

BOOK REVIEW:

SHAKHNOZA GANIEVA'S CONCEPT ON NATIONAL HERITAGE IMPACT IN SHAPING SOFT POWER DIPLOMACY

BAKHTIYAR KHASANOV 

PhD, Department of International Relations, UWED

The monograph by Dr. Shakhnoza Ganieva, a distinguished political scientist, renowned journalist, and specialist in cultural studies, *Heritage as a Factor in Uzbekistan's Soft Power Diplomacy. A Territory of Meanings* is a fundamental scholarly study devoted to the role of Uzbekistan's historical and cultural heritage in shaping the state's foreign policy image. At its core lies the conceptualization of cultural resources as an essential instrument of influence within the system of "soft power," a category that has acquired particular relevance in the context of the strengthening humanitarian dimension of international politics.

The work is built on an interdisciplinary foundation, drawing on approaches from cultural studies, political science, history, and art history. The author undertakes a detailed analysis of Uzbekistan's historical and cultural heritage as an integral component of the country's positive international image. Central to the study is Joseph Nye's concept of soft power, which Ganieva fills with content that is directly relevant to contemporary Uzbekistan, the broader Eastern space, and Islamic civilization.

The topicality of the research stems from the fact that the study of "soft power" as a category of political influence is particularly important for states that are shaping a stable cultural image. Uzbekistan, possessing a unique heritage that stretches deep into history, is becoming a natural participant in the humanitarian discourse on the international stage. In this regard, the monograph responds to the demands of the time: it not only reveals the essence of cultural diplomacy but also demonstrates how historical heritage is transformed into an instrument of foreign policy.

The work represents a valuable contribution to understanding Uzbekistan's cultural policy in the context of globalization. It analyzes the state's efforts to institutionalize the study of heritage and its representation abroad. Its scientific novelty lies in the author's first systematic analysis of Uzbekistan's cultural heritage as a unique resource of soft power.



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As a result of painstaking research, little-known or previously inaccessible manuscript and museum sources stored in many countries have been introduced into academic circulation. Comprehensive material is presented that characterizes the main trends in European and Russian Oriental studies concerning the heritage of Central Asia. In addition, a detailed analysis is provided of Uzbekistan's contemporary cultural policy (2017–2025), including its institutional mechanisms, demonstrating that the country actively employs diplomacy in its foreign policy, grounded in mutual respect and the exchange of values, art, and traditions. As a priority, the author cites President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's statement: "The in-depth study and popularization of the legacy of our great ancestors, who made an immense contribution to world science and culture and are our pride, is an honorable and responsible task for all of us."

Of particular value is the author's meticulous work in identifying and describing artifacts of Uzbekistan's historical and cultural heritage located in foreign collections—in museums and libraries in the United Kingdom, Germany, Russia, the United States, Turkey, France, and other countries—that had not previously been the subject of systematic scholarly examination in this context.

The author applies historical, cultural, and political science approaches, combining the analysis of primary sources (manuscripts, archival documents, museum exhibits) with theoretical reflection on the category of soft power. The source base encompasses the works of classic Orientalists from Uzbekistan and numerous other countries, as well as documents from international museum collections, including rare manuscripts from the 9th–16th centuries.

The monograph comprises five major chapters, each delineated thematically and chronologically. The first chapter is devoted to the historiography of the study of Uzbekistan's heritage—from the travelers and missionaries of the 13th–16th centuries to the works of classic Orientalists of the 19th–20th centuries. A vast historiographical corpus has been assembled, which the author systematizes into three areas: historical narratives; fundamental studies on the history and culture of the East; and works in Islamic studies and historical geography. Ganieva convincingly demonstrates that the history of studying the East has roots far older than academic Oriental studies, which began to develop in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Even before the institutionalization of Oriental studies, the region had been visited by Western missionaries, travelers, and collectors, whose works are preserved in foreign libraries and served as the first sources on the cultures of the peoples of Central Asia. The monograph presents the results of research into the works of Guillaume de Rubruck, Marco Polo,

Ruy González de Clavijo, Anthony Jenkinson, Ármin Vámbéry, and others.

A separate chapter is devoted to the history of the formation of Uzbek heritage collections in foreign museums and libraries, with detailed descriptions of individual objects. Thus, the Bodleian Library in Oxford (founded in 1598) is described in detail; it possesses a significant collection of Oriental manuscripts, including four copies of Imam al-Bukhari's 14th-century *Al-Jami' al-Sahih*, 84 manuscripts of Avicenna, 12 copies of *The Canon of Medicine*, 19 manuscripts of al-Farabi, eight manuscripts of al-Biruni, originals of Behzad's miniatures, lifetime copies of Navoi's poems, and copies of the *Baburnama*. Among the Central Asian manuscripts are the *Zafarnama* of Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi (1448) and the *Code of Timur*.

The author notes that Orientalists often work with manuscripts for years but are not always able to trace their path from creation to their present location. Manuscripts copied in Uzbekistan—from the works of al-Bukhari and Ulugh Beg's treatise *Zij-i Jadid-i Guragani* to the writings of medieval poets—are preserved in the collections of Oxford and other foreign libraries, underscoring the need for coordinated research and the repatriation of scholarly data.

The monograph devotes considerable attention to research on Russian collections: the formation of holdings at the Asiatic Museum, the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the National Library. The author analyzes the region's decorative arts, which serve as a bridge between nations, and documents cases in which major foreign museums acquired significant portions of Uzbekistan's heritage. Drawing on inventory books and scholarly catalog cards, the author summarizes data on works from the 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as primary sources on the origins of understudied collections.

Of particular interest is the chapter on the region's study by Western European researchers and collectors in the 19th century, which provides information on Uzbekistan's legacy in Great Britain, Germany, France, and other countries. As an example, the author cites data on the "Amu Darya Treasure" (Oxus Treasure), today a jewel of the British Museum.

Ganieva emphasizes that the states that once flourished on the territory of modern-day Uzbekistan created priceless collections of manuscripts and tomes filled with wisdom, philosophy, and legends. Many foreign studies have been devoted to the interaction between East and West, the interpretation of the achievements of Muslim civilization, and the enduring discoveries of medieval scholars. As a key point, the author cites Salim al-Hassani: "If there is a great misunderstanding of the

nature of Islam in the West, then there is also a great ignorance of the debt our own culture and civilization owe to the Islamic world.”

The monograph includes not only the analysis of primary sources but also the results of direct scholarly work with manuscripts and works of art originating in Uzbekistan and held abroad. The research strategy is grounded in the study of collections in prestigious museums and manuscript repositories, many of which have been made available for the first time for detailed analysis. It has been established that the volume of Uzbekistan’s legacy preserved in the largest manuscript collections and museums of Russia and Western Europe is both extensive and insufficiently studied. Therefore, the author underscores the importance of identifying artifacts that reveal new dimensions of Uzbekistan’s artistic culture, the history of the formation of international collections, and the exploration of previously unstudied layers of national culture.

The chapter devoted to Uzbekistan’s cultural policy demonstrates that the state relies on the region’s rich heritage and historical patterns of development. In recent years, the country’s leadership has defined new objectives for cultural development in both the short and long term. To realize these objectives, mechanisms have been elaborated for the study, preservation, and promotion of cultural and artistic heritage. Priority measures are being implemented to improve systems for the storage, research, and popularization of ancient written sources. The Abu Rayhan Beruni Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan has been designated the leading research institution for the preservation, study, and promotion of ancient written sources. Its unique collection (more than 26,000 manuscripts, 39,000 printed books, and approximately 5,000 historical documents in Arabic script) has been inscribed on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. The monograph provides a detailed overview of the most unique folios and manuscripts in this collection. The author stresses that the institute’s research will enhance the study of literary monuments and popularize the works of Eastern scholars in global scholarship. “Their works... are an integral and crucial part of Uzbekistan’s ‘soft power,’” writes Ganieva.

Special emphasis is placed on the creation of the Center for Islamic Civilization of Uzbekistan, intended to serve as a base for scholarly research into the history of Islam by both domestic and international specialists. The Center already possesses an extensive electronic database of manuscripts, documents, and publications, expanding international ties and facilitating the exchange of information. Of critical importance is the national project to establish a Scientific Center for the Study of Cultural Treasures Held Abroad: original medieval manuscripts

and works of art found in foreign collections constitute the "Golden Fund" of the world's libraries and museums, and their study and popularization is a crucial national undertaking. The monograph also highlights the non-governmental multimedia project Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan in World Collections, which publishes book albums and produces documentaries on foreign collections; an editorial board of renowned Orientalists has been established to implement the project.

Promoting Uzbekistan's soft power globally is a key objective in shaping the country's new international image. International collections represent an invaluable repository of information for researchers studying the culture and art of Uzbekistan from antiquity to the first half of the twentieth century.

Each chapter of the monograph draws on a rich factual and analytical base and is supplemented with references, commentary, and artifact descriptions. The author employs a popular-scientific style while adhering strictly to academic standards. Importantly, the work is not only a purely scholarly study but also a practical guide for specialists in foreign policy, cultural diplomacy, museum studies, and Oriental studies. A number of its provisions may be applied in developing Uzbekistan's cultural strategies and diplomatic initiatives. The book will also prove useful in university courses on international relations, cultural studies, and Oriental studies, as well as in the digitization and cataloging of Uzbek heritage preserved abroad.

The monograph *Heritage as a Factor in Uzbekistan's Soft Power Diplomacy. A Territory of Meanings* is a significant contribution to the development of scholarly thought on cultural diplomacy. It constitutes a unique study that reflects the interrelationship among history, culture, and politics in the modern world. The work is distinguished by its scope, academic depth, high degree of source reliability, and the relevance of its objectives. It may be recommended for translation into Uzbek, English, and other languages for publication by leading academic publishers, and for inclusion in the bibliographies of courses on Oriental studies, international relations, cultural policy, and the history of Central Asia.

Shakhnoza Ganieva's work unites a broad spectrum of sources and an interdisciplinary approach, building a persuasive argument that culture and heritage can serve as effective tools of soft power. The study fully meets academic requirements: it possesses internal coherence, logical argumentation, an extensive source base, and practical orientation. These qualities render it highly relevant for research and educational programs aimed at training specialists in international relations, cultural diplomacy, and regional studies.

“Xalqaro munosabatlar: siyosat, iqtisodiyot, huquq” jurnali

O'zbekiston Respublikasi Tashqi ishlar vazirligi tasarrufidagi Jahon iqtisodiyoti va diplomatiya universitetining ilmiy-nazariy nashrlarining fanlararo turkumiga mansub.

«Xalqaro munosabatlar: siyosat, iqtisodiyot, huquq» ilmiy-nazariy jurnali O'zbekiston axborot va matbuot agentligida 2007 yil 11 yanvarda (ruxsatnoma №0127) rasmiy ro'yxatdan o'tgan. Jurnal O'zbekiston Respublikasi Milliy nashr palatasi tomonidan ham rasmiylashtirilib, bosma nusxasi ISSN 2010-6203 va onlayn nusxasi ISSN 2181-1113 indeksiga ega. O'z navbatida bu indeks, xalqaro referativ nashrlar haqidagi ma'lumot bazasiga mutanosibliyadan dalolat beradi.

Jurnal sahifalarida nashr etiladigan maqolalar o'zbek, rus va ingliz tillarida bosib chiqariladi. Jurnal bosma ravishda nashr qilinib, yiliga to'rt marotaba, ya'ni yiliga har uch oy choragining birida tarqatiladi.

Jurnal tahririyatiga kelib tushadigan maqolalarning aksariyati zamonaviy xalqaro munosabatlar va jahon siyosati masalalari bilan bog'liq holatlarning analitik tahliliga oid bo'lib, jamiyat va davlat boshqaruvining turli ko'lami doirasidagi xalqaro-huquqiy masalalar mohiyatining tartiblashuvi, jahon xo'jaligi rivojlanishi va xalqaro iqtisodiy munosabatlar, O'zbekistonning ijtimoiy-gumanitar sohasi va xalqaro hamjamiytdagi dolzarb muammolar yoritilishiga qaratilganligi bilan ajralib turadi. Tahririyat fanning boshqa yo'nalishlariga aloqador maqolalar chop ettirish huquqiga ham ega. Jurnal nazariy, metodologik, mavzuga aloqador, sharhiy mavzuga doir analitik maqolalarni; nashrga oid ilmiy taqriz va boshqalarni nashr ettirishi mumkin. Maqolani jurnalda chop etish uchun to'lov badali undirilmaydi.

MUALAFLAR UCHUN

AKADEMIK MAQOLALAR UCHUN TAQDIM QOIDALARI

Jurnal quyidagi sohalarga qaratilgan asl akademik va tahliliy hissalarini qabul qiladi:

- Zamonaviy xalqaro munosabatlar va global siyosat
- Jamiyat va davlat ishlarining turli tomonlarini xalqaro huquqiy tartibga solish
- Jahon iqtisodiyoti va xalqaro iqtisodiy munosabatlarning rivojlanishi
- O'zbekiston va xalqaro hamjamiyatning ijtimoiy-gumanitar sohasidagi dolzarb muammolari

Jurnal nashr etish uchun quyidagilarni ko'rib chiqadi:

- Tadqiqot maqolalari
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- Adabiyot sharhlari
- Akademik nashrlarga sharhlar