



CULTURAL AND HUMANITARIAN RELATIONS BETWEEN UZBEKISTAN AND FRANCE: A NEW STAGE OF CENTURY-OLD UZBEK-FRENCH COOPERATION

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ABSTRACT

France, being one of the main actors in the international arena, has a significant impact on the solution of many pressing problems in the world. France can rightfully be considered the center and main driving force of the European Union. France for many centuries continues to be at the epicenter of world culture, art, philosophy and science.

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In the 1990s, a truly new milestone opened up in the development of relations between countries. The French Republic recognized Uzbekistan on January 3, 1992, and on March 1 of the same year, according to the Protocol on the establishment of diplomatic relations between Uzbekistan and France, an era of multifaceted cooperation began. Already in June 1992, the French Embassy was opened in Tashkent, and since March 1995, the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Paris. Speaking about cultural and humanitarian ties between countries, it should be noted that they began as early as the end of the 14th - beginning of the 15th century. Then France and the state of the great commander Amir Temur established friendly and trusting relations. This was facilitated by the correspondence between Charles V and Amir Temur. Orientalists of that time translated into French the works of Alisher Navoi, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur. The French historian Louis Mathieu Langlais translated Temur's Code into French, which became one of the significant events of the 19th century in the history of Temur studies. French historians are truly highly interested in the figure of Amir Temur, and the argument can be that the Association for the Study of the History and Arts of the Temurids (1988) has been operating in France for more than a quarter of a century. Lucien Keren, the founder and the First President of this Association, devoted more than 35 years of his life to studying the contribution of Amir Temur to the modern world order. It should be noted that the magazine *La Timuride*, founded by L. Keren, is published in Paris. For a significant contribution to the study of the history of Uzbekistan in 1996, Lucien Keren was awarded the Shuhrat medal. In addition, since 2018, the secondary school No. 43 of the city of Samarkand, specializing in in-depth study of the French language, has been named after Lucien Keren.

Of particular interest to French scientists is the archaeological monuments of Uzbekistan. For the first time, the date of the emergence of the city of Samarkand was established by the French archaeologist Franz Gröne, noting with the words: "Uzbekistan was the first among the countries of Central Asia to allow France to conduct archaeological excavations. In 1998, we were engaged in archaeological research in your country, in particular, excavations in Afrosiab. I know Uzbekistan as a country with the largest number of cultural monuments and I am sure that the development of tourism in this direction will bring huge profits to the country's economy". During the visit of the President of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoyev to France in 2018, Franz Gröne and a number of other specialists (Frederic Beaupertuis-Bressan, Amin Maalouf) in the field of history, archeology and culture were awarded the title of "Honorary Citizen of Samarkand".

The Public Foundation named after Ibn Sino has been established and is successfully operating in Uzbekistan, which actively cooperates with the Avicenna-France Association. This association was established in 2003 to popularize and promote scientific ideas and works, to preserve the cultural heritage of the great thinker Abu Ali ibn Sina or, as they say in Europe, Avicenna. The Association regularly organizes large conferences, symposiums, seminars and trips to popularize the ideas of Ibn Sina in Europe, in particular in France. In 2007, France handed over to Uzbekistan the Avicenna Museum in Afshon (Bukhara region)

facsimile copies of the “Canon of Medicine”, made in Arabic in 1447-1448 and the manuscript of the translation of the Canon into Latin, made in the second half of the 14th century, previously stored in the National Library France in Paris. Another important achievement in cultural and humanitarian cooperation should be noted that in France in 2016 the International Avicenna Prize was established. It is awarded to the best popularizers of the scientist's work. French scientists are actively collaborating with the Bukhara State Medical Institute named after Ibn Sino, and this partnership is yielding significant results. In particular, Avicenna readings have been held in Bukhara for the 10th year. Scientists from other countries of the European Union also take part in the conference.

“The establishment of the Avicenna International Prize is a very important event,” said French senator, former Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin in an interview with the Jahon News Agency. - It will promote even more active scientific and cultural exchange between the countries of Europe, the Mediterranean and Central Asia, as well as between Muslim, Christian and other civilizations. The award has very big tasks, including the promotion of interreligious and intercivilizational dialogue”.

In April 2019, a monument to Abu Ali ibn Sina was unveiled in the city of Rueil-Malmaison (14 km from Paris).

France is famous all over the world for its high quality international education. Every year it hosts millions of young people who want to study in the educational institutions of this country. The share of foreign students in French universities is about 10%. In this regard, Uzbekistan and France are developing cultural and humanitarian cooperation in the field of education. As part of the visit of the President of Uzbekistan to France in 2018, the Cooperation Program between the Academy of Paris and the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education for 2019-2021 was signed. It is expected to open branches of French universities in Uzbekistan, including the University of Strasbourg. Also, due to the growing popularity of learning French in 1260 schools, colleges, lyceums and 8 higher educational institutions of the country, in particular at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy, active learning has been established as the main or second foreign language. Also, since 2015, the French Alliance has been operating in the city of Tashkent. The main mission of which is the spread of the French language and culture, expanding the circle of lovers of the French and Uzbek languages. The French Alliance organizes French language courses for more than 1,000 students. On the eve of the visit of Sh. Mirziyoyev to France in 2018, the Center for French Language and Culture was established in Tashkent under the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The French cultural center was created in the form of a state institution and a property complex with the adjacent territory was donated to it at the address: Tashkent, Mirzo-Ulugbek district, st. Istiklol, house 47. On the occasion of the visit of the President of Uzbekistan, the Louvre Museum signed a memorandum of understanding with the Foundation for the Development of Culture and Art under the Ministry of Culture. According to this document, the exhibition “Civilizations and Cultures on the Great Silk Road” is expected to be organized in the Louvre Museum in

2021.

Speaking about cultural cooperation, poems by Uzbek poets Abdulla Aripov and Erkin Vakhidov were translated into French by talented students of the two countries. Poems published under the editorship of specialists from France. Moreover, an agreement was reached with the major French publishing houses Gallimard and Fallois on the translation of selected French works into Uzbek. It should be noted that the society “Uzbekistan – France” operates in Uzbekistan. The Society, in cooperation with the French Alliance of Tashkent, once a month holds a competition “Connoisseur of the Works of French Writers”. Thanks to this competition, a favorable creative atmosphere is created for the continuation of cultural and literary cooperation and the translation into Uzbek of the best examples of French fiction. Activists of the Friendship Society “Uzbekistan – France” regularly take part in the festival “Language and Culture”, which is traditionally held in the city of Tours. This plays a big role in strengthening friendly ties between our countries and developing people’s diplomacy.

In 2016, the book of the President of the French Republic Emmanuel Macron “Revolution” was published. This book tells the views, ideas and positions, as well as the vision of the future of France, as he notes, “in an era of great transformations”. Macron’s book in a short period of time managed to become a bestseller and was published in 20 countries around the world. At the initiative of Shavkat Mirziyoyev, this book was translated and published in Uzbekistan in 2018.

Uzbekistan has published the Constitution of the French Republic in Uzbek. This is a very significant event, timed to coincide with the 60th anniversary of the current French Constitution. As you know, this European country is called the laboratory of “Constitutional creativity”. In this regard, the French experience was carefully studied in the development of the Basic Law of our country.

During the historic visit of the President of Uzbekistan to France, the development of cultural and humanitarian ties was noted. On October 4, 2018, the Decree of the President “On the establishment of a visa-free regime in Uzbekistan for citizens of France” is in force. Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted that France was the first European country to introduce this visa-free regime for tourists visiting Uzbekistan. According to the State Statistics Committee of Uzbekistan, about 13,000 French tourists visited Uzbekistan in 2019.

On October 3, 2018, the Scientific and Cultural Forum “Cultural heritage as a bridge between Uzbekistan and France” was held. From the Uzbek side, it was attended by Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the French Republic Sardor Rustambaev, First Deputy Chairman of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sodyq Safoev, academician of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, chairman of the Uzbekistan-France friendship group in the Parliament of Uzbekistan Akmal Saidov, permanent representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to UNESCO Umid Chodiev, and the author and head of the project “Cultural heritage of Uzbekistan in the collections of the world” Firdavs Abdukhalikov. During the Forum, the participants discussed topical

issues and aspects of cultural interaction between the two countries, got acquainted with the rich cultural heritage of Uzbekistan and France. On the same day, the World Scientific Society for the Study, Preservation and Popularization of the Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan was presented to the participants of the Days of Uzbekistan in France. There was a ceremony of signing documents in the cultural and humanitarian sphere with French cultural institutions - the Louvre Museum, the Guimet Museum, the National Library of France, as well as the solemn presentation of certificates from the World Scientific Society for the study, preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of Uzbekistan. During the visit in 2018, the President of Uzbekistan expressed confidence in the further continuation of joint activities aimed at deepening Uzbek-French relations and strengthening their foundations on the principles of mutual respect, equality and trust.

In recent years, the Uzbek national martial art, kurash, has become increasingly popular in France. More than four years ago, the French National Committee for Kurash was formed in the country. International tournaments in this type of wrestling "Grand Prix of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan" were held in the cities of Hendaye, Bordeaux and Rueil-Malmaison, in which representatives from more than 20 countries of the world took part.

In conclusion, partnership relations between Uzbekistan and France have been tested by time. Huge development potential lies in the cultural, economic, socio-political spheres of cooperation, and in the coming years this will undoubtedly serve the benefit of the peoples of both countries. It is expected that within the framework of the visit of the President of Uzbekistan on November 20-21 this year, unique exhibitions of the richest cultural and historical heritage of our country will open in Paris in the world-famous Louvre Museum and the Institute of the Arab World. Uzbekistan and France, although geographically far from each other, are close in spirit, have common goals in the name of peace and development.

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