

“Refining China’s Grand Strategy for Central Asia: Soft Power Incentives”

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Abstract

China's soft power in Central Asia has increased significantly in recent years as the country seeks to expand its influence and presence in the region through a variety of economic, cultural, and diplomatic initiatives. This paper aims to provide an overview of China's soft power strategies in Central Asia that shape the region's political and security landscape. To this end, a brief overview of the concept of soft power and its application in the context of international relations is first provided. It then presents China's major soft power initiatives in Central Asia, including the Belt and Road Initiative, cultural exchange programs, and diplomatic efforts to strengthen ties with Central Asian states. The analysis proceeds with an assessment of these initiatives and the extent to which they have contributed to China's growing influence in the region. The authors concentrate on the distinctive principles of China's declared security strategy as they appear in the -stan region. The presentation will include narratives, initiatives, and particular instances of how China and the Central Asian nations' relations have progressed in attempt to establish China as a “desirable partner”. Authors discuss the potential challenges and limitations of China's soft power approach in Central Asia and the implications of this trend for the future of the region and its relations with other major powers. Overall, this paper provides a comprehensive analysis of China's soft power in Central Asia and offers insights into the dynamics of China's growing influence in the region, and especially related to slight changes in its Grand Strategy which comes as a consequence of the changes of order in the current international system.

Keywords: China, Grand Strategy, soft power, narratives, security policy, Central Asia