

ISLAM IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

2019.03.004. REZA MALEKI. INTERRELATIONS OF IRANIAN AND RUSSIAN CULTURES: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS // *"Sotrudnichestvo Rossii i Irana v politicheskoy, ekonomicheskoy i kulturnoy oblasti kak faktor ukrepleniya mira i bezopasnosti v Evrazii: Materialy Mezhdunarodnoy nauchno-prakticheskoy konferentsii 19 oktyabrya 2016."* Moscow, FSBEI HE MSLU, 2017, P. 138–143.

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The dialogue of cultures of Russia and Iran is 500 years old, the author notes. Recently, relations have reached a new level, in particular since the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran and the collapse of the Soviet Union. They are supported by all sorts of documents and treaties. But, despite significant development, they are not being implemented properly at the present time, both at the level of relations between the two countries and at the regional and international levels: new problems and challenges have appeared.

While the most complicated problems of the two countries at all levels are connected with such phenomena as extremism, terrorism, nationalism, religious intolerance and cultural influence of the West, it should be noted that all these challenges are rooted in culture. All the attention of the governments of the

two countries is focused on political, economic and military relations, while cultural relations are forgotten, giving them a very insignificant place. Nevertheless, it would be worth starting work with the development of cultural cooperation, the author notes. The common threats and prospects of the two countries, as well as the need to optimize the scope of cooperation between Iran and Russia at this level, require a thorough review and restructuring of the cultural relations between the two countries.

Challenges, common interests and goals at the bilateral, regional and international levels

At different levels, the situation is as follows:

- At the level of bilateral relations – the absence of strategic relations, joint discourse, as well as mutual understanding between the peoples of Iran and Russia;

- At the regional level – the influence of extremist movements, Western culture and the threat of national, tribal and religious identity, as well as the inability of the countries of the region to come to a common understanding;

- At the international level - discord in the international system, the superiority of the United States and Western countries on the world stage, the lack of universal dialogue for the establishment of international order in the world community. Russia and Iran in bilateral relations, at the regional and international level, need to take the following steps:

Ways to achieve the goals.

At the level of bilateral relations

If Russia and Iran cooperate as strategic partners and bring their relations to a new level, this will lead to the emergence of common interests, goals and challenges at the bilateral, regional and international levels, the author notes. Countries will be able to counter joint challenges, as well as protect and develop common interests. The strategic cooperation between Iran and Russia can be called consolidated, stable, strong and effective,

taking into account the interests of the two countries. If we consider the relations between Iran and Russia as a pyramid, then at its top there will be a transition to strategic relations, which directly depends on the development of cooperation in the nuclear field. No matter how much cooperation and mutual understanding between Iran and Russia may be, an improved infrastructure should emerge between the two countries as a basis for strengthening ties and their institutionalization. This fact will be beneficial in building relations between Iran and Russia, and therefore cultural strategic relations between the two countries are the basis of strategic relations.

To create mutual understanding between the two countries, it will not be enough to apply traditional methods of cultural diplomacy, which alone cannot create an adequate image of Iran in Russian society and vice versa. Iran and Russia should carry out mutual assistance to solve the tasks. The author notes, that Russian media, which actively talk about the life of modern Iran, creating a reliable image of the country, can be cited as an example. Iranian media are also trying to more broadly talk about Russia and the events taking place in this country. To raise cultural relations between Iran and Russia to a strategic level, the following relevant steps can be effective:

- Creation of a joint Iranian-Russian committee on cultural cooperation;
- Signing agreements in the field of culture;
- Creation and active work of cultural centers in two countries;
- Creation of joint analytical centers in the field of humanitarian, cultural and social sciences.

At the regional level

Iran, Russia, the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus have common problems that are also characteristic of the whole of Eurasia, including problems in the sphere of culture. Among

these problems are: the growth of extremism, the cultural influence of the U.S., national-religious disunity, the spread of divergence. Often they are brought into the region from the outside. The countries of the region are fighting them alone, focusing on non-cultural methods of action, and not having a common plan of resistance. However, the effective use of the cultural potential of all countries in the region can help to overcome these problems, the author notes.

It is necessary to formulate this policy as a “regional cultural mutual enrichment” in order to make the best use of the cultural potential of the countries of the region, as well as to raise relations and cultural cooperation to a higher level. Individual countries will contribute to the development of their own and common cultural potential thanks to the achieved increase in the level of culture in various fields, as well as the resultant force of cultural influence in the region. Iran and Russia, having the ability to transnational impact, in addition to bilateral cultural interaction, can play a constructive role in creating a regional dialogue that can rise to the level of multilateral cultural one. In order to achieve regional cultural mutual enrichment, as a first step, it is necessary to hold a meeting of culture ministers of Eurasian countries, form a joint commission on cultural cooperation in Eurasia, establish a common Eurasian analytical center, as well as create cultural maps of Eurasia, coalitions and joint multilateral cultural structures, establish or to intensify the cultural organizations of Eurasia.

At the international level

The most important thing in the world at the present stage is changes in the international system that is emerging in the transition period. This era of opportunities and threats to other countries, effective communities, and it will become a source of formation of the international system in the future. As a result of the First and Second World Wars, the main participating countries were divided into winners and losers. If now the main actors do not build their

future taking into account the peculiarities of that era, they may be among the losers. Knowledge of the features of this era and awareness of its position in it will help us influence the formation of the desired international system in the future. The most important factors in this formation are the preservation of world values and discourse. Iran and the Russian Federation play a large role in shaping the desired system of international order. In order to make the best use of the cultural potential of the countries of the region, as well as to bring relations and cultural cooperation to a higher level, it is necessary that this promotes the culture of the region. Thanks to the achieved increase in the level of culture in various areas, as well as the resultant force of its influence in the region, individual countries will contribute to the development of cultural potential.

In conclusion, the author notes that common threats, as well as the need to optimize cooperation, require a thorough review and restructuring of the cultural relations between the two countries.

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Abstract. In the article there is data on socio-eco-economic crisis escalation in Syria during its accelerated industrial