Unlocking a Potentially Potent Tool of Statecraft: Military Soft Power

Abstract

The conversation regarding the use of military statecraft to effect political outcomes in the international system has been historically focused on the physical, coercive, and/or intimidatory aspects of military *hard power*. However, as pivotal a role as this overarching threat of force has played in military statecraft historically, it overlooks a key alternative form of exercising military statecraft – military *soft power*. This leads to an interesting research question: How can a non-coercive, non-aggressive form of military power, *or military soft power,* be leveraged as part of military statecraft to shape foreign policy outcomes? In an effort to answer this question this article will first define military soft power, then analyze how it can be leveraged by states in the international system to effect favorable political outcomes, and then finally discuss the issue of measuring the effectiveness of military soft power, in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the concept. The concept will then be assessed via a case study of U.S. – Colombia military relations, with a focus on the passing of the 2009 Supplemental Agreement for Cooperation and Technical Assistance and Security (SACTA), particularly how the U.S. leveraged military soft power to achieve a desired foreign policy objective. This article is intended to exploratory in nature and designed to stimulate interest and discussion into an important but understudied topic.

Introduction

The historic discussions relating to the strategic leveraging of military statecraft to influence foreign policy outcomes has almost exclusively been focused on the physical, coercive, and/or intimidatory use of military power – commonly referred to as *military*

hard power. This general framing of military power, in almost exclusively hard power terms, can best be exemplified by examining Robert Art's (2009) argument that:

> "…force is integral to foreign policy because military power can be wielded not only forcefully but also 'peacefully.' The forceful use of military power is physical: a state harms, cripples, or destroys the possessions of another state. The peaceful use of military power is intimidating: a state threatens to harm, cripple, or destroy, but does not actually do so. To use military power forcefully is to wage war; to use it peacefully is to threaten war" (Art and Waltz 2009, p. 3).

This conceptualization of the military's power to impact foreign relations as being exclusive to the dimension of 'force' is too restrictive (whether it be considered in terms of projection and/or use of force), as it distorts and limits the much broader scope of what constitutes military power. The distortion lies in the fallacious conceptualization of the military's role in delivering mission objectives exclusively through coercion and intimidation. In such conceptualizations the potential impact of *military soft power*, a key tool in exercising military statecraft, is not given sufficient consideration.[1] As a result, the current conceptualization of the military's role in statecraft remains limited, and distorted. This is problematic considering that—beyond just the mere existence of a gap in scholarly literature on military statecraft—decision-makers are lacking a complete understanding of the tools available to them via military statecraft. Therefore, to contribute to a better understanding of the full scope of possibilities for leveraging the military for the purposes of statecraft, this paper will seek to answer the previously posed question: How can a non-coercive, non-aggressive form of military power (military soft

[1] Power is the ability to influence the behavior of others to get the outcomes you want and there are several ways one can achieve this: you can coerce them with threats; you can induce them with payments; or you can attract and co-opt them to want what you want. Soft power deals exclusively with the latter - the ability to get others to want the outcomes you want by co-opting rather than coercing. It is also considered the "second face of power" that indirectly allows you to obtain the outcomes you want. (Nye 1990)

power) be leveraged as part of military statecraft to shape foreign policy outcomes within a target state?

Defining and Understanding Military Soft Power

Joseph Nye (2022), who conceptually developed the notion of *soft power*, described it (in relation to hard power) as follows: "The ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or *payments*" (p.1). He then continues by espousing its utility by stating that, "…attraction [a derivative of soft power] is much cheaper than coercion [a derivative of hard power], and an asset that needs to be nourished…" (*as found in* Garcia, et al 2009, 17). Following along this line of reasoning and logic, military soft power can then be defined as *the leveraging of military power in a non-aggressive, non-coercive manner, by a state, in order to attract or persuade an actor in the international system to behave in conformity to that state's desired foreign policy objectives*.[2] As this conceptual definition will undoubtedly seem rather unorthodox, considering the almost exclusive treatment of military power as solely an instrument of hard power utility, along with the fact that the use of force is the primary mission of the military, it needs some further development. The obvious question arising is, "How can military soft power, emanating from an organization steeped in a legacy of force and violence, attract or persuade without the use or projection of force, or violence?" In staying as closely as possible to the spirit of Joseph Nye's (2008) conception of soft power, while maintaining that military soft power is both non-coercive and

[2] It is important to note that this conceptual definition does not include monetary transfers (in the form of direct military aid) as a method of exercising military soft power, it does however include transfers of military materiel in the form of weapons and equipment. This distinction derives from the nature in which the decision making process, regarding monetary transfer of military aid, occurs. Monetary transfers are almost exclusively a political decision (thus more representative of economic statecraft or political statecraft), whereas the transfer of military materiel is a decision made primarily by military decision makers. These decision makers are relinquishing material from their own inventories and budgets.

non-aggressive, the ability of the military to effectively leverage soft power must lie in its ability to either:

A) Project a sense of awe or envy in another actor by either its military values, culture, capabilities (includes materiel), policies, institutions, doctrines, strategies, reputation, etc.; or

B) Possess the capability to mobilize its forces to provide some form of benevolent service to a target state during a grave time of need - *in a manner perceived as unthreatening to the target states sovereignty*.

Actors receptive to these soft power overtures will seek out a relationship with the military of that state seeking to attract or persuade, and thus open themselves up to influence via effective military statecraft.

At this point it would seem natural to develop, in greater depth, the means by which military soft power is able to influence, however, that very subject will be the explicit purpose of the next section. Before expanding on this aforementioned concept, it is important to first frame the nature of the power relationship between the two actors, where one is seeking to leverage military soft power on another, in order to provide a more fundamental baseline for understanding. Also, for this very same purpose, it is important to establish the specific means by which soft power can be leveraged (i.e. the tools of military statecraft for exercising soft power).

With relation to the relative power relationship between two actors where one is seeking to leverage military soft power, it is to be assumed that a certain level of asymmetry exists. As defined earlier in this paper, to effectively leverage military soft power, the influencing actor's military must be able to project a sense of awe and/or envy

in another actor; or possess the ability to fill a critical security gap for another actor without threatening their sovereignty. Neither of these criteria would be applicable to the militaries of two or more actors whose relative military power was equal. Therefore, the actor with the more powerful military (heretofore referred to as *state A* or *the military of state A*) then leverages one of these two shortcomings in the target actor (heretofore referred to as *state B* or *the military of state B*) to shape a particular foreign policy outcome. As such, state A's primary benefit is essentially political. While the weaker actor (state B) takes advantage of the relationship to receive some sort of direct military benefit (resulting from military-to-military cooperation of some form), or other tangible benefit resulting from allowing the foreign military to operate within their sovereign territory (ex. humanitarian assistance efforts). Therefore, state B's primary benefit is essentially military or economic. Thus, it can be assumed that the ability of a nation to wield military soft power will be proportionate to its military strength of attraction in relation to its target. This line of reasoning parallels Hirschman's (1945) notion regarding asymmetric trade relations, essentially establishing that asymmetric economic relations accrue greater overall political benefits to the more powerful state (state A) due to the state of dependence which will likely ensue; as well as the influencing of domestic actors within state B (as found in Blanchard, Mansfield and Ripsman 2000, 119-122).

One final note regarding the natural power asymmetry that exists in these relationships—it is not to be misconceived in the traditional zero-sum sense as involving a victor and a victim, or as involving some form of exploitation or coercion. This exchange is voluntary. Both actors surrender something of value. State A is providing the services of its military to develop the capabilities of state B's military in some form. In

return, state A receives the ability to influence the foreign policy outcomes of state B by creating a relationship of dependence, and thus gaining a key domestic actor within state B – the military. Therefore, each benefit, and neither should feel coerced, hence the notion of military soft power versus the more coercive form of hard power. (Baldwin 1985, 43)

With regards to the types of soft power available to a state engaging in military statecraft, there are several types. However, only the two most commonly exercised will be discussed here. The first to be discussed will be the most common vehicle for a state to exercise soft power: military-to-military cooperation. Military-to-military cooperation is rooted in that ability of a superior military force (military of state A) to project a sense of awe or envy in another by its values, culture, capabilities (includes transfers of materiel), etc. The weaker military (military of state B) desires to reflect these envied attributes in their own force and therefore enter into cooperative agreements in hopes that these attributes may be transmitted, or absorbed, through the cooperative relationship. This cooperative relationship can come in various forms to include officer exchange programs, joint-operational inter-force training, diplomatic exchanges, materiel supply, command positions, etc. Once this relationship begins to develop the military of state A begins to ingratiate itself, through the transposition of these envied attributes onto the military of state B, and a certain level of dependence develops - as the military of state B seeks to continue to institutionalize these changes within its own force. As a result, the military of state A weaves itself into the fabric of the weaker force's political system (state B) and thus provides state A with a domestic interest (military of state B). This domestic interest then begins to influence foreign policy in favor of maintaining the beneficial relationship

with the military of state A. Thus, essentially, as the military of state B sees it in its own interest to maintain its relationship with the military of state A, it begins to serve as a 'proxy domestic lobby' for state A's political apparatus. State A's political apparatus can then begin leveraging this military soft power to engage in military statecraft, which will ultimately shape foreign policy outcomes within state B.

The second most common form of military soft power exercised is humanitarian assistance operations. These operations involve the military force of state A either formally requesting, or being formally requested to, deploy onto the sovereign territory of a nation facing a crisis or disaster (famine, natural disaster management, etc). Once this transaction occurs and the military of state A begins to effectively provide service and relief, a certain level of trust, value, and confidence is established within the domestic audience of state B. This military effort, or soft power influence act, then translates itself into foreign policy leverage, as domestic institutions within state B become amenable to repaying the act of support in the form of political currency. The benevolence of the military of state A essentially shapes opinions and ideas in a matter which helps to serve its interests—which in itself is a valuable form of military statecraft in which soft power is the fundamental tool for shaping outcomes.

Leveraging Military Soft Power

This section seeks to further develop the methods, introduced earlier, by which military soft power can be leveraged to influence foreign policy outcomes. In order to do so, a few concepts will be borrowed from Robert Art (2009), derived from his notion of the '*fungibility of force'* (Art and Waltz, 2009). Although military soft power has been explicitly established to **not** involve the use, or threat of use, of force, the *spill-over*

effects and the *linkage politics* observed by Art (2009) in describing the leveraging of hard power share some core commonalities with military soft power; and thus legitimate the borrowing of terms. For both military hard and soft power their "mere presence structures expectations and influences the political calculations of actors." (Art 2009, 7). Yes, the greater pervasiveness of hard power makes it a great deal more fungible than its soft power counterpart, however, when a strong soft power military relationship exists between two actors, it can pervade many of the decisions made by political decision makers. The concepts of *spill-over effects* and *linkage politics* can thus be considered applicable when discussing military soft power.

Spill over effects (as applied to military relations) can best be described as when a military relationship or action "yields a result that can be consequential to the interactions and the outcomes that take place in other domains" (Art and Waltz 2009, 14). Military soft power actions can oftentimes provide just as great an impact as hard power; this is best exemplified in humanitarian assistance efforts. The boost in reputation, image, and domestic support within state B, for the benevolent military actions of state A, can sometimes even reap greater political benefits than the exercise of hard power. An example of this would be Operation Unified Assistance, the U.S. military's response to the 2004 Tsunami in Southeast Asia that killed over 126,000 people. The U.S. mobilized its military forces in the Pacific region to provide much needed humanitarian/disaster relief, which included feeding over a million refugees and providing critical medication and shelter to many of those displaced, within just 48-hours. This feat can in many ways be considered just as impressive and awe-inspiring as the use of the military to apply force. While executing this mission, the U.S. military force occupied the sovereign

territories of Utapao, Thailand and Sumatra, Indonesia at the invitation of those host nations. Post-mission, polls showed that "65 percent of Indonesians viewed the U.S. favorably and backing for Osama Bin Laden dropped from 58 percent to 23 percent. Indonesians opposing U.S. anti-terror efforts within Indonesia declined by half, from 72 percent in 2003 to 36 percent in 2005. The results were described as the 'first substantial shift of public opinion in the Muslim world' since 9/11" (Kay 2005, 28-32). The *spillover effects* of this mission's exercise of military soft power were manifold, providing U.S. policymakers much greater leverage for engaging in statecraft with Indonesian decision makers in overlapping realms (economic, political, military). However, most importantly, was the closer cooperation that resulted after the tsunami relief efforts on U.S. counter-terror initiatives within Indonesia (and around the greater Muslim world in general)—a key U.S. interest related directly to national security priorities. This example demonstrates the *spillover effects* that result from the application of military soft power, which work to extend influence into unrelated domains (i.e. political and/or economic). In the case presented, the political domain translated into increased cooperation in fighting terrorism.

Linkage politics, on the other hand, can best be described as linking two unconnected issues, typically through an intermediary statesman, in order to compensate for a weak position in one area by linking it to a strong issue in another area. This creates "bargaining leverage" (Art and Waltz 2009, 18). An example of *linkage politics* is the expanding U.S.–Vietnam military relationship. A recent pact signed focuses on high-level military exchanges, maritime activities, search and rescue, peacekeeping operations and humanitarian aid and disaster relief between the two militaries. This military soft power

being exerted on the weaker Vietnamese military force serves as a strong point/issue within this relationship and it is being linked to a weak point in the relationship—the limits on access of U.S. military vessels to Vietnamese ports (particularly Cam Ran Bay in the South China Sea). Optimally, the Vietnamese would prefer an outcome that included maintaining a healthy and cooperative relationship between their military (which envies U.S. capabilities, materiel, doctrine, strategies, etc.), and the military of the U.S., while continuing to deny U.S. vessels open access to Vietnamese ports in the South China Sea—for fear of agitating China. However, the U.S., as part of its greater Pacific strategy, desires access to Vietnamese ports to maximize freedom of movement in the South China Sea. Thus, their optimal outcomes would be to engage in a military cooperative relationship with Vietnam in exchange for open access to Vietnamese ports. Although this outcome is not an optimal outcome for Vietnam, Vietnamese political leaders, influenced by the military lobby desiring maintain the continued benefits of a cooperative relationship with the U.S. military, will link these two issues and likely settle for a sub-optimal outcome. Thus, through a shrewd leveraging of military soft power, the U.S. is linking the two, relatively unconnected issues (port access and military cooperation), by establishing stronger relations between the U.S. and Vietnamese military forces that could ultimately push Vietnamese politicians to broaden port access to both U.S. commercial and military vessels. (Barnes 2012, www.online.wsj.com)

In the previous discussion on the means by which military soft power can influence outcomes, it became apparent that there exist multiple domestic institutions and actors that can be leveraged (by strategic use of military soft power) to affect a desired foreign policy outcome. However, there is one domestic institution in particular that can

potentially be most influential in effecting change – the target nations military. As two militaries engage in a cooperative relationship, there is a key value, deeply ingrained in every state's military strategic culture, which state A can tap to mold desired outcomes in state B, and that is the desire to increase (or at the minimum maintain) current levels of power and influence within the domestic political arena. In this case the military of state B would seek, at a minimum, to maintain its current level of power and influence domestically, which includes maintaining its budget, manpower levels, role, and status within domestic society. The logic goes that as it develops a cooperative relationship with the military of state A, its relative power and influence rise within the domestic political setting. Thus, to increase, or at least maintain this status, the military of state B will lobby domestic institutions to maintain at, at a minimum, the status quo relationship with the military of state A. This reality that can be leveraged by state A in order to shape foreign policy outcomes with regards to state B. This is the essence of military soft power working to achieve targeted foreign policy outcomes (See Figure 1).

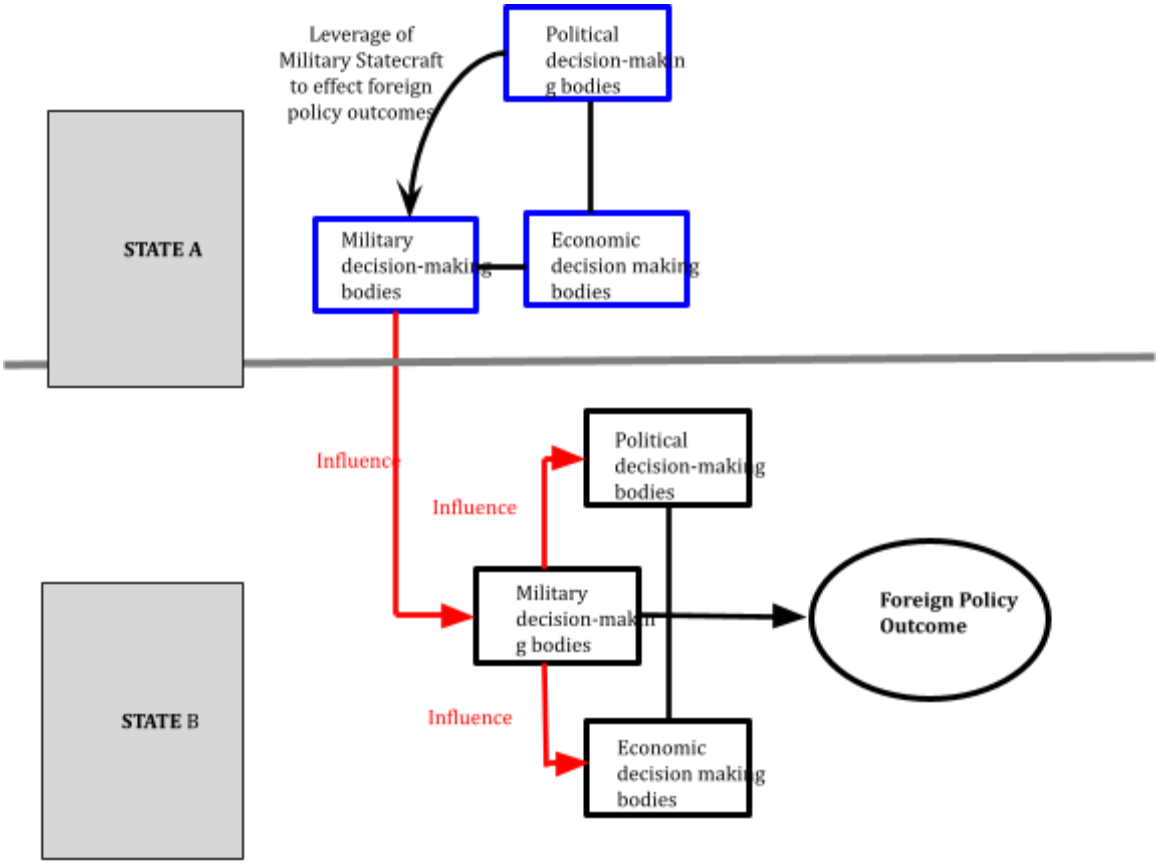

Figure 1: *The flow of influence from state A to state B through their respective militaries*

Military Strategic Culture – A Key Assumption in Exercising Military Soft Power

Expanding upon current conceptions of *military strategic culture* lies beyond the scope of this paper, however, considering that there is a basic underlying assumption in the previous section deriving from a concept of military strategic culture, it is appropriate to place that assumption within context. Strategic culture, as defined by Snyder (1977), is "the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior that members of a national strategic community have acquired through

instruction or imitation" (Snyder 1977, 8). As such, military strategic culture embodies these very same principles. The military is an organization steeped in a long tradition of hyper-vigilance over the methods in which policymakers (making decisions far from the battlefield) decide to best utilize their capabilities. This fundamental factor has woven military leaders tightly into political decision-making cycles. As a result, the military has become a key figure in policymaking and has developed a history of wielding political influence over not just *'high politics'* issues, such as resource allocation and/or war mobilization, but also of *'low politics'* issues, such as bureaucratic and professional interests, as well as policy output (Snyder 1977, 8). Therefore, in the case of military soft power, the influencing military (military of state A) can leverage the military apparatus being influenced (military of state B), and its variable forms of domestic policy influence, to shape policy outcomes favorable to its own agenda.

Measuring/Assessing the Impacts and Effectiveness of Military Soft Power Influence

Attempts at leveraging military soft power to gain influence in shaping foreign policy outcomes are rarely explicit, i.e. intended goals/targets that can be easily observed are not often clearly stated. As a result, measuring success or failure, or degrees thereof, can prove complex if not properly framed or structured. However, these difficulties are not insurmountable. An excellent starting point would be Baldwin's (1985) means for measuring the effectiveness of economic statecraft, a form of statecraft that shares many properties, on various levels, with exercises in military statecraft (in this case the exercise of military soft power). The first principle to be established is that the dichotomy of determining whether an influence attempt was simply a "success," or a "failure," is grossly insufficient. To remedy this situation then, as proposed by Baldwin (1985), an

assessment of efficacy using standard power measurement concepts should be applied. Most basically, it should be made clear that influence attempts (in general) are a matter of degree, as opposed to a clear success or failure situation. Also, power varies not just in degree but in scope, domain, and cost as well. With regards to degree and scope, third parties, secondary goals, implicit goals need to be considered. In the case of the U.S – Vietnamese cooperative military relationship, measuring the degree of success or failure must be measured in degree of influence gained within the Vietnamese political decision-making process, by entering into the cooperative relationship, not solely on whether or not the U.S. ultimately attains full, and open, access to Vietnamese ports. Will partial access be granted? Will refueling rights be granted? Point is, there are varying degrees of success or failure that must all be considered when measuring effectiveness. With regards to costs, when measuring effectiveness of military soft power, the costs of alternative options must considered as well. Returning to the example of U.S.-Vietnamese military relations, before any determination is made as to the efficacy of this influence attempt, alternative options for securing port access must be considered. Military seizing of ports would obviously be too costly in terms of reputation lost, danger of sparking larger conflagration with larger regional powers, cost to allies, etc. Other options may or may not be more effective, but those alternatives must be considered properly, within context, before any judgment is made.

This is merely a starting point for measuring and observing the effectiveness of military soft power. Again, it is by no means an easy task, however, it is a necessary one if the efficacy of military soft power is to be gauged accurately. It is not a simple

dichotomy of success or failure, but rather a calculated effort at determining degree, scope, domain and costs.

Case Study – The Cooperative U.S. and Colombian Military Relationship and SACTA

The U.S. and Colombia's cooperative military relationship dates to the first Military Assistance Agreement signed in 1952, however, the relationship became institutionalized under Plan Colombia in 1999. Although it did not originally begin as such, Plan Colombia became the centerpiece of a militarized strategy, developed through close U.S. and Colombian cooperation (much of it developed by joint military planners), aimed at countering narcotics operations and the guerrilla insurgencies that were pervasive throughout the Colombian countryside at the time. The execution of Plan Colombia brought the U.S. and Colombian militaries into a highly cooperative relationship where strong relationships were solidified through several high-level exchanges; as well as through the vast array of programs that brought military personnel into closely cooperative relationships. These programs included such things as: helicopter training and technical programs (which included a component of foreign military sales), Joint Task Force Omega provision of planning and intelligence assistance, joint base building projects, special forces training, air interdiction equipment and planning, access for Colombian military personnel to U.S. military training schools, etc. Also, a key component of the plan was U.S. military personnel stationed on sovereign Colombian territory, strictly for training and technical assistance purposes. However, it was the later 2009 *Supplemental Agreement for Cooperation and Technical Assistance* (SACTA) that will be the focus of this case study. Specifically, how the U.S. military, a stronger military eliciting awe and envy to a weaker military partner—the Colombian military—exerted

military soft power to achieve a favorable foreign policy outcome, namely the stationing of U.S. troops on Colombian soil with the authorization to conduct independent intelligence and surveillance operations. The essence of SACTA was to strengthen cooperation between the two militaries in terms of counter-narcotics operations, however, a key component of this was increasing U.S. access, or stationing of troops, on Colombian military bases. This agreement conveniently came as Ecuador's President, Rafael Correa, refused to extend the U.S. mission on the Manta Base located within Ecuador's political boundaries in that same year. Therefore, SACTA can be interpreted in many ways as filling the gap left by this displacement of U.S. military personnel in Ecuador that were deployed to a region critical to U.S. national security interests yet governed by increasingly unfriendly regimes. A further examination of this agreement will elucidate the means by which U.S. policymakers leveraged military soft power, as part of its overarching political strategy, to influence Colombian domestic politics, and shape that specific foreign policy outcome. (Torrijos 2010, 3-4)

Before entering this specific policy process it is critical to provide a basic introduction of the influence of the Colombian military within domestic policy making circles in Colombia. Central to Colombia's power structure is the close alliance between business, landowning elites, the military, and the United States. These actors have penetrated the state and influenced the decision-making of elected officials. "Through coalitions with state policy makers and military officers they are able to guide and sometimes direct policy making. The linkages that the military maintains with regional economic [and policymaking] elites and US hegemony over the 'drug war'…underlie the decision making of individual policy makers and the outcome of policy " (Aviles 2010,

32). Pizarro (1995) categorizes Colombian civil-military relations as an "unequal civil accommodation" where there is little civilian countering to military prerogatives and some have even claimed that the US-Colombian military relationship has influenced the ideological makeup of the Colombian military force, contributing…to greater military institutional influence in Colombian politics. (Aviles 2010, 33-34)

With these historical considerations in mind, and now turning to the specifics of SACTA, one can see the delineation of military soft power influence being leveraged by the U.S. military, through the Colombian military, in order to shape a specific foreign policy outcome favorable to U.S. interests. The key interest of SACTA lied almost exclusively with military concerns. There were no equivalent economic or social components to the agreement despite the encroachment of sovereignty it allowed for. Consequently, its potential negative consequences were serious, and many. The access that was granted to foreign troops to Colombian military bases, with authorization to conduct operations, provided a great deal of political ammunition/propaganda to leftist political parties contending for power within Colombia. It also exacerbated tensions in an already highly deteriorated relationship between Colombia and Venezuela. Further, it encouraged attacks on these occupied bases by guerrilla organizations (particularly the FARC) still operating in Colombia at the time. The list continues however, the main point being that there were no substantial political, economic, nor social benefits gained on the Colombian side as part of this agreement that could be used as justification for passing this legislation. or interpreted as a natural or political trade-off made to acquiesce or placate an exclusively military demand. Much less so to overlook the fact that the legislation was passed without being submitted for congressional approval, nor was the

Senate consulted on the matter. What is interesting, and revealing, is that Colombia cited the issue of reciprocity as its justification for SACTA, stating that "commitments acquired by others should follow the criteria used to assess their own." (Aviles 2010, 4-6). On the other hand, the benefits to the U.S. abounded. SACTA helped build prestige for the U.S. in the region, to pre-empt any geopolitical reconfiguration in favor of Venezuela or other belligerent nation, it conveyed the message that the U.S. stands by its partners in the region and then, of course, access to bases to conduct counter-narcotics, surveillance and intelligence operations. So how was this dramatic shift in policy to be explained? This is a classic, although perhaps unorthodox, example of linkage politics, discussed earlier. An issue where the U.S. was weak, access to military bases in Latin America to replace the Manta base, was linked to an issue in where the U.S. was strong, continuing unfettered access to the privileged relationship the Colombian military enjoyed with the U.S. military. I mention that it is an unorthodox example of linkage politics because essentially the two issues seem intimately linked in that the U.S. military would in essence want access to regional bases to avoid disrupting operational levels after losing the Manta base in Ecuador. However, the access to bases, and the determination to seek access to Colombian bases, was primarily a political decision considered and made by the U.S. political decision-making apparatus (of course with input from the military). However, SACTA was more of a strategic geo-political move for the U.S. to exert greater influence within the region versus the mere military utility of base access for counter-drug operations. Nonetheless, the US, through shrewd military statecraft, leveraged what were many years of exerting military soft power, to have the Colombian military leadership lobby the requisite political decision-making bodies to get

the legislation passed to attain the desired foreign policy outcome. Of course this leveraging of military soft power to achieve this outcome is part of a larger effort that included aspects of political and economic statecraft as well, however, it played a pivotal role nonetheless. Any cost/benefit analysis of this action (beyond scope of this paper), when compared to alternative means for acquiring access to bases located in a critical region of Latin America to U.S. interest, would be highly likely to show that the military soft power exerted had a high degree of success.

Conclusion

The focus, historically, on the coercive, physical and intimidation aspects of military power have been entirely too narrow. Through spillover effects and/or linkage politics, and primarily driven through the influencing of key domestic actors (particularly the military), military soft power, if leveraged strategically, can have a great influence on shaping foreign policy outcomes. As a result, the conversation regarding military soft power needs to develop beyond the view derived from the narrow lens in which it has been historically. This invaluable tool of statecraft, overshadowed by its far more influential counterpart –military hard power—provides another strategic tool for policymakers to leverage when engaging in statecraft. However, if this tool is left underutilized, due to the heavier conceptions of force, coercion, and intimidation, traditionally considered when thinking of potential uses of the military for achieving political ends, then policymakers will be deprived of this potentially potent tool of statecraft—military soft power.

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