

UDC 101.1:316

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**Cultural heritage of the Great Silk road in the context  
of spiritual modernization of Kazakhstan**

The article analyzes the historical and cultural phenomenon of the Great Silk Road in the context of actual problems of Kazakhstan's spiritual modernization. The traditions of interaction and dialogue of cultures on the Great Silk road are considered as factors of modern civilization development. It is proposed to use the spiritual experience of various cultures that Kazakhstan has accumulated to overcome political and religious confrontation and achieve peace and harmony among peoples. It is noted that the Great Silk road is a vivid example, which must be used to form the mutual relations of peoples in the modern world on the basis of dialogue but not the opposition of cultures.

*Keywords:* cultural heritage, interculturality, dialogue among cultures, national culture, spiritual modernization.

In modern culture, it is strongly said about calls for the achievement of a new level of trust between different peoples and people towards each other. Due to the cardinal changes that are taking place, the present era requires a renewed view of the world and of a man and the results of his creative activity as well. Modernity reveals an urgent need to develop a new worldview that would be based on the understanding of the unity of the historical destiny of mankind and guided by the ideas of a dialogue and mutual trust. However, the achievement of such a renewed historical form of the universal worldview is impossible without the maintenance of the dialogue by each participant, without its unique and original cultural identity, since, a full development of a society is impossible without the spiritual experience of past generations and without the study of its cultural heritage. It is no coincidence that representatives of modern philosophical and cultural studies insist that cultural diversity is an indispensable distinctive feature of mankind and a common heritage of mankind. It is necessary to cherish and preserve it for the benefit of all mankind. Cultural diversity creates a rich and diverse world that expands the range of choices and provides the necessary conditions for the realization of human opportunities and values, thus, being the driving force of the sustainable development for communities, peoples and nations. Cultural diversity that flourishes in conditions of democracy, tolerance, social justice and mutual respect between peoples and cultures is essential for ensuring peace and security at the local, national and international levels.

Modern cultural theory believes that, on the one hand, there is an idea of the plurality of equitable cultures and its uniqueness, but, on the other hand, it is necessary to think about an integrating beginning that creates cultural unity, without which the existence of mankind is impossible. The most promising dialogue is the dialogue between cultures with its value orientation on equality and partnership and ensuring cultural stability as well [1]. In this regard, the scientific and theoretical as well as practical significance of cultural studies becomes actual where modern processes of cultural interaction between countries and peoples and the dialogue of cultures are analyzed in the context of historical experience of this kind.

It is important to remember that cultural diversity is strengthened as a result of the free dissemination of ideas and, that, it is enriched due to constant exchanges and interaction between cultures. Therefore, so much

importance in modern relations between nations is attached to creating conditions for flourishing and free interaction of different cultures on a mutually beneficial basis as well as to encouraging dialogue among cultures in order to ensure broader and more balanced cultural exchanges around the world in the interests of mutual respect of cultures and a culture of peace.

The cultural uniqueness and value of the Great Silk road is in fact, that, for the first time in the history of mankind, it connected various countries and peoples on the gigantic expanses from the Mediterranean to the Pacific and connected their material, artistic and spiritual cultures as well. The most various achievements of different peoples' culture were exchanged for many centuries along this road.

The United Nations, proposing the revival of the Great Silk road in modern realities and promoting the adoption of the UNESCO project «The integral study of the Silk road — the ways of dialogue», initiated a broad and detailed study of the history of ancient road and its integration opportunities in the development of modern cultural relations between East and West and the improvement of relations between peoples inhabiting the Eurasian continent from the end of the twentieth century.

Today, there is a revival to a new life of the Great Silk Road thanks to the efforts of many states of the world. An increasing number of people show a keen interest towards the history of this ancient transnational trade highway, to unique cultural monuments, preserved spiritual values and traditions, customs and holidays of the peoples. The Great Silk road had a great influence on the formation of social, economic, political and spiritual characteristics in the culture of the countries through which it had passed. There were large and small commercial cities and settlements along all its routes, the cultural significance of which is still relevant today.

Such a region as Central Asia and, more specifically, the territory of modern Kazakhstan, was of a particular importance for the functioning of the Great Silk road. This region was not only crossed by dozens of trade routes, but there were also important ethnic processes, diplomatic treaties and military alliances were entered into a contract and there was an active interaction of cultures as well. A great role in the spread of written languages, world religions, many material and technical achievements belongs to the peoples of this region. According to N.A. Nazarbayev, «Kazakh steppe and Kazakh cities were crossroads of the dialogue of great cultures of the South and East, North and West» [2; 18]. And the culture of the Kazakh steppe is «a complex and multilevel phenomenon with the greatest historical tradition» [2; 19].

For the first time in the history of mankind, the Great Silk road connected various countries and peoples and also connected their material, artistic and spiritual cultures on the giant expanses from the Mediterranean to the Pacific. The most varied achievements of different peoples' culture were exchanged on this way for many centuries.

The United Nations, proposing the revival of the Great Silk road in modern realities, promoted the adoption of the UNESCO project «Integral study of the Silk Road — the ways of dialogue», according to which a wide and detailed study of the history of the ancient road, the formation and development of cultural relations between East and West, improvement of relations between the peoples inhabiting the Eurasian continent have been carried out [3].

Nowadays, the peoples of many countries are trying to learn the roots of their history, to understand the sources of spirituality, their national involvement in the world culture. Therefore, it is no coincidence that, in recent years, there has been an intensification of scientific and public interest towards the Great Silk Road, the idea of its revival as an important channel for interaction between different cultures.

As far back as 1972, the UNESCO adopted the Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. 146 countries are the supporters of this agreement, that involves the world community in the process of recognition, protection and revival of the unique values that human civilization has. The Convention provides a permanent legal, administrative and financial basis for the international cooperation in this field. Its implementation allowed to form a «concept of world heritage», overcoming all political and geographical boundaries. The international community, in accordance with the adopted agreement, helps countries to protect cultural and natural sites, classified as the world values.

All these efforts contributed to the fact that interest towards the Great Silk Road stimulated various studies that allowed to fully study the scientific, technological and cultural relations that existed between the West and the East and to find out how intercultural contacts developed closed social systems, broadened people's horizons, contributed to a more intensive development of the intellectual sphere. V.M. Mezhev confirmed that «to understand the present historically means to find a key to understanding the past and the future» [4; 93].

Today, when mankind has faced problems of survival under new conditions and the processes of globalization give rise to crises in all spheres of human life, and especially in the sphere of cultural development, the point of mutual understanding in the relations between people and states, the results of human activities as a whole of which depends on the communicative competence. Thus, the problems of trust, sensitivity to each other's interests, readiness to listen and understand all the participants in the dialogue arise on the way to common goals.

The Great Silk road is a phenomenon of world history and culture, a kind of cultural artery through which contacts of many peoples and states have been going on for a long time. It is possible to trace the processes of intercultural communication for 1500 years, to see the diversity of peoples who took part in this grand exchange of achievements in material and spiritual culture, to determine the main characteristics of current cultural situation, as well as the trends in the development of intercultural relations in the future.

Under conditions of globalization characterized by tendencies towards cultural unification and cultural isolation, the dialogue of cultures with its value orientation on ensuring world order and stability is an important factor in preserving the cultural unity of the world in a variety of cultures. This is most typical for the Eurasian multicultural space, where ethnic cultures develop dialogue models that include both universal foundations and its own cultural characteristics.

The Great Silk road has played a huge role in the development of human civilization and has a unique cultural value. Due to the existence of the intercontinental road, there was one of the fastest in the world history and a grand interpenetration of cultures of different peoples and the expansion of the space of international communication. The Great Silk road contributed to the strengthening of social, economic and cultural contacts between the farmers of oases and pastoralists of the steppes of Central Asia as well as the development of the northern steppe and mountain regions, especially the Syrdarya basin, valleys and foothills of the Tien Shan and Semirechie by farmers and townspeople. The history of cultural contacts on the Great Silk road shows a special role of nomadic tribes and peoples inhabiting the territory of Kazakhstan and neighboring countries in the formation of the Eurasian cultural area.

The cultural history of the Great Silk road, the development of which is an important component of cultural policy of modern Kazakhstan, shows that the alliance of forces has always been the most effective form of people's response to historical challenges. The disintegration of common space that connected the peoples close to each other for centuries is increasingly perceived as a great loss, with which many of today's difficulties and turmoil meet in people's minds. Only unity opens up the scope for its dynamic development. The main goal of the states' efforts on reviving the Great Silk road is to demonstrate the advantages of cultural diversity through the recognition of the importance of constant interpenetration and interchange processes in relations between cultures, as well as the ties established since the time of civilization.

An important role in the revival of the Great Silk road belongs to the Eurasian idea, which, emphasizing the importance of the development of national cultures, the uniqueness and originality of each nation and peoples, offers such a way of civilizational development when, many national cultures are united within the framework of a single cultural and historical integrity that ensure unity in diversity. Nazarbayev N.A. has become one of the first heads of state who substantiated the position of his country in the process of Eurasian integration and the revival of the Great Silk road.

Thus, the Great Silk road appears as one of the oldest integration models of human society's development, which is still in the 21st century. Due to the exchange of material and cultural values, this way links the unique and original civilizations of the East and the West for twenty centuries. The experience of the past cultures' interaction on the Great Silk road allows modern cultures to understand better each other, to realize the continuity of the development of civilization, the enduring connection of the times and destinies of peoples whose further existence is impossible without an equitable dialogue of cultures.

Today, the culture of the world is a set of dialogues of local cultures. We see the results of these communicative processes in the manifestations of culture, its forms and tendencies. The Great Silk road was a powerful accelerator in the process of communication of many peoples of the past. It is possible to draw certain parallels between the opening of the Great Silk road and the advent of the information: the opening of the Great Silk road made intercultural relations regular and more frequent, gave a new idea of the world, and the expansion of the information area with the help of new technologies allowed them to become almost instantaneous, changing the attitude towards the time and space in general. Both of these global processes have led to the activation of the communicative ability of societies and individuals.

The topic of cultures' dialogue gets a particular urgency in the interrelated processes of preserving the uniqueness of ethnic cultures on Kazakhstan territory and the formation of modern Kazakhstan culture.

Therefore, it is necessary to pay the closest attention to the concept of cultures' dialogue of such scientists as M.M. Bakhtin, V.S. Bibler, A.N. Nysanbayev, according to whom the dialogue as a universal phenomenon fixes the constructive aspect of cultural interaction, is an integrator of cultural integrity, shows the impossibility of the existence of culture outside the dialogue. The dialogue of cultures with its value orientation on ensuring world order and stability is an important factor in preserving cultural integrity in the globalized world characterized by tendencies towards cultural unification and cultural isolation. This is most typical for the Eurasian multicultural area, where ethnic cultures develop dialogue models that include both universal foundations and its own cultural features.

Dialogue of cultures as a complex social and cultural phenomenon has its own specific nature and its existence supposes mutual interest of dialogue's participants. The interdependence of the ideological content, the semantic field of dialogical interaction and the real factors of life is a fundamental feature of cultures' dialogue.

In conditions of cultural plurality, a dialogue with its internal idea of partners' equality becomes the main counter-balance that creates the integrity of the world's perception, in which any culture must be perceived and understood.

«The very history of mankind is the deepest communication of people with each other. The very existence of a man is the deepest communication. To be means to communicate» said M.M. Bakhtin [5; 312].

V.S. Bibler warned against a primitive understanding of dialogue as the different types of dialogue heard in a person's speech that are not related to the idea of dialogue within the dialogue concept of culture. «In the dialogue of cultures» we are talking about the dialogic nature of the truth itself (beauty, goodness) and, that the understanding of another person implies the mutual understanding of «I-You» as ontologically different personalities possessing different cultures actually or potentially, logics of thinking, different meanings of truth, beauty, and goodness. The dialogue, understood in the idea of culture, is not a dialogue of different opinions or views but it is always a dialogue of different cultures» [6; 299].

The Kazakh philosopher A.N. Nysanbayev noted that in the globalized world, dialogue becomes a problem: «not a theme, but a complex and vitally real problem that pervades all spheres of modern life within the interconnected and conflicting world» [7; 3].

Culture is the «soul» of society. It expresses a creative character of a person inspiring him in practical and creative activity and has universal significance, referring therefore to phenomena that have absolute significance for a person when educating and moulding a person. Being originally a social phenomenon, it is absolutely historical, since the factors determining its development and the social conditions of functioning in a particular society are historical and variable. Today, the thinking and being of a person is not recognized just as something independent, but, moreover, they deepen their own culture. They become internally vital and necessary for their own culture. This determines and causes the need to learn to accept and take into account the diversity of cultures and fully recognizing its singularity, uniqueness and authenticity at the same time.

It is no coincidence that in modern Kazakhstan, starting a new historical stage of its civilizational development, that is, the Third Modernization [8], special importance is attached to such an important process as the modernization of public consciousness. Stressing the specifics and innovative character of planned modernization, N.A. Nazarbayev noted the preservation of its culture, its own national code as the first condition for its implementation. «The new modernization should not look arrogantly at historical experience and traditions as before. On the contrary, it should make the best traditions a prerequisite, i.e. an important condition for the success of modernization. Modernization will remain undecided without reliance on national and cultural roots. I want her to keep its feet on the ground. And this means that history and national traditions should be taken into account» [9].

Modernization does not exclude, but implies the development of different cultures and traditions, since there is the potential for further civilizational development in them. It is important to remember that the values of different cultures are incomparable and incommensurable. However, in order to enrich the civilization and achieve the integration of society, a dialogue based on universal human values is needed. It is in this dialogue that each culture returns to its spiritual origins and reflects on the universal values that relate it to other cultures. Therefore, the principle of non-use of force, mutual respect and broad cultural exchange should be the basis for interaction and dialogue between countries.

In today's realities, when mankind faced the need to search for more effective forms of cooperation for maintaining peace and security on the planet, a comprehensive and complex study of the Great Silk road's history and culture and its restoration as a «way of dialogue» corresponds to this need. For many millennia

the Great Silk road has served as a rapprochement between different peoples, the exchange of ideas and knowledge and the mutual enrichment of languages. Man, as the creator of culture, constantly strove to overcome political and religious confrontation, to assert his activity on the principles of universal and common to all mankind character. And the Great Silk road is a vivid example of this, which must be used to form the mutual relations of peoples in the modern world on the basis of dialogue but not the opposition of cultures.

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### Қазақстанның рухани жаңғыру шеңберіндегі Ұлы Жібек жолының мәдени мұрасы

Мақалада Қазақстандағы рухани жаңғырудың өзекті мәселелері шеңберіндегі Ұлы Жібек жолының тарихи-мәдени феномені талданды. Ұлы Жібек жолындағы мәдениеттердің өзара әрекеттесуі мен диалогы қазіргі өркениеттік дамудың факторлары ретінде қарастырылды. Саяси және діни конфронтацияны өту, халықтар арасында бейбіт өмір мен келісімді орнату үшін Қазақстанда жинақталған әртүрлі мәдениеттер қатынасудың рухани тәжірибесін қолдану ұсынылды. Қазіргі заманда мәдениеттерді бір-біріне қарсы тұрғызу арқылы емес, керісінше, диалог негізінде халықтар арасында қатынастарды қалыптастыру үшін Ұлы Жібек жолды жарқын мысал ретінде қолдану қажеттілігі туралы айтылды.

*Кілт сөздер:* мәдени мұра, мәдениеттердің өзара әрекеттесуі, мәдениет сабақтастығы, ұлттық мәдениет, рухани жаңғыру.

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### Культурное наследие Великого Шелкового пути в контексте духовной модернизации Казахстана

В статье анализируется историко-культурный феномен Великого Шелкового пути в контексте актуальных проблем духовной модернизации Казахстана. Традиции взаимодействия и диалога культур на Великом Шелковом пути рассматриваются как факторы современного цивилизационного развития. Предлагается использовать накопленный Казахстаном духовный опыт общения различных культур для преодоления политической и религиозной конфронтации и достижения мира и согласия между народами. Отмечается, что Великий Шелковый путь — яркий пример, который необходимо использовать для формирования взаимоотношений народов в современном мире на основе диалога, а не противопоставления культур.

*Ключевые слова:* культурное наследие, взаимодействие культур, диалог культур, национальная культура, духовная модернизация.

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