



ANALYSIS OF THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN UZBEKISTAN

Since independence in 1991, Uzbekistan has declared the protection and preservation of the historical and cultural heritage as a fundamental principle of its public policy. In order to secure its rich ancient history, Uzbekistan pursues a policy of protecting its cultural and historical heritage, which is reflected in the Constitution of the Republic. On this basis, Uzbekistan is striving to use all relevant international and regional instruments recommended by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other international organizations.

With Uzbekistan's cultural policy which aims to preserve the tangible and intangible heritage of the country, a number of historical and cultural sites such as Samarkand, Shakhrisabz, Bukhara and Khiva are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. The cultural space of Boysun district, as well as Shashmaqam (Uzbek classical music style) and Katta Ashula (original genre of the art of singing in the Uzbek traditional music) were included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Based on the proposals of the Government of Uzbekistan, under the auspices and with the participation of the UNESCO, following anniversaries were widely celebrated: the 600th anniversary of Mirzo Ulugbek (1994), the 600th anniversary of Amir Temur (1996), the 2500th anniversary of Bukhara and Khiva (1997), the 1225th anniversary of famous muhaddith Imam Bukhari and the 1200th anniversary of Ahmad Fargoni (1998), the 1000th anniversary of the national epic "Alpomish" (1999), the 800th anniversary of Jaloliddin Manguberdi (1999), the 1300th anniversary of Abu Mansur al-Maturidi and the 910th anniversary of Burhan al-Din al-Marghinani (2000), the 2700th anniversary of the holy Zoroastrian book "Avesta" (2001), the 2500th anniversary of Termez (2002), the 900th anniversary of Abdulkholik Gijduvoni (2003), the 660th anniversary of Ubeydullah Ahrar (2004), the 1000th anniversary of Mamun Academy (2006), the 2700th anniversary of Karshi city (2006), the 2750th anniversary of Samarkand and the 2000th anniversary of Marghilan (2007) and 2200th anniversary of Tashkent city (2009).

On the other hand, specific institutions have been established aiming to preserve the historical heritage of the country. For example, the International Institute for Central Asian Studies (IICAS) of the UNESCO was established in August 1995 in Samarkand on the initiative of the first President of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov. The main objectives of IICAS include developing and supporting the inter-

national interdisciplinary scientific cooperation on the history and culture of Central Asia. For more than twenty years, the IICAS has undertaken more than 30 scientific events dedicated to the preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of Central Asia. Currently, in addition to the countries of Central Asia, the Republic of Korea, China, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkey are the participating members of the Institute.

It is noteworthy that there are over 100,000 ancient manuscripts of great historical and cultural value in Uzbekistan. In this regard, the Center of Oriental Manuscripts named after Abu Rayhan al-Biruni under the Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies was established in 2014. The Center owns the largest oriental and Islamic manuscript collection in Central Asia and one of the largest in the world with more than 65,000 manuscripts and lithographic books. The Center's collection is also included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. The manuscripts of the main collection are written in Uzbek, Arabic, Persian, Tatar, Urdu and other languages and devoted to a wide range of topics including astronomy, mathematics, physics, chemistry, geography, medicine, history, philosophy, philology, literature and religious sciences. The experts of the Center are engaged in in-depth studies to work on and protect the priceless monuments of the ancient literacy. Recently, the Center has completed the joint project with the Gerda Henkel Foundation (Germany) on the creation of an electronic card catalog in English, which will enable the experts around the world to receive information about a particular manuscript.

Despite the fact that Uzbekistan is one of the world leaders in terms of the amount of architectural epigraphy, these inscriptions have not been studied and published until recently. Therefore, in order to provide a comprehensive analysis and synthesis of epigraphy of all architectural monuments in the country, the Government of Uzbekistan together with the UNESCO launched the project "The Architectural Epigraphy of Uzbekistan". As a result of years of work within the framework of the project, the inscriptions on the world famous architectural monuments of Samarkand such as Shah-i-Zinda complex, Amir Temur Mausoleum, Bibi Khanum Mosque, and epigraphic inscriptions of the monuments of Khiva (13 architectural complexes, including burial inscriptions of Pahlawan Mahmud complex) have been explored and partially published. For instance, on October 17, 2016, the UNESCO Office in Uzbekistan hosted a presentation of 12 recently published albums dedicated to epigraphic

inscriptions on architectural landmarks of Karakalpakstan, Andijan, Bukhara, Kashkadarya, Navoi, Namangan, Surkhandarya, Fergana, Khorezm regions and Tashkent city, as well as two albums on historical architectural complexes of Samarkand, namely, Registan and Shah-i-Zinda. The albums are published in Uzbek, Russian and English by Uzbekistan Today News Agency. The series of books represent the first phase of the project and works on the project that cover the remaining unexplored epigraphic inscriptions throughout Uzbekistan will be continued. In total, 25 volumes are planned to be published.

Another ambitious project for the preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of Uzbekistan is "Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan in the collections of the world", which is carried out on the initiative of Uzbekistan Today News Agency with the support of the President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev. To date, four volumes of richly illustrated book-albums have been prepared. These book-albums are devoted to items which were found in Uzbekistan and stored now in the collections of various museums and individuals' collections. These masterpieces which were created by ancient and modern masters throughout the ages, epochs and civilizations, reflect the unique heritage of material and artistic culture of Uzbekistan. There is no doubt that this project will significantly contribute to the popularization of the historical and cultural heritage of Uzbekistan.

The intention of the Government of Uzbekistan to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of the country is evident in the current initiatives of the President-elect of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev. For instance, during the 43rd Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on October 18, 2016, the head of the country proposed to establish both the Imam Bukhari International Research Center in Samarkand focused on studying on religious and spiritual heritage of the Islamic thinkers and the Department of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) under the Tashkent Islamic University.

Thus, analysis of Uzbekistan's public policy in the field of culture shows that the process of preservation of the historical and cultural legacy, cultural traditions and spiritual heritage of the country is under way. The Uzbek experience on the issue of careful preservation, enrichment and promotion of its national cultural heritage that contribute to the advancement of historical science of Uzbekistan should be studied for further application in other countries of the region.

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Politics, Foreign Affairs and Security

- The Parliament of Turkey passed in the first reading a bill of amendments to the Constitution. The Parliament approved the two final sections of the 18-article of the new Constitution. The provisions are planned to be discussed during the second reading in the Parliament.
- During his official visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, and the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and the Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, discussed further bilateral cooperation in trade, investments and energy. Moreover, the parties signed 8 international agreements on issues such as diplomatic missions, visa exemptions, tourism and international transportation and religious affairs.
- The President of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon has appointed his 29-year-old son Rustam Emomali as the Mayor of Dushanbe replacing Mahmadsaid Ubaidulloev, who had been the Mayor for 19 years.
- During the Open Debate on Conflict Prevention and Sustaining Peace where Kazakhstan participated as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the first time, the Foreign Minister, Kairat Abdrakhmanov, presented the policy address by the President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, entitled Kazakhstan's Concept Vision on Sustaining Global Partnership for Secure, Just and Prosperous World.
- The Defense Ministry of Russia reported about signing an agreement with the Turkish Army to ensure flight safety over embattled Syria. The memorandum that lays the groundwork for coordination between the two countries' air forces to prevent accidents involving planes and drones in Syrian air space was inked during the visit of the delegation of the Turkish Defense Ministry to Moscow.
- During his 6th official visit to Kiev, the U.S. Vice President, Joe Biden, and the President of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko, discussed current progress of the Ukrainian reforms and issues of cooperation between Kiev and International Monetary Fund related to the governmental efforts to stabilize the country's banking system.
- The Anti-Terrorist Centre of Kazakhstan reported about lifting the extended moderate yellow level of terrorist alert in the country caused by the deadly Aktobe gunshop attack and Almaty po-

lice station attack as of 16 January 2017.

Economy, Finance and Energy

- Iran's Oil Ministry published the list of 29 international companies qualified to bid for oil and gas projects following the lifting of sanctions. It was noted that the companies would have opportunity to participate in the development projects of 49 oil and gas fields based on a newly designed agreement, called the Iran Petroleum Contract.
- The North Caspian Operating Company (NCOC) informed that Kazakhstan exported 1 million tons of oil from Kashagan field. Currently, work is carried out in order to increase the level of production to 180,000 barrels per day. The production level is expected to reach 370,000 barrels per day after the start of re-injection of associated (sulfur) gas into the reservoir.
- The Russian state-owned energy company Rosneft informed about signing an amendment to the agreement with the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) envisaging additional supplies via Kazakhstan and the prolongation of the contract signed on June 21, 2013 till December 31, 2023. According to the new contract, Rosneft pledged to deliver 70 million tons of oil between 2017-2023, whilst the total volume of the supplies (including 21 million tons of oil which was previously delivered) will amount to 91 million tons within a 10-year period.
- Kazakhstan's National Wealth Fund Samruk-Kazyna reported in its 2017 oil market outlook that the oil prices are expected to increase by \$10 per barrel in 2017 as compared to 2016. According to the basic scenario of the Fund, the average oil prices would reach \$50-52 per barrel in 2017.
- According to the Nord Stream AG Company, in 2016 the Nord Stream pipeline operated at 80% of its annual capacity of 55 billion cubic meters. It was reported that 43.8 billion cubic meters of natural gas was delivered to the European consumers in 2016. In the five years since starting operations of the pipeline system, a total of 154.4 billion cubic meters of natural gas was transported to the European Union.
- The Chinese General Administration of Customs reported that in 2016 the trade turnover between Russia and China grew by 2.2% and reached \$69.5 billion. It was also stated that in 2016 the Chinese exports to Russia grew by 7.3% and stood at \$37.3 billion, while imports from Russia fell by 3.1% to \$32.2 billion. In December 2016, the bilateral trade turnover stood at \$7.17

billion, with China's exports and imports amounted to \$3.9 billion and \$3.2 billion respectively.

- The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) announced about its plans to provide \$3.5 million loan to support the first PVC profile manufacturing facility in Turkmenistan. Production is estimated to start in 2017, with an annual output of 3,000 tons of profiles.
- The Committee on Statistics under the Ministry of National Economy of Kazakhstan reported that the country's trade turnover with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) amounted to \$11.95 billion in January-November 2016, which is by 21.1% less compared to the same period of 2015. It was also stated that Kazakhstan's exports to the EAEU countries decreased by 26.8% to \$3.48 billion in the reporting period, while imports were down by 18.5% hitting \$8.47 billion.
- The President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, signed an order on extra measures to speed up the socio-economic development of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. Under the presidential order, 5 million manats (\$2.79 million) was allocated via the 2017 Presidential Contingency Fund to the Cabinet of Ministers of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic.

Society and Culture

- The heads and high-ranking officials of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russian, Turkey and other Eurasian countries expressed their condolences to the President of Kyrgyzstan, Almazbek Atambayev, on the crash of a cargo plane near the Manas Airport. The Turkish cargo plane the Boeing 747 crashed in Kyrgyzstan, causing the deaths of 37 people including 4 pilots. Most of the victims are believed to be residents of the village of Dacha-Suu.
- According to the decision of the authorities in the Turkish capital Ankara, the Karyagdi Street where the Russian Embassy is located was renamed after the Russian Ambassador Andrei Karlov who was assassinated in December 2016.
- The Working Group on the redistribution of powers between the branches of government was created in Kazakhstan. The Head of the Kazakh Presidential Administration, Adilbek Dzhaksybekov, became the head of the Working Group. The President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, stated the need for the redistribution of powers among the President, Government and Parliament in December 2016.