
THE "SOFT POWER" FACTOR IN THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA IN ASIAN COUNTRIES.

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Khudayberganova Shakhnura Bakhtyorovna

Graduate student of the University of World Economy and Diplomacy

Abstract

The Republic of Korea in 2023 is a developed country, a strong democracy and a cultural center. However, even in the last century, especially before the 1960s, South Korea was far from the same state as we see it now. The "Korean Economic Miracle" made it possible to emerge from the ranks of poor and developing countries, declare itself on the international stage and become one of the important players in geopolitics. Its diplomacy has become more active and inclusive than ever before. This article examines the tools and methods that the Republic of Korea uses in foreign policy within the framework of the concept of "soft power".

Keywords

Soft Power , Foreign Policy , Korean Wave , Cultural Diplomacy , Public Diplomacy , Republic of Korea , Hallyu.

In the 21st century, there is an increase in the importance of "soft" levers of influence on the global community. Many countries are trying to create their own model of "soft power". This article examines the soft power of South Korea on the Central Asian countries through diplomacy, culture, investment, economy, as well as various Korean international organizations that play an important role in relations between the countries. The study also discusses the introduction of Korean community through the dissemination of Korean culture.

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Presuming the primacy of the market structure of the economic system, J. Nye reflects on the importance that non-state actors, primarily transnational corporations, have acquired. In these changing conditions, the role of information technology and communication is increasing, and the success of the state depends not only on military or economic power, but also on the ability to be attractive, ensuring that "others want what you want."

The development of technology, the "post-industrialization" of society largely negate the importance of traditional methods of political communication, which in their entirety are integrated into the concept of "hard power". Under the "hard power" of J. Nye implies the use of such powerful means in foreign policy, such as, for example, military intervention and economic pressure. "Hard power" is the ability to compel, due to the material power of the country. Continuing his thought, the author wrote that the United States needs to turn to a new form of force that would allow the state to change the situation in such a way that other countries develop preferences or define their interests so that they are consistent with its own interests. Building his concept based on the above, J. Nye gives the following interpretation of "soft power": "the ability to attract others to one's side, seeking support for one's own agenda in international relations by demonstrating cultural and moral values, the attractiveness of the political course and the effectiveness of the country's political institutions."

In foreign policy, "soft power" is used by a number of countries such as the United States, China, Japan, South Korea, India, Turkey, the United Kingdom and other states, respectively. We are interested in the influence of "soft power" on the countries of Central Asia, so we will focus only on a specific state from the above, namely in South Korea, which manifests itself most in this region.

Establishment of diplomatic relations between South Korea and the countries of Central Asia. The Republic of Korea was one of the first States in the Asia-Pacific region to recognize the independence of all the republics of Central Asia and established diplomatic relations in 1992:

1. Uzbekistan: On December 30, 1991, the Republic of Korea recognized the sovereignty of Uzbekistan. The Republic of Korea opened an embassy in Uzbekistan in December 1993. But even earlier, immediately after the establishment of relations, in order to intensify cooperation, an education center was opened in Tashkent in May 1992.

Over the past few decades, the Republic of Korea has transformed from a poor country into an economic center and a model of liberal democracy in the world. At the moment, South Korea is one of the most developed countries in the world, is a

member of the G20 club of countries. Being one of the most powerful countries in the world in economic terms, South Korea actively promotes its political and cultural interests not only in the Asia-Pacific region, but also in the world, in particular in Central Asia. South Korea is a leader in the production of high technologies, in the heavy and chemical industries, medical industry, education, etc. The Republic of Korea has always remained an attractive foreign policy direction for the Central Asian states. On the one hand, the principle of multi-vector nature and the status of neutrality in the foreign policy of the states of the region contribute to the diversification of partners for cooperation. On the other hand, the pragmatic interests of the Central Asian elites have always been more clearly manifested in relation to states that are not in the area of direct geopolitical influence or pressure. In this regard, the experience of cooperation between the Central Asian States and the Republic of Korea demonstrates an example of pragmatic and mutually beneficial cooperation. In general, it should be noted that the Republic of Korea is actively increasing economic cooperation with Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and partly with Turkmenistan, and with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan is limited to the sphere of cultural and humanitarian interaction. Tashkent and Astana are striving to intensify the participation of Korean companies and investments in their economy and expect to receive high technologies and innovative developments.

The soft power of the Republic of Korea. The soft power of the Republic of Korea is more attractive and is perceived as not a threat to the local culture in the Central Asian states. The success of the Republic of Korea, its economic miracle, high technology and culture are admired by many in the Central Asian region. Sometimes the common belonging to the Altai language group is emphasized, which also brings the peoples closer together.

The effectiveness of the South Korean "soft" foreign policy model is increasingly felt in Central Asia, in particular in Uzbekistan. Restaurants of Korean cuisine, shops with Korean goods, clothing and cosmetics, as well as household appliances and electronics from the largest Korean manufacturers are opening everywhere.

In conclusion, it should be noted that South Korea has managed to create in a short period of time a national model of "soft power" capable of competing with the "soft power" of such powers as Japan, the United States, Great Britain, Turkey and other countries of the world. The presence of companies in the country that create high-tech products, ranging from smartphones to huge ships, has raised the South Korean brand to unprecedented heights. By introducing modern technologies and

innovations, Korea has managed not only to preserve the traditional flavor, culture and custom, but also to spread it around the world. Given the recent trends in the region, it is possible to predict the further activation of the Korean soft power model. Which has managed to justify itself as a relevant tool of the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan. However, despite the successes achieved in the above-mentioned policy, the real prospect of intensive cooperation in other areas remains vague for several reasons: In general, it can be noted that this is due to the nature of Korea's trade relations with the region, which is dominated by the resource and raw material flow. Moreover, the absence of an absolute leader in Central Asia complicated the integration processes necessary for the transport and logistics corridor. Also, weak legal institutions that could guarantee the inviolability of Korean business. The above factors have a decisive influence on the interest of the Korean side already.

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