

MASTER'S THESIS

Uighur's identity and sense of belonging, can soft power play a role?

Fung, Winston Wai King

Date of Award:
2014

[Link to publication](#)

General rights

Copyright and intellectual property rights for the publications made accessible in HKBU Scholars are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners. In addition to the restrictions prescribed by the Copyright Ordinance of Hong Kong, all users and readers must also observe the following terms of use:

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from HKBU Scholars for the purpose of private study or research
- Users cannot further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- To share publications in HKBU Scholars with others, users are welcome to freely distribute the permanent URL assigned to the publication

Abstract

This study seeks to ascertain whether Chinese soft power can shape or sway the sense of belonging and identity of Uighurs within the Chinese state. The methodology used for this study will involve surveys and interviews, employing the two primary quantitative and qualitative methods. The findings from this study suggest that Chinese soft power, in the form of education in a controlled environment, does have this ability to sway Uighur to identify with the Chinese state. However, gauging the views of the wider educated Uighur community, indicates that the effectiveness of Chinese soft power is constrained by multiple social, political and economic issues. Based on the analysis of these findings, there appears to be three potential solutions: (i) create a multi-ethnic culture, (ii) incorporate civic nationalism as a component of PRC citizenship and (iii) to reformulate soft power into the form of shared goals that would require cooperation between Uighur and Hans to accomplish.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have helped to make the completion of this thesis possible. First, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to my parents and my wife for their sincere support and understanding throughout my research period. Second, I would also like to thank both my supervisors, as I am deeply grateful to Professor Ting Wai and Jean-Pierre Cabestan, for their patient guidance, constant encouragement and support during the challenges I faced while conducting this research. Last but not least, I am greatly indebted to the Uighur and the Han respondents as this study would not have been possible without the willingness and co-operation of the Uighur and Han respondents who generously gave their time and trust to the author to enable him to successfully conduct the surveys and interviews which were essential to the completion of this project.

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
	1.1 Background and Rationale.....	1
	1.2 Thesis Argument	4
	1.3 Purpose.....	6
	1.4 Outline	11
2.	Literature Review	14
	2.1 Soft Power Literature.....	14
	2.2 Identity Theories Literature	21
	2.3 Chinese and Uighur national identity theories.....	24
	2.4 Soft Power and National identity.....	32
3.	Methodology	34
	3.1 Introduction.....	34
	3.2 Contacting and selecting Uighur respondents	38
	3.3 Survey and Focus Group Methodology	41
	3.4 Interviews.....	46
4.	Survey Findings	52
	4.1 Introduction-Summary of Overall Findings	52
	4.2 General findings by Ethnic Group	55
	4.3 Validity.....	63
	4.4 Average Rating by for all items under each Categories.....	66
	4.5 Another perspective: findings by 4 dimensions	68
	4.6 “5 Categories & 4 Dimensions” analysis by radar charts.....	73
	4.7 Survey findings conclusion.....	83
5.	Interview Findings	87
	5.1 Introduction.....	87
	5.2 Culture	92
	5.3 Religion.....	97
	5.4 Governance	99
	5.5 Education	104
	5.6 Soft Power Comparison	107
	5.7 National Identity	111
	5.8 Sense of belonging.....	113
	5.9 Uighur-Han perception	115

5.10 Solutions	121
5.11 Historical narrative.....	124
5.12 Conclusion	130
6. Current Chinese Soft Power Predicaments and its Solutions.....	139
6.1 Comparison between the survey and interview: Education as the Key .	139
6.2 Multi-ethnic Culture and the Meaning of being a PRC citizen	148
6.3 Shared Goal Approach.....	164
7. Conclusion	179
Bibliography	185
Appendix: Survey Questionnaire Sample.....	201