions ... that reflect those practices and beliefs' (Mearsheimer 2018). This means that culture encompasses a broad set of activities, functions, institutions and organizations in order to regulate the society's myriad shared practices and beliefs. Culture can then be seen as the third great sphere of human social organization in addition to state and economy. It is pertinent to note that these three spheres focus on creating three different types of value, namely strategic value, economic value, and cultural value, allowing the society to maintain, sustain, and reproduce itself over time. These three types of value are the outcomes of three types of value chains namely, strategic, economic, and cultural value chains, with their three types of activities, viz., strategic, economic, and cultural production, distribution, and consumption.

Cultural production, distribution, and consumption take place by means of cultural institutions and organizations. The concept of ideological state apparatuses, put forward by Louis Althusser, the noted post-Second World War French political theorist, encompasses key cultural institutions active in the cultural domain (Althusser 1971). Ideological state apparatuses are primarily non-coercive and non-repressive sociocultural entities, and consist of family, educational, religious, legal, professional, social, and political institutions, organizations, and associations (Althusser 1971 & 2014). Considering the expansion of the cultural domain in the domestic and interstate contexts during the last 40 years, science, technology and innovation (STI), media, entertainment, design, publishing, research and development, strategic communication, entrepreneurial, environmental, non-governmental, community, and civil society organisations and entities can also be justifiably counted amongst contemporary cultural institutions. These institutions, their personnel, and their value creation are fundamental soft power assets of a state. Comprehensiveness of the cultural domain and cultural institutions helps explain why different types of diplomacy were listed earlier as different practical manifestations of foreign cultural policy.

A rational and good foreign cultural policy will be linked organically with the domestic cultural policy. A comprehensive domestic cultural policy is based on viable strategies for the integrated development of the domestic cultural domain as a whole, including the maximum realistic development of all cultural institutions. The success of foreign cultural policy depends to a large extent upon the success of the domestic cultural policy. Building durable soft power means understanding and leveraging this interdependence. Trying to focus on formulating a great foreign cultural policy to the exclusion of domestic cultural development is to court failure in the long term and frustration in the short term. No amount of astute cultural diplomacy will make up for the deficiencies of domestic cultural policy and national cultural institutions, because foreign cultural policy and its associated types of diplomacy seek to pursue the state's cultural interests through the utilization of the domestic cultural value chain, cultural instruments, and cultural institutions. The formulation and implementation of the strategies for the contradiction-free development of the national cultural value chain forms the primary remit of the domestic cultural policy, requires that domestic cultural policy is not considered reductively as a matter of the promotion of arts, crafts, film, and heritage alone. If this happens to be the case, then there is a risk that the foreign cultural policy may also reflect this reductive preference leading to suboptimal results. This reductionism will also undermine the development of the whole domestic cultural ecosystem, including the stultification of these few elements erroneously considered to form the whole range of domestic cultural policy.

The Triple Helix model of cooperation, which was originally conceived to effect and promote science, technology, and innovation gains by means of fostering collaborations between government, academia, and industry (Etzkowitz 2008), later morphing into Quadruple Helix with the inclusion of media, cultural, and civil society factors (Carayannis, Barth & Campbell 2012; Laranja 2017), and then becoming the Quintuple Helix (Carayannis & Campbell 2019) by factoring in the ecological and environmental sustainability perspective, may be proposed as the contemporaneously suitable model for the dynamic development of the cultural value chain and cultural institutions. A domestic cultural policy that is inspired by these theoretical and practical perspectives will of necessity try to discover non-linear connections and linkages, not only among different cultural institutions but also between cultural institutions and different economic, political, and security institutions, so that they continue to function even when linear interaction between them has temporarily come to a halt. The

implementation of this cultural ecosystem approach can lead to not only rapid soft power building but can also foster speedy and high-quality economic growth.

Building soft power by means of a supple integration of domestic cultural policy and foreign cultural policy presupposes a deep comprehension of soft power mechanics, interstate cultural competition and cooperation, cultural value chain, cultural politics and cultural interests. This understanding has to be derived from the critical observation of the domestic and interstate actions of great powers, regional or middle powers, transitional powers, and small powers. It needs to be clarified that transitional powers can be either small powers in the process of becoming regional or middle powers, or the latter in the process of becoming great powers. When this process of transition is reversed and denotes a backward movement, such states can be called retrogressive powers. Soft power building greatly impacts the power trajectories of transitional states than it does traditional great powers or small powers.

A robust foreign cultural policy needs to grasp that just as geopolitics is the end and geoeconomics the means to realise that end (Blackwill & Harris 2016), so, in the ultimate analysis, hard power is the end and soft power one of the many means for securing this particular end. Problems and difficulties will inevitably beset foreign policymakers whenever this relational aspect between geopolitics and geoeconomics on the one hand, and between hard power and soft power on the other, is overlooked. This is the case in Pakistan where numerous policy statements have been issued of late, announcing the abandonment of geopolitics in favour of geoeconomics (Dawn 2021; The Express Tribune 2021). It is, therefore, probable that the relation between hard power and soft power will be misunderstood. In fact, a few cases may be discerned where Pakistan has applied soft power when hard power projection was needed and vice versa.

It is, therefore, imperative to remember at all times that there is a strong correlation between soft power advantages and hard power capabilities. States possessing high soft power accumulation without proportionate hard power assets remain vulnerable to states with greater quantum of hard power. In such cases, soft power proves to be of little avail. In fact, states with high soft power and low hard power resources are anomalies in the post-Second World War international system. Their security depends in large part upon the global alliance and partnership system of great powers which provide hard power security guarantees to such anomalous states. Austria, Canada, Denmark, Netherlands, New Zealand,

Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are a few of such states enjoying high soft power capabilities and low hard power assets. They enjoy high overall security as a result of their close partnership with the US-led global alliance and partnership system. These states are interestingly among the top 20 soft power nations as per the Global Soft Power Index 2021 (Brand Finance® 2021). Also, it should not be forgotten that states with some of the highest hard power concentrations will also command unusually high accumulation of soft power such as China, France Germany, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, all of which are among the top 15 soft power nations in the world, as per the above-mentioned index.

Just as there is a strong correlation between economic strength and military capabilities (Kennedy 1988), so economic capacity forms the irreducible basis of soft power. Building soft power on a weak economic basis is as challenging as building military capacity on meagre economic capacity. Having military power and soft power in the absence of economic and financial strength is always a precarious business. A foreign cultural policy with such shaky foundations will invariably be hampered by low or stagnant economic growth. Therefore, a state may risk its autonomous development if it prioritises its cultural interests over its economic, security, and political interests, or tries to secure its cultural interests ahead of these other interests. Doing so can lead states, especially, regional, middle, and transitional powers, into dangerous strategic miscalculations that can negatively impact their growth trajectories.

While a state may have a robust cultural value chain, yet its soft power projection may not accurately reflect its advanced level of cultural development, simply because global soft power metrics may be liable to be influenced by the dominant trends of the international order, which in turn may reflect the strategic preferences of the powers dominant in the system. An example may be Cuba which, despite enjoying relatively high levels of cultural development, is ranked 58th in the above-mentioned soft power index. Perceptions of the leading nations in the world are, therefore, likely to shape the perceptions about the developing nations in an uncanny echo of the Marxian principle that ruling ideas of a society are the ideas of its ruling classes (Marx & Engels 1976). It needs to be noted that the equation between the ruling classes and knowledge production may be a bit reductive, considering the fact that the enterprise of knowledge draws its leading personnel from across a number of social groups in the contemporary world. Nevertheless, the underlying structural principle of the relationship of power,

knowledge, and perceptions, hold truer for the international society, if the dominant nation is substituted for the ruling classes.

However, all cases of low soft power capabilities cannot be explained away as a result of the structural factor of dominant powers' strategic preferences. It may equally be true that if a nation's cultural development is poor at home and is not a priority of either the state or the people, then the foreign cultural policy will not also yield optimal results, even if its cultural diplomacy and other associated forms of diplomacy are being conducted efficiently. Soft power projection in such cases will continue to be ineffective. A case in point may be Pakistan. Though it is the strategic partner of China, which is the second biggest economy in the world with massive hard and soft power capabilities, yet its own soft power projection is relatively modest. One might, with some degree of plausibility, say that Pakistan, like Cuba and other similar countries, also suffers from the adversarial strategic preferences of other leading great powers which impact its soft power standing in the world. Nevertheless, the deeper reason seems to be the sub-optimal economic and financial management coupled with the poor state of cultural affairs at home.

Remediation of this situation requires that a state, given adequate economic resources and basic good economic and financial management, should develop its foreign cultural policy and various related forms of diplomacy from simple to complex attraction through the cultural ecosystem approach. This means that a state needs to move from simple reputation management and image preservation or enhancement to qualitative increases in domestic cultural production, increased trade of its cultural and creative goods and services, technological sophistication of its domestic cultural ecosystem, and greater global collaboration and networking of its cultural institutions and its personnel. At the moments, Pakistan's foreign cultural policy and cultural diplomacy are based on simple attraction strategies rather than complex attraction.

A nation's soft power building should be sensitive to the general and particular laws of its overall development and growth. What this means going forward is that the state undergoing the transition from the lower to the higher stage of development should focus on soft power only after it has crossed a certain growth threshold. Significant resource allocation for soft power building before crossing this threshold, which threshold will differ from country to country, depending upon the particular growth dynamics of countries, may delay the

state's transition to the higher stage of development. The growth trajectories of newly industrialised countries like China, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore, and Turkey during the last 20 years confirm this tendency. It, should, therefore, be carefully determined if Pakistan has indeed entered that stage of development, where significant soft power allocations can be warranted. In this respect, perhaps a tentative proviso may be to increase, *ceteris paribus*, the annual cultural development spending by 1 to 2 percent if the economy grows by 5 to 6 percent. However, there are certain components of the cultural ecosystem like the science, technology, innovation, higher education, and research where targeted and consistent annual investments of, say, 7 to 10 percent of GDP even in periods of low growth can lead to oversize gains, assuming prudent economic, financial, and development management is established and continues to be in place.

A comprehensive foreign cultural policy and an astute integrated cultural diplomacy will also need to be awake to the fact that cultural production or the production of cultural goods and services, like economic and strategic production, inevitably follows the dominant logic of domestic and global circulation and flows of capital, which is based on the extraction of value from peripheral to core economies (Wallerstein 2004), the latter including advanced, newly industrialised and emerging economies. In the cultural realm, at least, this extraction remains largely peaceful, non-coercive, and non-violent. It has been estimated that unequal exchange between the global South to the global North annually amounts to USD 2.2 trillion in Northern prices, and that between 1960 and 2018, it totalled USD 62 trillion, which would have been equivalent to USD 152 trillion, had this value been utilised for the development and growth in the global South (Hickel, Sullivan & Zoomkawala 2021).

Furthermore, foreign cultural policy of developing countries like Pakistan, needs to be conscious of the fact that the soft power of advanced countries and that of developing and emerging countries will be ontologically different. Therefore, the strategic aims of the foreign cultural policies of developing and emerging countries will be significantly different from those of core economies. The strategic aim of the former will be balancing global cultural production and reversing the current global pattern of cultural value extraction. On the other hand, the strategic goal of most of the core economies, with few exceptions, will be the maintenance of the currently dominant pattern of unequal exchange-driven cultural value extraction.

To pursue their ontologically different soft power building, the foreign cultural policies of developing countries need to build regional niches for their cultural production. Building such niches relatively quickly has become possible because of the 21st century inability of the even the most powerful country in the world to exercise soft power equally in all regions of the world. What this means is that a country's soft power projection, like its hard power projection, will be greater in some regions. Developing countries need to explore and find out these niches based upon a nuanced global scoping analogous to firm-level boundary spanning practices which are designed to link the firm's internal culture of research and development with the external sources of creativity and dynamism. One helpful pointer in this regard is to remember that regions and countries where a country exerts hard power contrary to the wishes of the regional and national publics are regions where its soft power will be low, even if the duration of the exercise of hard power produces the opposite effect. Even then, there will be tough competition for such potential regional soft power niches. Regional soft power niche creation is also being encouraged by the development of the multipolar trend in the international system. It has led to the diversification and multiplication of the opportunities of cultural attraction for developing countries. However, newly industrialised countries and emerging economies may be best positioned in the next 5 to 10 year to benefit from increased global multipolarity. It must be kept in mind that where the multipolar trend has increased opportunities, it is also going to generate intense interstate economic and cultural competition.

Pakistan's Cultural Production in a Global Perspective

The global footprint of Pakistan's cultural production is modest, its cultural value creation is limited, and its soft power capabilities are not very impressive at best. While there have been areas where Pakistan has performed rather well, large sectors of cultural production have not become globally competitive so far. Pakistan is indeed linked with major global hubs of cultural production in the core economies, but it is more often than not an eager recipient or net importer of high-tech cultural goods and services of different countries. What this means is that Pakistan is primarily active as an avid consumer of American, British, Indian, and more recently, Chinese and Turkish high-tech cultural goods and services, whether it is higher education, innovation, publishing, and entertainment and media, and only secondarily active as the exporter of mainly low- to medium-tech cultural goods. A snapshot of the

performance of a few domestic cultural industries and institutions is discussed below.

The total revenues of the global creative and cultural industry sectors, consisting of advertising, architecture, arts and crafts, design, fashion, video, photography, music, performing arts, publishing, research and development, software, computers, electronic publishing and TV/radio (UNCTAD 2021), generate annual revenues of around USD 2.250 trillion (EY 2015). The latest data available in open-source online databases is for the decade between 2005 and 2014. During this period, Pakistan's exports in creative industries decreased while its imports increased, but it managed to maintain a net trade balance (UNCTAD 2018). During the same period, Pakistan's exports in creative and cultural industries amounted to less than 5 percent of its total exports, while its trade in creative industries remained less than 3 percent of its total trade. Moreover, Pakistan's trade in cultural and creative industries showed a pattern of regional concentration with its top ten partners in trade in creative industries located in the Europe, the Middle East, and North America (UNCTAD 2018). It is surprising that countries like Central Asian Republics, Iran, and Turkey with which Pakistan enjoys major cultural complementarities, and China, which is the key strategic partner of Pakistan, did not figure as its significant creative and cultural trade partners between 2005 and 2014. Since latest data was not available, it is to be hoped that since 2015, the patterns of Pakistan's cultural and global trade may have undergone regional diversification.

Entertainment industry, especially films and cinema, have not experienced sufficient growth during the last 20 years. While Pakistan is now the 5th most populous country in the world, yet it did not figure among the top 20 box office markets worldwide in terms of revenue (Statista 2021). In 2018, the total worldwide box office revenue of Pakistan was USD 972,155 compared to India's USD 582.4 million and Turkey's USD 126 million for the same year (Nash Information Services 2021). However, Pakistan has showed good regional progress in digital economy with 46 million Pakistani social media users being the second highest in South Asia after India's 448 million, but ahead of 45 million social media users in Bangladesh and 36 million in Iran (DataReportal 2021).

Pakistan's record in promoting tourism has been likewise chequered. In 2019, Pakistan's total inbound tourism revenues stood at USD 948 million compared to Turkey's USD 42.4 billion (World Bank, 2021a). Likewise, Pakistani

tourists spend more abroad than foreign tourists spend in Pakistan. In 2019, the expenditure by inbound tourists stood at just 3.1 percent of Pakistan's total exports against the expenditures by Pakistani outbound tourists in foreign destinations amounting to 5.2 percent of Pakistan's total imports, compared to foreign tourist spending in Turkey at 17.2 percent of its total exports against the spending of Turkish tourists in foreign destinations at 2.2 percent of total exports for the same year (World Bank, 2021b; 2021c).

In so far as higher education is concerned, while Pakistan has made considerable progress during the last two decades, still its higher education sector is far from globally competitive, with no Pakistan University currently among the top 200 universities of the world. However, one or two leading universities like the National University of Sciences and Technology and Quaid-i-Azam University have been consistently improving their rankings in recent years, and may figure among the top 200 global varsities in the next 5 to 10 years if present levels of development continue.

It is well-known that research and development function as major drivers of scientific and technological progress, which in turn, among other things, propel innovation and high-tech cultural and creative production. Pakistan's manufactured exports exhibited some of the lowest R&D intensity in the world as its high-technology exports were only 2 percent of its manufactured exports, compared to 8 percent for Indonesia, 10 percent for India and Poland, 13 percent for Brazil, 31 percent for China, 32 percent for South Korea, 52 percent for Malaysia, and 62 percent for Philippines (World Bank 2021d). Between 2000 and 2019, Pakistan spent less than 0.5 percent on research and development as a percentage of GDP while India was spending close to 1 percent during the same period (UNESCO Institute of Statistics 2021a). This abysmally low public R&D investment is reflected in an extremely poor performance in the Global Innovation Index 2020 which ranked Pakistan 107th out of a total of 131 countries (Cornell University, INSEAD & WIPO 2020). However, the balance of Pakistan's innovation input (ranked 118th) and output (ranked 88th) was slightly better, which meant that with low innovation inputs like institutions, human capital, research and development infrastructure, and market and business sophistication, Pakistan produced relatively higher innovation outputs in terms of knowledge, technology and creative outputs (Cornell University, INSEAD & WIPO 2020). What this points to is the inherent resilience, innate talent, and resourcefulness as three remarkable cultural traits of Pakistanis that enable them to make the best out of

an unenviable situation on any given day. Quantity tends to be almost as important as quality, but it invariably gets short shrift once contrasted with quality in a binary relationship. Pakistan suffers from low numbers of R&D manpower, which inevitably undermine its progress in science, technology, and innovation. In 2017, Pakistan had around 488 R&D personnel per million inhabitants, considerably lower when compared to about 11,400 in China (2018), 8500 in Germany (2018), 7433 (2018) in Ireland, 6995 in the United Kingdom, 2656 (2018) in Malaysia, 2280 in Iran, 2003 in Thailand, 1893 in Turkey, and approximately in 776 in South Africa ((UNESCO Institute of Statistics 2021b).

Pakistan's Contemporary Foreign Cultural Policy and the Way Forward

One of the biggest barriers to the development of a robust foreign cultural policy in Pakistan is its disconnect with the domestic cultural policy. The domestic cultural policy in turn lacks a cultural ecosystem approach based on the above-mentioned Triple, Quadruple, or Quintuple Helix models of collaboration and networking. The different types of diplomacy, such as cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, science diplomacy, knowledge diplomacy, digital diplomacy, city diplomacy, etc., have not been harnessed so far in a concerted strategy aligned with the domestic cultural ecosystem. Moreover, the domestic cultural value chain continues to be viewed in narrow terms and has not been integrated so far to include all cultural institutions with the result that the domestic cultural policy, educational policy, human capital formation, science and technology policy, innovation policy, and digital policy, among others, are considered separately rather than as interpenetrating parts of the same cultural ecosystem. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Pakistan has instituted relatively efficient public diplomacy, science diplomacy, and digital diplomacy initiatives, but what is still missing is the appreciation of the cultural ecosystem approach. It may be argued that the formulation of comprehensive domestic and foreign cultural policies has received short shrift due to the historical predominance of geostrategic concerns in Pakistan's foreign policy. This, however, will not hold water because security interests have engaged the greater part of the attention of all major powers including great powers and big regional powers, but many of these powers have experienced high levels of cultural development and cultural production. What has been missing in Pakistan's case is that it has not been able to pursue its economic interests tenaciously and accurately combined with low prioritisation of cultural development. This meant that the totality of culture and the need to integrate the extensive range of cultural institutions into a multidimensional

cultural value chain remained beyond the sight and purview of public policymaking.

However, during the last 3 to 5 years, there has been a renewed focus on incorporating various aspects of the cultural ecosystem in Pakistan's foreign policy and diplomacy. These efforts have been admirably initiated by MoFA. In 2019, the establishment of the Public Diplomacy Division at MoFA led to a number of key steps required for transforming Pakistan's diplomacy (MoFA 2021a). The Division took the lead in formulating the new strategic vision, called Vision F.O. for guiding Pakistan's diplomacy in the 21st century. The Division created and launched the Ministry's new website to enhance its digital communication and digital diplomacy capabilities. Pakistan joined the new Saudi-led Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) in 2020 as a founding member (MoFA 2020a). The Ministry is successfully running a Digital Diplomacy Working Group composed of leading IT experts in the country to enhance its digital diplomacy efforts (MoFA 2020a). The Ministry launched Public Diplomacy Consultative Group and held its first meeting in June 2020 to foster wide-ranging collaboration with stakeholders from government, industry, academia, civil society, and business community (MoFA 2020b). The Ministry has utilised its F.M. Connect initiative, whereby the Foreign Minister consults and engages with stakeholders from diverse sectors, to interact with leaders in cultural and creative industries (MoFA 2020c).

The Ministry launched a promising Science Diplomacy initiative in 2018 that focuses on socioeconomic development, domestic and international S&T collaborations, highly qualified Pakistani diaspora, domestic and international institutional linkages, technology transfer, and science communication and popularization (MoFA 2021b). One of the highlights of the Ministry's science diplomacy efforts has been the establishment of the Diaspora Outreach Research and Innovation Network (DORIN), which is expected to lead to increased S&T returns through increasing collaboration opportunities with both advanced and emerging global and regional hubs of R&D and innovation excellence (MoFA 2021b).

Pakistan's missions abroad regularly engage in multiple cultural diplomacy activities and cultural promotion events like arts and craft fairs, painting, calligraphy and photographic exhibitions, sports competitions, business promotion events, conferences, seminars, town hall meetings, cultural galas, etc.

However, these activities are centred on simple attraction strategies of reputation management and image enhancement rather than the complex attraction strategies based on increased high-tech cultural and creative production.

Though the Ministry's Science Diplomacy initiative is a welcome exception to this general tendency, yet it focuses more on connecting domestic and international S&T actors without any corresponding effort to leverage viable domestic and global S&T partnerships for promoting science-based regional development in Pakistan. Science-based regional development, based on the comprehensive development of new industrial clusters like, science and technology parks, research parks, innovation districts, and high-tech development zones to name a few, has been one of the most potent forms of furthering socioeconomic, urban, and science, technology, and innovation development in advanced, newly industrialised, and emerging countries. Science-based regional development can also fulfil the need for creating world-class meetings, incentives, conferences / conventions, and expositions / exhibitions / events (MICE) infrastructure so as to increase the ability of Pakistani cities to attract the leading global and regional events. Science-based regional development may also provide perhaps the most powerful development methodology for rapid progress across a range of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It needs to be noted that the Ministry's execution of public, cultural, and science diplomacy as well as other forms of diplomacy, though laudable, will continue to be constrained by the overall stage of national development, especially the stage of national cultural production because national cultural conditions, will provide the ultimate basis for the country's foreign cultural policy and associated forms of diplomacy. If these conditions are mature and advanced, available inputs will likewise be diverse and high-tech. To support a 21st century foreign cultural policy, it is imperative for the country to transition to a qualitatively higher stage of development.

In this regard, the relationship between advanced cultural production and thriving cities is also critical. Sustainable and modern cities are crucial for ensuring the optimal functioning of the cultural value chain, because the spill-over effects of harmonious or disturbed cities will proportionally affect each segment of the cultural value chain. Digitally enabled, inclusive, socially just, accessible, safe, and participatory cities will be positive drivers of cultural development. The question of innovative and sustainable city development is also

linked to tourism promotion as cities tend to be major sites of global tourism. Seeing cities as some of the biggest and lasting cultural artefacts of human civilization can put culture at the heart of governance and development in Pakistan. In this regard, the role of city diplomacy should be emphasised (Grandi 2020), which means that inter-city foreign relations focusing on leveraging different urban features and endowments for promoting relations with foreign publics should be promoted. In this regard the local government and district administration structures need to be sensitised to the related subjects of science-based regional development and sustainable urban development.

In sum, it is imperative to adopt a cultural ecosystem development approach based on the Quintuple Helix partnerships across public, private, and societal actors. Only after this requirement of a multidimensional cultural development approach has been implemented, can Pakistan hope to have domestic and foreign cultural policies that are well-synchronised, that produce maximum cultural value without the minimum generation of contradictions, and that help build soft power without compromising other major national interests.

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