



## INDIA AND CENTRAL ASIA: FORMATION OF CULTURAL TIES

*Omonboy Khaytimmatov*

*Master's student*

*Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies*

*Tashkent, Uzbekistan*

### ABOUT ARTICLE

**Key words:** India, Central Asia, culture, economy, Central Asia, social.

**Received:** 11.05.23

**Accepted:** 13.05.23

**Published:** 15.05.23

**Abstract:** The cultural ties between India and Central Asia have a long history dating back to ancient times. India has played an important role in shaping the cultural, economic and social aspects of Central Asia. The Silk Route, which connected India and Central Asia, facilitating trade and the exchange of ideas, played a key role in the formation of these cultural ties. The influence of Indian culture can be seen in the art, literature, music and architecture of Central Asia, while the influence of Central Asian culture is evident in the festivals and customs of India. The interaction between the people of India and Central Asia has been a two-way process, with each side learning from and influencing the other. This article explores the formation of cultural ties between India and Central Asia, highlighting the key factors that have shaped their relationship over the centuries.

## HINDISTON VA MARKAZIY OSIYO: MADANIY ALOQALARNING SHAKLLANISHI

*Omonboy Xaytimmatov*

*magistratura talabasi*

*Toshkent davlat sharqshunoslik universiteti*

*Toshkent, O'zbekiston*

### MAQOLA HAQIDA

**Kalit so'zlar:** Hindiston, Markaziy Osiyo, madaniyat, iqtisodiyot, O'rta Osiyo, ijtimoiy.

**Annotatsiya:** Hindiston va Markaziy Osiyo o'rtasidagi madaniy aloqalar qadim zamonlardan boshlangan uzoq tarixga ega. Hindiston Markaziy Osiyoning madaniy, iqtisodiy va ijtimoiy jihatlarini

shakllantirishda muhim rol o'ynadi. Bu madaniy aloqalarning shakllanishida Hindiston va O'rta Osiyoni bog'lagan, savdosotiq va fikr almashishni osonlashtirgan Ipak yo'li muhim rol o'ynadi. Hindiston madaniyatining ta'sirini O'rta Osiyo san'ati, adabiyoti, musiqasi va me'morchiligida ko'rish mumkin bo'lsa, O'rta Osiyo madaniyatining ta'siri Hindiston bayramlari va urf-odatlarida yaqqol namoyon bo'ladi. Hindiston va Markaziy Osiyo xalqlari o'rtasidagi o'zaro munosabatlar ikki tomonlama jarayon bo'lib, har bir tomon bir-biridan o'rgangan va bir-biriga ta'sir qilgan. Ushbu maqola Hindiston va Markaziy Osiyo o'rtasidagi madaniy aloqalarning shakllanishini o'rganib, ularning asrlar davomida munosabatlarini shakllantirgan asosiy omillarni yoritib beradi.

---

## ИНДИЯ И ЦЕНТРАЛЬНАЯ АЗИЯ: ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ КУЛЬТУРНЫХ СВЯЗЕЙ

**Омонбой Хайтимматов**

*студент магистратуры*

*Ташкентский государственный университет востоковедения*

*Ташкент, Узбекистан*

---

### О СТАТЬЕ

**Ключевые слова:** Индия, Средняя Азия, культура, экономика, Средняя Азия, соц.

**Аннотация:** Культурные связи между Индией и Центральной Азией имеют давнюю историю, уходящую в глубокую древность. Индия сыграла важную роль в формировании культурных, экономических и социальных аспектов Центральной Азии. Шелковый путь, соединявший Индию и Среднюю Азию, облегчая торговлю и обмен идеями, сыграл ключевую роль в формировании этих культурных связей. Влияние индийской культуры можно увидеть в искусстве, литературе, музыке и архитектуре Центральной Азии, а влияние среднеазиатской культуры проявляется в фестивалях и обычаях Индии. Взаимодействие между народами Индии и Центральной Азии было двусторонним процессом, когда каждая сторона училась и влияла на другую. В данной статье исследуется формирование культурных связей между Индией и Центральной Азией, выделяются ключевые факторы, формировавшие их отношения на протяжении веков.

## INTRODUCTION

India and Central Asia have a rich history of cultural, social, and economic ties that date back to ancient times. The complex relationship between India and Central Asia has been shaped by the movement of people, ideas, and goods between the two regions for centuries. Today, this relationship remains an integral part of the cultural landscape of both regions.

The cultural ties between India and Central Asia can trace back to the ancient Silk Road. This trade route connected China to the Mediterranean and extended through Central Asia, crossing through India. Candidate of Political Sciences, Ildar Yakubov states that "The ties of India and Central Asia have deep historical roots. It is believed that Buddhism came from India to China through Central Asia. Babur, the founder of the Mughal dynasty, was born on the territory of modern Uzbekistan. The Great Silk Road linked India and Central Asia for hundreds of years. Trade and cultural ties affected both Central and South Asia. Along this route, merchants, scholars, and adventurers from all over Eurasia came in contact with one another, sharing their cultures, innovations and ideas. Even now, there are many common words in Indian and Central Asian languages". Art, religion, and philosophy from India flowed to Central Asia, while Central Asian music, language, and spirituality had a profound influence on Indian culture.

## THE MAIN RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Diplomatic Affairs Editor of The Economic Times, Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury states that Central Asia has been the crossroads of numerous cultures throughout its history, and India's influence and impact can be seen in the languages, customs, and religions of the region. For example, the Buddhism of India influenced the development of the Gandhara region of modern-day Pakistan and Afghanistan. The region's art and architecture reflect both Indian and Hellenistic styles, and the local language absorbed and transformed many Sanskrit words. Similarly, Central Asian influences on India are also diverse and deeply embedded. Central Asian Sufi saints established many Islamic shrines throughout northern India, most famously the Ajmer Sharif shrine. Also, several Indian languages, including Hindi, Bengali, and Punjabi, have borrowed words from Persian and other Central Asian languages. The Mughals Turkic-Mongol heritage and Central Asian culture impacted art, literature, architecture, and cuisine of India.

Buddhism is a prominent world religion that began in the ancient Indian subcontinent around the sixth century BC and eventually spread across the Asian continent. Buddhism had a significant influence in the region west of India, which included present-day Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asian countries. Buddhism flourished rapidly in these areas throughout the early years of the Common Era. Buddhism expanded from the Indian subcontinent to Central Asia through a multidimensional process involving trade, diplomacy, migration, and cultural interchange. Buddhism has a tremendous impact on Central Asia's cultural and intellectual landscape. Central

Asia was at crossroads of trade and cultural exchange between different civilizations. The region was also a melting pot of different religions, including Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Nestorian Christianity, and Islam. Buddhism arrived in Central Asia in the first century CE, during the reign of the Kushan Empire. The Kushans supported Buddhism. The most famous Kushan emperor who promoted Buddhism was Kanishka I (r. 127-151 CE), who convened the Fourth Buddhist Council in Kashmir and built numerous Buddhist monuments and stupas (a hemispherical structure containing relics-typically the remains of Buddhist monks or nuns - a place for meditation) throughout his empire. The widespread of Buddhism was enabled by several factors that included the endeavors of Buddhist missionaries, traders, pilgrims, and the support extended by local rulers, chieftains and merchants.

After Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, Buddhism is the fourth most popular religion in Uzbekistan. 0.2% of the population engages in it. In Uzbekistan, just one Buddhist confession is officially registered. Uzbekistan is home to Central Asia's only operational Buddhist temple. The Japanese scientist Kyuzo Kato, an accomplished archaeologist who has been conducting archaeological digs in the Surkhandarya region of Uzbekistan for many years, is one of the great figures who investigated the history of Buddhism in Central Asia. Termez, according to a number of experts, notably Kyuzo Kato, is the birthplace of Buddhism, from whence the teaching spread to China and Japan. Kyuzo Kato researched and documented the ancient cave Buddhist complex "Kara-tepa" on the Amu Darya's shore in Uzbekistan. The distinguished scientist became the driving force behind Uzbek-Japanese research on the Kushan Empire, whose capital was precisely on the area of Dalverzin-tepa, on the banks of the Surkhandarya River, near the ancient city of Denau in southern Uzbekistan.

According to Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury that some of the first monuments of Buddhism were found in Uzbekistan, which are now included in the UNESCO Heritage List. In total, there are about 20 Buddhist monuments in the country, most of which are located near the city of Termez in Kara-tepa, Fayaz-tepa and Dalverzin-tepa. Near Termez is the Zurmala stupa, the first Buddhist building discovered in Central Asia, a cult Buddhist building of the Kushan era.

"Very interesting account about the genealogy of India and Central Asia is given by Farista. Fazil Khan in his book *tarikh-e-munaji- e-Bukhara* gives significant information. It is a well known fact that Sufism came to India from the Central Asian region. Great scholars like Albaruni and Abdul Rajjak Samarkandi came to India from Khwarism. Great Central Asian cities like Bukhara and Samarkent were the Centre of Sufi saints. Poets like Nasim, Masafi, Maharam, Mushrib and Shaukat popularized Indian poetry style in the Central Asia.<sup>2</sup> Al-Baruni, the Great Scholar from Central Asia in his masterpiece 'Tarikh-UL-Hind' provided encyclopedic information about India. Al-Kwarezmi contributed in Astronomy at large. Ganges khan, Taimur, Babar and Nadir shah

have great imprints on Indian history, all these came from the Central Asia. Great Scholars like Abdul Raja Samarqandi, Zia UL Naqsbandi (author of Tutinama) and Albaruni (author of Kitab-UL-Hind) migrated from Central Asia to India which has left the impression of their wisdom. They played an effective role in the exchange of the legacies of these two countries that have notoriously short distances. It should be noted that for a long time Uzbekistan and India have been striving to develop close ties, paying special attention to mutually beneficial cooperation between the peoples of the two countries. It is noteworthy that the Great Silk Road, which ran through the territory of Central Asia, was directed not only to China, but also to India".

Since these ancient times, not only diplomatic and trade relations have developed between the peoples, but also an active exchange of knowledge. Great ancestors created unique works about the history of the Indian people, and the art of the peoples of our countries is fed by the same sources of national culture and literature. So, Abu Rayhan Beruni (973-1048) in the book "India" studied in detail and carefully the culture and traditions of the Indian people, and the Timurid historian Abdurazzak Samarkandi (1413-1482) twice (in 1441 and 1446) went on a diplomatic mission to India. The ties between Central Asia and India were especially actualized during the period of almost three hundred years of existence of the Baburid Empire. In the world-famous work "Babur-name", Z. Muhammad Babur gives detailed information about the relations between Central Asia and India. From this point of view, the digitization of historical manuscripts and books - bringing to the general public about historical and cultural ties - is a very relevant proposal. In addition, the holding of the "Week of Indian cinema" in Uzbekistan, which has a large number of fans, as well as various festivals will allow you to get to know the culture, life, traditions and history of our peoples, will provide additional assistance in further strengthening relations between Uzbekistan and all countries of Central Asia with India.

India and Central Asia have had a deep spiritual and cultural tie for millennia, with Sufism serving as the lynchpin of this relationship. This mystical branch of Islam has left an unmistakable imprint on the religious, aesthetic, and intellectual landscapes of both India and Central Asia, resulting in a common history that endures to the present day. Sufism is a mystical and spiritual branch of Islam that emphasizes the seeker's relationship with Almighty through inner contemplation, meditation, heart purification, devotion, dedication, and obedience from the center of the soul.

Maheep & Hafeezur Rahman state that modern-day Central Asia, comprising Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan, has been a significant hub of Sufi thoughts and practices and India has played a vital role in the development and dissemination of Sufism in the region. Sufism arrived in the region with the spread of Islam, and numerous Sufi orders emerged over time, each with its distinct rituals and practices. Despite the challenges posed by

modernity and globalisation, secularism, and religious extremism, Sufism survived and adapted in contemporary India and Central Asia. In recent years both the regions are experiencing a revival of Sufi traditions.

As Abu-Bakir Waissi said that the Indian subcontinent is located close to central Asia, meaning that people from both areas have interacted with each other extensively historically. However, in the present day, there remain very few remnants of Indian culture in central Asia. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have basically none, as they were the farthest away. But Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan were closer to India. Indian food, Indian ruins, and perhaps a few Indian customs can still be found in these countries.

The two regions have a long history of political and economic exchanges as well. India has been an emerging economic power in recent years and is looking for opportunities to expand its trade relationships in the Central Asian region. India has shown particular interest in the North-South Transport Corridor (NSTC), which would create a multimodal network for trade and transportation between India, Iran, and Russia, opening doors for the economic integration of Central Asia with South Asia.

Uzbekistan-India relations have a long history. There are several references in Sanskrit and Pali literature to Kamboja, which is thought to have comprised areas of modern-day Uzbekistan. Sakas, a significant group of Eurasian nomads who are said to have fought alongside the Kauravas in the Mahabharata, originated from areas that included parts of Uzbekistan. In later years, Uzbekistan's Fergana, Samarkand, and Bukhara flourished as significant trading routes connecting India to Europe and China. At various eras, the Saka/Scythian, Macedonian, Greco-Bactrian, and Kushan Kingdoms comprised sections of both India and modern-day Uzbekistan, and at other times, they were part of neighboring empires.

"India is now a favoured destination for medical tourism from Uzbekistan," a senior Indian official said. "The Indian pavilion at Tashkent International Tourism Fair will showcase cultural aspects through dance and yoga."

Vinod Kumar, Indian Ambassador to Uzbekistan, said the idea was to popularise and promote India. "Our historical connections and cultural interactions over thousands of years provide us a sound base for further developing partnership," he told ET.

Aside from Bollywood, India is working to increase the popularity of yoga in Uzbekistan. Yoga courses are held in the Indian Cultural Centre in Tashkent, which was renamed the Lal Bahadur Shastri Centre for Indian Culture in 1995. "Considering the number of people practicing yoga at our center on a regular basis and those queuing to be enrolled in the classes, one can easily see how popular yoga is," remarked a cultural center employee.

According to one Uzbek official, "People see yoga not just as a physical exercise, but as a way of life." The Uzbek official went on to say that the goodwill shown by India through free yoga, Kathak, Hindi, and tabla sessions is greatly appreciated by the local government and people.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the relationship between India and Central Asia is an essential component of both regions' cultural and historical identities. The two regions have been bonded for centuries, having shared their cultures, religions, and philosophies throughout their interconnected history. Today, there are several opportunities for deepening the relationship, including trade and economic collaboration, that could contribute to creating a mutually beneficial platform. It is imperative to acknowledge the potential for continued growth and strengthening of these exchanges to bolster the cultural unity and identify the forms of cooperation beneficial for both regions.

### REFERENCES

1. India and Central Asia: The Thorny Path of Cooperation, Ildar Yakubov
2. India and takes special interest in Central Asia, Eurasia & Russia, Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury
3. India and takes special interest in Central Asia, Eurasia & Russia, Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury
4. India and Central Asia: An Interpretation of Mutually Indelible Historical Relationship and its Multi Faceted Impact, Amit Kumar Singh
5. Cultural and historical ties between Central Asia and India, Ramziddin Gulyamov
6. India's Sufi connection to Central Asia unravels spiritual and cultural synergy, Hafeezur Rahman
7. Bollywood music and yoga steal the show at Tashkent summit, The Economic Times <https://m.economictimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/bjp-targets-four-lakh-venues-for-people-to-listen-to-100th-episode-of-mann-ki-baat/articleshow/99852355.cms>