

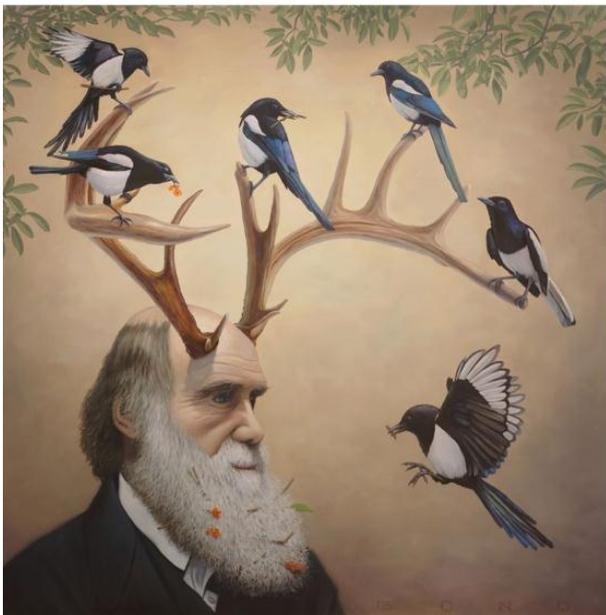
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The Main Trends And Directions Of Cultural And Humanitarian Cooperation Between China And Kazakhstan Within The Belt And Road Initiative

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Abstract

The main historical aspects of cooperation between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the People's Republic of China in the social, humanitarian and cultural spheres are considered in the article, the main regulatory documents, both in historical retrospective and in the context of the implementation of the Belt and road initiative (BRI) are identified and summarized.

The authors believe that in the modern period, the cultural and humanitarian cooperation between the two countries within the international project "Silk Road Economic Belt" (SREB) is acquiring new trends. In the rapidly changing international situation, the growing factors of instability and unpredictability, cultural and humanitarian cooperation can not only revive trade relations along the Silk Road, but also contribute to the maintaining of peace and stability at the regional level. .

The authors also noted that the cultural and humanitarian aspect of the SREB for various reasons in Kazakhstan society can be perceived as a tool of "soft power" of China.

Keywords:

History, culture, trade, cultural and humanitarian cooperation, BRI, SREB, Charter of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, cultural exchange, good neighborliness, image, globalization, «soft power», national security.

Las principales tendencias y direcciones de la cooperación cultural y humanitaria entre China y Kazajstán dentro de la iniciativa Belt and road

Abstract

Los principales aspectos históricos de la cooperación entre la República de Kazajstán y la República Popular de China en las esferas social, humanitaria y cultural se consideran en el artículo, los principales documentos reglamentarios, tanto en retrospectiva histórica como en el contexto de la implementación del Cinturón. e iniciativa vial (BRI) se identifican y resumen.

Los autores creen que en el período moderno, la cooperación cultural y humanitaria entre los dos países dentro del proyecto internacional “Silk Road Economic Belt” (SREB) está adquiriendo nuevas tendencias. En la situación internacional que cambia rápidamente, los factores crecientes de inestabilidad e imprevisibilidad, la cooperación cultural y humanitaria no solo pueden revivir las relaciones comerciales a lo largo de la Ruta de la Seda, sino que también contribuyen al mantenimiento de la paz y la estabilidad a nivel regional.

Los autores también señalaron que el aspecto cultural y humanitario del SREB por diversas razones en la sociedad de Kazajstán puede ser percibido como una herramienta de “poder blando” de China.

Palabras claves:

Historia, cultura, comercio, cooperación cultural y humanitaria, BRI, SREB, Carta de la Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai, intercambio cultural, buena vecindad, imagen, globalización, «poder blando», seguridad nacional.

Introduction

The cultural and humanitarian policy of countries allows the most effective way to solve the problems of ensuring national interests, preserving

the national identity of cultural diversity in the context of globalization, and confronting interethnic conflicts.

One of the most important areas of bilateral cooperation between Kazakhstan and China is social, humanitarian and cultural interaction. Interstate cultural exchange contributes to the formation of ideas about the respective country and people, and public opinion acts as the basis of diplomatic relations. In this regard, cultural exchange, being an important component in the relations between the two countries, acts as a unique opportunity to lay the foundation of mutual understanding and peace [1].

The history of relations between Kazakhstan and China does not subside exclusively into the field of interstate political and diplomatic contacts, and the content of these relations is not limited to economic ties. In the relations between states and peoples, cultural and humanitarian ties play a huge role. In our opinion, the history of the formation of Kazakh-Chinese cultural and humanitarian ties, their development, stages, trends and features of interaction is an important area of bilateral interstate relations. Due to the long-standing bilateral contacts between Kazakhstan and China, the presence of a common border has long been the formation and development of diverse ties, including in the field of culture, education and science.

The Chinese initiative to create a giant integration space is aimed to revive the historic Great Silk Road in modern conditions. In the XVI century, the Silk Road was an event of world order and a globalization process of the early Middle Ages, when values, goods and achievements in one part became available in other parts of the Earth. Combining trade, people passed on scientific discoveries to each other, exchanged material and spiritual values, thereby developing cultural ties between peoples living on the Silk Road.

Since the formation of the Kazakh Khanate from the second half of the 15th century, the Kazakh “bais”, which owned many livestock, sought to sell markets in order to exchange wealth, to acquire fabrics, handicrafts, porcelain and ceramics, and other goods in exchange. However, in those days, the Kazakhs did not have direct access to the Chinese goods; they received them through East Turkestan and the Central Asian khanates. The Kazakh rulers well understood their place at the crossroads of civilizations, offered intermediary services to neighboring countries [2]. Such trade relations with neighboring countries contributed to the development of cultural ties between them.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, in 1991 agreements were signed

in the field of tourism, education and cultural exchange between Kazakhstan and China. In accordance with the SCO Charter, (2002), humanitarian cooperation is a priority, the deepening and development of integration educational ties is aimed at promoting the comprehensive and balanced economic growth, social and cultural development, and, accordingly, security in the region.

The Expert Working Group on cultural interaction at different stages of relations between the countries was formed, a Plan for multilateral cultural cooperation was developed, an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of culture was concluded. Since that time, the main areas of interaction in the field of culture have been identified.

The development of relations in the field of education and science was enshrined in the Agreements between the governments of the SCO member states, many bilateral documents were signed that set the standard to cultural and humanitarian cooperation within the SCO.

Thus, the Kazakh-Chinese cooperation has acquired a permanent character, the purpose of which was to increase further the level and effectiveness of scientific research, as well as to expand the exchange in the field of education. Later, an agreement was also signed between the governments of the PRC and Kazakhstan on the scientific and technical cooperation, as well as an agreement on the mutual recognition of documents on higher education [3].

Similar events are being continued in a new format as part of the implementation of BRI, according to the Plan of the Ministry of Culture of PRC. Joint and reciprocal events with Kazakhstan have become a tradition, indicating the quantitative and qualitative growth of contacts between the two countries in the field of culture, as well as the obvious interest of the authorities of both countries in mutually beneficial cultural exchange. Official humanitarian events deepen interest in the neighbor; therefore, contribute to the development of trade, economic, political, tourist interaction at all levels.

In modern conditions, cultural and humanitarian relations between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the People's Republic of China are resuming from a new perspective. One of the new formats in this area is cooperation within the BRI.

Materials and methods

To study the cultural and humanitarian cooperation between the countries, comparative-historical, systemic and comparative research methods are used. This contributed to a comprehensive analysis of the experience of

cooperation between China and Kazakhstan in the humanitarian sphere in the context of the implementation of BRI. The applied methods made it possible to analyze the historical development of cultural relations between China and Kazakhstan in their temporal development, to determine the role of cultural and humanitarian relations in cooperation between countries, and to assess the development of relations in the context of “people-to-people bonds”. The study also relies on the problem-chronological method of studying the historical reality, which provided an opportunity to compare the state of development of humanitarian ties in the two countries and determine the immediate prospects for this process.

This study is based on the principle of theoretical and empirical unity, which made it possible to carry out a practical verification of the initial theoretical provisions of this aspect of cooperation between countries.

A wide range of documents and materials was used in the article, which together make it possible to draw up a comprehensive idea of the trends, nature and dynamics of cultural and humanitarian cooperation between countries.

Literature review

In general, the viewpoints of researchers can be divided into three conditional groups. The first group includes studies in which the authors’ attention is focused on the history of the development of cultural and humanitarian cooperation between Kazakhstan and China. The second group includes studies that analyze the cultural and humanitarian aspects of cooperation between the two countries within the Chinese SREB initiative. The third group of researchers considers the active cultural policy as a tool of “soft power” and the authors of such works tend to evaluate critically the actions of People’s Republic of China in relation to Central Asia, including Kazakhstan.

Also, the article used the work of such Kazakhstan scientists as Valeev R.M., Kadyrova L.I., Kiribizhanova J., Mametkhanuly N., Khafizova K.Sh., Sultanov B.K., Kaukenov A., Amrebaev A.M. ., Russian researcher A. Lomanov, the foreign researchers Raffaello Pantucci, Marek Yoshek, Jenny Jenish Kyzy and the Chinese scientists Liu Zaiqi, Wang Manli, Gao Yimei, who study the process of implementing a global project, highlighting various problems related to both countries policy and and with the public opinion of the BRI member countries.

Results

The SREB implies the strengthening of friendly relations and cooperation between Kazakhstan and China at a new level. The Chinese initiative will

allow the two countries to share humanitarian experience and build a new model of mutually beneficial cooperation in the cultural and humanitarian sphere, based on harmonious development.

In our opinion, the modern New Silk Road will change radically the world outlook of the two peoples, unite the community of views, bring religions closer and strengthen cultural ties. At the same time, the solution of existing problems on the implementation of this project requires focused political support from the states, which allows creating a peaceful and good-neighborly environment, without which cultural and humanitarian cooperation between Kazakhstan and China becomes almost impossible.

The analysis of cooperation between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the PRC in the cultural and humanitarian sphere from the moment of establishing diplomatic relations to the present day is relevant and of great importance. Firstly, to determine further prospects for the development of relations between the two countries. Secondly, less attention is paid to cultural and humanitarian cooperation between countries due to the presence of more relevant and fundamental foreign policy and economic issues. It is humanitarian ties that largely lay the foundation for friendly relations between countries. Thirdly, cooperation in the field of culture plays a leading role in this process, since thanks to it, the worldview of compatriots, especially of the younger generation, is formed. A better understanding of another state is achieved through educational and cultural exchange, which affects later the construction of the foreign policy.

Discussion

The formation of Kazakhstan as an independent state led to the necessity to build its own foreign policy, as well as the establishment of official political, economic, social and humanitarian, cultural relations with other countries. The geopolitical position of Kazakhstan in the center of Eurasia allows the state to act as a mediator between East and West.

Cooperation in the cultural and humanitarian sphere within the SCO Charter has developed gradually. By 2017, the flow of direct Chinese investment in the Republic of Kazakhstan has increased by 7 times compared to the previous year. A significant event was the holding of the two-day BRI Forum in Beijing, within which the question of the key role of Kazakhstan as a portal to Europe for the PRC was raised.

The cultural and humanitarian aspect was presented initially as one of the basic elements of the Chinese «Belt and Road» initiative. In 2013, during a historic speech at Nazarbayev University, CPC Chairman Xi Jinping presented his vision of a new model of cooperation in Eurasia. The Chi-

nese leader put forward five principles on the basis of which this model should be implemented. Among the five principles, the authors single out “people-to-people bonds”, containing the cultural and humanitarian aspect of the BRI. Explaining the last thesis, Xi Jinping emphasized the close connection of the first four directions and the indicated “people-to-people bonds”. Since, in his words, “in order to achieve success in cooperation in the aforementioned areas, we definitely need to get people’s support, intensify friendly contacts between our peoples, strengthen their mutual understanding and traditional friendship, thus reinforcing regional cooperation with strong social and public base ”[4].

According to the Russian researcher A. Lomanov the term “mutual connection of human hearts” closing this scheme has been firmly established in Chinese sociopolitical and scientific literature related to the BRI problem. This fifth component can be called conditionally a “humanitarian basket” [5].

In scientific and practical discussions, the five BRI principles define how the “road of peace”, “the road of openness”, “the road of prosperity”, “the road of innovation” and “the road of civilization” and denote the cultural and humanitarian component of the initiative.

The document “Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road”, Issued by the National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China, with State Council authorization, emphasizes that “people-to-people exchanges “ is the social foundation of creating BRI.

The cultural and humanitarian unit of the PRC program document consists of four areas:

1. Promotion of public exchanges, exchanges are supposed in the scientific and educational sphere and between governmental and non-governmental organizations.
2. expansion of cultural ties, according to which joint holding of cultural events of various levels is planned, such as holding festivals and competitions, years of culture of the countries along BRI. At the same time, it is planned to cooperate with UNESCO, which should include both joint filing of applications for inclusion in the World Heritage Fund, and collective activities to protect the relevant cultural sites.
3. Tourism development. First, this is the use of the heritage of the Great Silk Road, including the development of special routes, the joint creation of exclusive products with the Silk Road brand.

4. The development of humanitarian cooperation, which highlights the work on the exchange of information and experience in combating the spread of infectious diseases, as well as the joint provision of emergency and medical care [4].

China's plans to create alliances of relevant cultural organizations of countries along the BRI will provide an opportunity to share the rich cultural heritage of our history and the achievements of domestic science and education.

Along with cooperation in the field of science, education, culture, health care and informal contacts, another new direction of cultural and humanitarian cooperation within the BRI is the creation of an intelligent Silk Road and a healthy Silk Road. Such interaction is designed to create a solid public and social foundation for the implementation of the BRI between Kazakhstan and China [6].

In general, it can be noted that the tasks in the field of promoting cultural and humanitarian cooperation, identified during the speech of Xi Jinping, correspond largely to the guidelines set previously.

However, like any other project, the Chinese initiative has its advantages, as well as certain risks and challenges. The primary task of Kazakhstan with the participation in the initiative is the most efficient use of opportunities, on the one hand, and the minimization of risks arising from the project, on the other.

There is some duality of perception of the Chinese initiative in Kazakhstan public opinion. On the one hand, this is a pragmatic approach based on high expectations from cooperation with the world economic leader. On the other hand, fears and phobias, having mental and historical roots. Both domestic and foreign analysts associate the risks for the implementation of the SREB precisely with sinophobia in the Central Asian society [7].

According to Chinese scholars, Liu Zaiqi and Wang Manli, representing the Wuhan University School of Economics and Management, the construction of the BRI faces significant "soft power of resistance" conditioned by national, religious, cultural and social differences, ongoing conflicts, manifestations of ideological factors, and the impact of large countries' attitudes [8].

A similar opinion is shared by Kazakhstani political scientist B.K. Sultanov, noting that, "the exacerbation of anti-Chinese sentiment in the Kazakhstan society will ultimately lead to the breakdown of the Chinese SREB, the deterioration of Kazakh-Chinese relations and, ultimately, undermine the development of the economy of Kazakhstan and worsen the

socio-economic position of the country”[9].

At the same time, one can observe a different position in Kazakhstan society. The traditional sinophobia coexists with the new phenomenon-sympathy for China. The Kazakhstan youth forms their own vision of the Celestial Empire through interaction with the “soft power” of China. A sociological study conducted in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan revealed that among 300 respondents representing the young and educated elite of the two countries, 96% of respondents are positive about Chinese investments. The most negative opinion was expressed about the influx of Chinese immigrants to 80% of respondents. 70% of respondents are concerned about environmental pollution [10].

As noted above, according to a group of researchers, the cultural and humanitarian aspect of BRI is a new tool of soft power, the opinion of this group is argued that educational and cultural resources are actively used with the Chinese side, providing more attractive conditions for the Kazakhstan youth. The authors believe that the cultural and humanitarian aspect is an important component of the global project of our time, the approaching of peoples and cultures can achieve the significant economic effect of the international project. In order to clarify the purpose of the Chinese initiative and to avoid misunderstanding on both sides, it is necessary to move from the official state level to the level of civil society, involving actively the humanitarian and cultural resources of the two countries.

Conclusion

Thus, we can conclude that, since 1991, both the relations between China and Kazakhstan as a whole and the cultural and humanitarian interaction between the countries have been developing linearly. Each stage was characterized by its goals and objectives. Kazakhstan has become China’s trading partner in the Central Asian region. In our opinion, the experience of cultural and humanitarian cooperation within the SCO is developing in the future, it also continues in a new format in the process of implementing BRI. According to the Chinese tradition, on the basis of previous experience, the work on the creation of mechanisms for cultural and humanitarian cooperation within the SREB is detailed, which gave a fresh impetus to bilateral relations in conditions of instability.

In the process of implementing the initiative, a mechanism for cultural and interpersonal exchanges is established, more platforms for cooperation are created, and channels are opened for beneficial cooperation between Kazakhstan and China. Within the international BRI, cooperation in the field of education is strengthening, student exchange is developing, schools with

joint management are being created. Both in China and in Kazakhstan, the analytical centers are beginning to play an increasingly important role, on the basis of which networks and partnerships are being created. Thus, new models of cooperation in culture, sports and healthcare are being formed that contribute to stimulating the interest among the younger generation in understanding the cultural and historical heritage of both countries. However, the active cultural and humanitarian cooperation within the SREB in the Kazakhstan society is not always perceived positively. It is believed that the Chinese traditional culture can be used as a tool of “soft power” and poses a certain threat to the national security.

In this context, we support the Chinese researcher Gao Yimei, recommending to organize the systematic work of representatives of various fields of knowledge, such as cultural studies, philology, and religious studies, for rigorous research of the phenomenon of cultural misunderstanding and to understand where the border of cultural misunderstanding and political interests lies [11].

In the process of implementing the BRI, we can safely say that the two countries have succeeded in developing cultural and humanitarian cooperation, which is at a high level and is actively developing in all areas with some preponderance of the side of China. Cooperation between China and Kazakhstan, in various fields, contributes to maintaining stability and security in the region.

Using the principle of “people-to-people bonds” contributes to the creation of a positive image of China and increases significantly its credibility both at the regional level and in the international arena. This allows to solve the foreign policy problems through the use of the PRC tools of cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

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