

THE ROLE OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY IN JAPAN

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Cultural diplomacy is not explored by scholars a lot as other fields. Simon Mark mentioned several reasons for it, firstly this type of diplomacy did not use to count as an important tool of international relations and states have more crucial tasks to do; secondly it is hard to find out long term impact on a state and finally a lack of scholar awareness of what the discipline includes.[1]

However, nowadays cultural diplomacy is one of the important parts of foreign policy and also counts as a soft power of the country. It defines as an exchange of ideas, information, art, and other cultural aspects between countries to strengthen their bilateral relationships. It is predicted that a better awareness of cultural heritage would contribute to the establishment of mutual international relations that based on mutual trust and understanding. It aids a government's foreign policy and diplomacy aims. [2] Mostly it involves with the states' foreign ministry or the ministry of international relations as a reason of its connection with foreign policy or diplomacy and it entails the strategic use of communication technology in international communication, resulting a better understanding of other countries cultural aspects.

Cultural diplomacy is based on organizations of various cultural events between states and advancing trade, diplomatic and political, economic interests. Mostly the cultural heritage of the country transmitters by human communication, people who are exchanging to other states to study and this diplomacy primarily focused on education aspects in an intercultural context. [1]

Official representatives of national governments have traditionally been the main participants in diplomatic dialogue between various nations. However, because of expansion of social networks and the rising availability of information on the internet the role of officials gradually declining. The potential of social networks has recognized, because it can reach a bigger worldwide audience and are fast for information distribution. [1] Nowadays every information is under our fingertips, but internet is not only tool that help to distribute information.

Artists, singers are also helping to develop cultural diplomacy as sharing the cultural heritage and tradition using their songs, films, books. [1] Such kind of field is called "Celebrity diplomacy" and counted as a tool of cultural diplomacy. Celebrities not only share their arts, but also can be ambassadors of governmental or nongovernmental organizations, for example United Nation's goodwill ambassadors and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees special envoy A.Jolie.

Cultural diplomacy also includes education exchanges, scholarships, artist performances, exhibitions, special lectures and seminars, music concerts, theatre, soap operas, architecture, art, sports etc.

Japanese soft power can be called as traditional tool after post-war Japanese diplomacy. As all countries Japan also tries to build a positive image of the country as increasing the popularity and improving its international status. Cultural diplomacy plays a significant part in it.[3]

The way of improving their cultural diplomacy can be divided in four periods. By the mid twentieth century the aim of their diplomacy was to change the way of how people consider Japan from militaristic country to peace-loving state. In 1951 Japan joined to UNESCO and adopted peaceful constitution in which state cannot have an army.

The second period was after two decades, and the next aim was to become peaceful and economically developed country. Japan promoted the idea of abandoning cheap exports and having a new level of development.

The next period started in the 80th. The aim that was held during this time was to position Japan as a responsible international partner. The key objectives were to keep peace, prosperity, and economic assistance. Japan began to actively promote interstate exchanges.

Final period was in 90th, and Japan had to adapt its diplomacy to the new era. It was a time when countries integrated into the process of globalization. Japan is considered as developed country, had an experience conducting cultural diplomacy and acted as a model of economic development to other developing Asian countries.

Initially, Japan's strategy was to export traditional cultural values and their promotion to other countries was intended to show the historical significance and cultural heritage. But mostly cultural layer helped to gain Japan's popularity in the world and emergence interest to Japanese history and culture. Cultural and public diplomacy is an important tool of developing countries soft power and in Japan these two diplomacies are interconnected to each other. Japan's MFA defined it as “広報文化外交” (kouhou bunka gaikou) which means “Public Affairs Cultural Diplomacy”.

[4]

In Japan, much attention is paid to the formation of a favorable image of the country, the growth of its popularity in the world and the improvement of its international status. Cultural diplomacy plays an important role in this, which includes familiarization with traditional and modern culture, humanitarian exchanges, as well as the dissemination of the Japanese language. Promoting Japanese language education in other countries serves to develop future leaders who will help to construct a bridge between Japan and the rest of the world, improve understanding of Japan, and lay the foundation for international friendship. As a result, through the Japan Foundation, MOFA sends Japanese language specialists overseas, provides training for foreign Japanese language teachers in Japan, and develops Japanese language teaching materials. [4]

To create a positive image of Japan to other countries MFA and Japan foundation made different projects. Japan has a great national branding which helps to others to have an understanding. Nowadays modern culture is increasing its influence and importance, majority of people know about Japanese animations, manga, style, and fashion. By these its notable that cultural diplomacy of this country on a high level. Also, they try to promote their brands culture to overseas through special lectures that will help them to attract foreign students and increase the influence of the country, diplomatic missions organize activities with Japanese culture as musical concerts, exhibitions, dances, sport, food, clothing from animations.

Education is also a key element of Japanese cultural diplomacy. MFA tries to attract foreign students to study there. It executes application and selection procedures to admit qualified students from all around the world as MEXT Scholarship students. It has different scholarships as Honjo International Scholarship Foundation, Joint Japan World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program. [5]

Japan is also launching several international exchange schools. Many schools while on educational travel in Japan have engaged in exchange programs with schools all around Japan. There are a wide range of school exchange programs which can meet a variety of aims such as cross-cultural communication, language learning, sports, or art exchange, and more. One of them is JET programme and established during the third period to position as responsible international partner. Participants are from 40 different countries that took part in this program. [5] The benefits that they mention during exchange programs are Increasing Learning Motivation; Deepening the Understanding of Japanese Culture; Acquiring a Global Perspective; An Inspiring, Engaging Japanese-Learning Environment.

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ENERGY POLICY OF IRAN: CENTRAL ASIAN DIMENSION

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The independence of the Central Asian countries provided external players with the opportunity to expand their geopolitical spheres of influence in a region new to them and receive material dividends from the establishment of trade and economic ties. Iran did not become an exception, and in the first years after the collapse of the USSR, it seemed that even higher hopes were attached to gaining positions in Central Asia than other countries of the Near and Middle East (with the possible exception of only Turkey). Against the backdrop of tense relations with a number of Arab monarchies and friction with the West, a “breakthrough” in Central Asia meant for Iran compensation from the costs of isolation by acquiring new partners and establishing new economic ties. In the early 1990s, Iran focused on ethnic and linguistic affinity, starting an active policy in the region from Tajikistan, which is culturally close to it. However, then Tehran's Central Asian ties went beyond the narrow "Tajik framework" and now includes, to varying degrees, all the states of the region. The countries of Central Asia themselves are also interested in Iran, first of all, insofar as Iran is able to solve transport (access to the Gulf) and energy problems, provides technology and develops trade relations, has influence in the Economic Cooperation Organization formed in 1985 (ECO), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Strengthening of positions in Central Asia gives Iran the opportunity to solve a number of important interrelated tasks

The first is to get out of isolation. This direction of Iran's foreign policy works for the country's international image. Moreover, in contrast to the Middle East, where the Iranian policy of increasing influence was perceived as a claim to provide decisive military and political influence on the regional situation, in Central Asia Iran has traditionally acted and is acting more balanced. This allowed him to develop relations (albeit to varying degrees) with all the Central Asian states, which perceive him as an independent and significant player in the region. Cooperation with Iran