

Russia in central asia politics essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Throughout the post-Soviet policy of the Russian Federation in relation to Central Asia was changing from actually complete ignoring the region as observed in the early 90's of the XX century to the development of cooperation with them, mainly in the institutional and petroleum areas (which can be seen today). However, it seems that still and not formed some unified strategy of Moscow in Central Asia, where would be clearly visible place and the role of the region in the national interests of Russia.

When considering the Central Asian vector of Russia's foreign policy in the post-Soviet period conditionally divided into three main stages:

- The first phase covers the period of the early to mid 90's and is associated with actual exception from the scope of CA priorities of Russia against the illusory desire to become “ an integral part” of the West;
- The second stage was in the late 90's and the connected with critical reinterpretation of the results of all Russia's foreign policy, including the Central Asian sector;
- The third stage, which began with the arrival in 2000 of power in the Kremlin, Vladimir Putin and his team can be described as a purposeful desire to engage the region in the sphere of influence of Moscow for a major strengthening Russia's international position.

I want to look in detail at the third stage of the relationship between Russian and it's politic in Central Asia.

The third stage (2000 – present)

The coming to power in 2000, Vladimir Putin and his team was largely significant and a turning point in the development of the Russian Federation. The Russian foreign policy strategy has become more clearly expressed focus on the formation of the country as a center of international relations and the global economy.

It appears that such a fundamental transition in Moscow “ from words to action” was possible only in conditions when the Kremlin appeared financial, administrative and other resources. On the one hand, due to constructed by Putin power vertical pursued a new personnel policy, in general clean-up in public administration and the Russian regions, decreased randomness and inconsistent foreign policy of the Russian Federation.

Many of the foreign policy goals became evident when Moscow was formed and strengthened the idea that the recovery of lost regional positions, primarily in the former Soviet Union, is an inevitable step to increase the international role of the Russian Federation. Central Asia in this point of view came to be seen as one of the areas where and by which it is possible to proceed with the new elements of foreign policy, such as pragmatism, flexibility and specificity. This greatly facilitated by the fact that during the whole time of the post-Soviet Central Asian countries in general have always been friendly towards Russia.

Russia’s policy in Central Asia

Institutional Cooperation

Fundamentally new and important moment in the foreign policy of the Russian Federation on towards Central Asia has become a decisive shift to concrete actions and initiatives for the development of institutional cooperation. In this case, the prime rate in Moscow was made to search for new integration schemes and formats, rather than the reanimation of old (such as the CIS, which still retain the function of a political club). Manifested itself in a high flexibility of Russian politics: Moscow began almost at the same time develop multiple integration schemes / institutions – EurAsEC (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan), SES.

The Eurasian Economic Community was the most efficient in compared to other institutions. In 2000 in Astana, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan signed an agreement “ On creation Eurasian Economic Community. Creation of EurAsEC gave substantial impetus for the expansion of cooperation between the countries which entered the Community.

In 2002 Council for Transport Policy Integration Committee of EurAsEC was created. His main task was to coordinate the activities of national transport infrastructure, as well as ensuring the smooth transit of cargo and passenger vehicles on the territories of member states. In 2003, the EurAsEC observer status at the UN General Assembly. Another indicator of the success of many initiatives within the community was the fact that in 2006, Uzbekistan joined the Eurasian Economic Community.

In the period 2006-2007 was reshed some success in terms of promotion of members in the creation of the Customs Union. So in October 2007 in Dushanbe, the presidents of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan signed a

package of documents relating to the legal framework. Moreover, the preliminary agreement on the signing of the above documents by Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus was reached in August 2006 in Sochi at a special session of the Interstate Council of the EurAsEC.

Single economic space is virtually not functioning. In 2003 year in Yalta, Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus signed an agreement “ On creation of a single economic space.” However, after the so-called Orange Revolution in the Ukraine (2004) and the subsequent political crisis in the country (which is still largely not overcome) SES today is in fact a “ non-functional” institution.

Organization of the Collective Security Treaty, although it was formed on basis of the Collective Security Treaty, but has become an order of magnitude more effective institution. The initiative of Russia CST was transformed into the CSTO. Also in 2002 in Kishinev, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Belarus and Armenia adopted the Charter of the Organization. In 2004, the Collective Security Treaty Organization observer status at the UN General Assembly. In 2006, Uzbekistan joined the CSTO.

No less important event for the CSTO was the summit of Heads of State, held in autumn 2007 in Dushanbe (Tajikistan). The most significant result of the summit was to reach agreements on cooperation between CSTO and SCO, which lays the foundation for a major military and political power in the post-based in Moscow, and involving the potential of China.

Security and military cooperation

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have traditionally sought to development Russian military cooperation and security. As a result of these Central Asian countries in 2004 actually reached the level of a common defense space with Russia. In 2004, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan agreed in principle to upgrade its air defense system (NORAD) by Russia, and Moscow gave the right long-term use of strategic military objectives located in their territories. The most important of them – the cosmodrome “ Baikonur” (Kazakhstan), the anti missile ground “ Sary-Shagan” (Kazakhstan), electro-optical assembly space monitoring “ Nurek” (Tajikistan), naval weapons testing site on Lake Issyk-Kul (Kyrgyzstan).

In 2006, Bishkek and Moscow signed an agreement for the provision of Kyrgyzstan the 2006-2008 free military-technical assistance amounting to more than \$ 27 million. In October 2007, an agreement on transfer of Russia Tajikistan military equipment and ammunition, two hundred and first Russian military base in 2008, which allows to gain enough scale army of Tajikistan. Starting from 2005, Uzbekistan has also shifted vector of cooperation in military and security to Russia. Back in 2005, Uzbekistan has adopted a decision to withdraw from the territory of the Republic of the U. S. air base (since 2001 located near Karshi), and in June 2006 joined the CSTO.

Economics

At the same time, the economic cooperation of Central Asian countries while waiting little justified. As mentioned above if not to consider the oil and gas sector, then the economic activity of the Russian Federation is not high. Moreover, the fact that Moscow has not yet showing commitment to the

development of large-scale and full economic relations, considering the region as a supplier of hydrocarbons. Not only reduces the effectiveness of the entire Russian Central Asian policy, but pushing the region to search for other economic partners.

The countries of Central Asia as well as in the 90s did not weaken their efforts diversification of foreign economic relations, and on Russia spend more balanced economic policy. This was clearly evident even in the field of oil and gas cooperation – the main stream today towards economic interaction. On the one hand, the states of the region are building closer relations with Russia in oil and gas. At present, there exists well-developed legal base, both at the bilateral and multilateral levels, as well as expand the scope of work of Russian companies.

On the other hand, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan – states with significant export potential for hydrocarbons, do not reduce the activity to diversify its external relations in the oil and gas industry, seeking to reduce its dependence on Russia. Kazakhstan since 2015 suggests sent to neighboring China for at least 20% of oil exports by the recently commissioned pipeline “Atasu – Alashankou” . Parallel to this at least 25% of oil exports expected to be sent to Europe by pipeline “Baku – Tbilisi-Ceyhan “. Currently, Kazakhstan has had committed to deliver to Europe every year 7. 5 million tons of oil to the above pipeline.

Conclusion according Russia in CA:

The future of Russian-Central Asian relations will depend largely on Russia. This is due to the fact that in the post-Soviet space only Russia, given the <https://assignbuster.com/russia-in-central-asia-politics-essay/>

scale of its economic and geopolitical potential to take on the role of pushing forces of integrated economic development of Central Asian countries (like all other post-Soviet states). Fixing Russia in Central Asia is possible, provided that in the XXI century, Russia will play the main role in the economic, scientific and technological progress of the region – that is the role that she played the second half of XIX century until the collapse of the Soviet Union.

For this purpose Russia renounced the largely Soviet stereotypes of Central Asia as a “ loss of the region” and to realize that when a competent economic policy, namely Central Asia can be the most effective place of using the Russian capital. It seems that as after understanding of this in Russia began to speak of the beginning of a fundamentally new phase of Russian foreign policy in general and in Central Asia in particular.

China in Central Asia

For over 100 years, Central Asia has been component part of the Russian Empire and then the Soviet Union, China was seen only in the context of a common set of Sino-Russian and Sino-Soviet relations. After the collapse of the USSR the value of CA in the foreign policy of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) progressively increased. Accordingly increased and foreign policy activity in China, where can be conditionally divided into three main stages:

– The first stage covers the early 90’s of the twentieth century, connected with understanding the new realities in China and around Central Asia, the establishment of diplomatic relations and the formation of trust and the legal

framework, in particular in the context of solving the problems inherited from the Sino-Soviet period;

- The second phase was mainly for mid – late 90's, however, and taking most of 2001, characterized by the formation of Central Asia with participation of Beijing with the mechanisms and institutions of regional cooperation, as well as the expansion of the economic presence of China;

- The third phase, which began conditionally after coming to power in China, the politicians of the “ fourth generation” continues to the present. This stage is characterized by an increase in activity and offensive policy of China in almost all areas of cooperation in order to prevent the development of the situation in the region at a disadvantage for the Beijing Plan.

The third stage (2001 – present)

At the beginning of XXI century, China's foreign policy there are significant changes in Beijing even more strongly and actively began to spend a policy of defense of its national interests. This was largely due to cardinal change in the international situation after the events of September 11, 2001, when China felt the strengthening of military-political and economic influence of the U. S. and its closest allies.

Military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the rapid expansion of the American presence in the region located in close proximity to China – all this came to be seen by Beijing as future lever of influence in Washington.

Therefore strategically important for China is getting the right balance of power with the United States around the perimeter of the Chinese border and in areas of special interest in China.

Adjustment of China's foreign policy coincided with the upgrade process of the political elite, came to power in the country of the "fourth generation" of Chinese leaders, led by Hu Jintao. These policies have inherited much more stable and powerful state (both in military and economic terms). All that together should be considered as other critical causes increased activity and aggressiveness in Chinese foreign policy.

China's policy in Central Asia

Taking into account transformation of the region's status as a strategic, value of CA for the PRC increased significantly. Central Asian direction became considered in the context of the complex foreign policy efforts of Beijing the global level. China is particularly worried that the U. S. policy in Central Asia will become the catalyst for the negative trends in the Chinese region and Xinjiang. This, in turn, created a real threat to the stability and security of China.

Besides gaining strength in the Chinese economy to Beijing was important to provide secure access to raw materials in the first place oil and gas resources of the region, but potentially – and transit opportunities. This could prevent Washington's plans for political, economic and military reformatting CA. In this regard, China had made the focus on strengthening and development of the SCO bilateral relations with the countries of the region, especially in the economic sphere. With the rapid growth of the Chinese economy, these is what would allow more effective use of existing resources for Beijing in CA various economic projects, and at the same time, maintain the existing political elites in the region.

Institutional Cooperation

Considering the SCO as a key mechanism to “ keep your hand on pulse “ took place in the CA process and guarantees from the threat of creating anti-Chinese alliance, China made a bid to strengthen the solidarity in the Organization, to strengthen its international image and increase the value of the economic component of relations. In the first place, it was necessary to extend and concretize the SCO the legal framework of regional cooperation. Already in June 2002, held in St. Petersburg summit adopted the Charter of the Organization, which included the rights and obligations of members, given the new situation in and around Central Asia.

Later, to make the organization more international weight, China, together with Russia, called for bringing to of the new countries to the SCO. In 2004 the SCO as observers entered Mongolia and in 2005 – Iran, Pakistan and India.

In parallel there was intensive within the Organization development of new mechanisms and areas of intergovernmental cooperation. In 2004, was established the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), with the Executive Committee in Tashkent. Since 2005, the SCO formed and started to operate the Business Council and the Interbank Association. The main objective of the two substructures, dominated by China – to effectively coordinate the financial, government, business and scientific community, followed by systematic introduction of current as well as long-term projects in different areas.

As a result in recent years China has become more active and a precisely for the development of the economic component. Starting from 2006, Beijing has made a number of proposals to improve economic cooperation in the SCO framework, in particular the formation of a free trade zone, a regional transport infrastructure. Practical realization of the proposals, according to China will contribute to the growth of bilateral trade in goods and services, reduction and gradual elimination of non-tariff barriers, realization of large investment projects in the region.

Security and military cooperation

In spite of all situation, due to the appearance in CA of U. S. military bases, Beijing kept its earlier policy of expanding cooperation with the region's security, both within the SCO and bilaterally. In the last years China has become more and more active cooperation with the Central Asian states in the framework of the SCO RATS. Noticeably increased the number of held joint activities with China, whose purpose is to develop practical mechanisms for cooperation of law enforcement agencies of the Organization. Example of this are unprecedented scale counterterrorism exercises in August 2007, the Russian site "Chebarkul" (Chelyabinsk region), which involved about two thousand Chinese troops and a significant amount of equipment.

At the bilateral level, China has successfully used the the presence of the factor common security threats to establish a relationship of trust with its Central Asian partners. In this case, Beijing appears to be able to link the level and scope of security cooperation in the implementation of major investment projects in specific countries in the region.

At the same time it should be noted that in such delicate and specific area of security and military cooperation, China is trying to be as long as a “shadow” of Russia. Unlike Moscow Beijing does not advertise its “military capability” as is not interested to provoke further “irritation” in Washington and its NATO allies regarding the growing military and political ambitions of China in Central Asia and the SCO.

Economics

China realized a policy of increasing its presence in the region also manifested itself in the economic sphere. Especially significant is the massive increase in Sino-Central Asian trade. Over the period 2003-2010, trade between China and Central Asia increased by about 11 times, amounting to about \$ 20 billion. In this case, actual turnover may be even higher, given the so-called shuttle trade, the volume of which, according to expert estimates, reaches 4.5 to 6.5 billion.

Along with the development of production and trade, project investment activity in China and in its region has increased significantly. Chinese investments in Central Asia by the end of 2007 exceeded \$ 11 billion, and loans – \$ 3 billion. Moreover, these financial resources are not only in the oil and gas sector, but also in many other sectors, such as transport, telecommunications, hydropower, textiles.

At the beginning of XXI century Chinese direction is becoming a priority in the foreign policy of all countries of Central Asia. Today, regional states consider China as one of its strategic partners capable to become not only the guarantor of regional security, but perhaps, driven integrated economic

development. Further all in economic cooperation with China Kazakhstan progressed. Astana has already reached an agreement with Beijing on the mechanism of co-financing of a number of major investment projects amounting \$ 5 billion, not only in the oil and gas sector, but also in industries such as steel, telecommunications, information technology.

As an important partner in the oil and gas industry sees China and the leadership of Turkmenistan. In 2009 under a contract with Beijing Ashgabat planned to start delivery to China to 30 billion cubic meters of gas annually through the pipeline, which passed through the territory of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. There is an increase interest in economic cooperation with China and Uzbekistan, which as in the case of Turkmenistan, especially noticeable in the the oil and gas sector. However, Uzbekistan is trying to attract Chinese investors to participate in the country's carried program of large-scale privatization of large economic facilities, although Beijing and Chinese business is not so actively respond to the signals coming from Tashkent.

In its turn for Kyrgyzstan is still the most important transit of Chinese consumer goods to other countries of the CIS. According to some experts, the transit of Chinese goods in the post-Soviet countries Kyrgyzstan brings at least \$ 250 million a year, roughly comparable to the size of the state budget of the Republic.

Compared to other countries in the region, China is important for Tajikistan, primarily in the investment plan, as their financial capabilities in Dushanbe highly restricted, and clearly excessive hopes for large-scale investments in

Russia have not been realized. Currently, the Export-Import Bank of China (EXIM Bank) has financed the construction of hydropower plants in Tajikistan on the Zarafshan River, the construction of power lines, as well as reconstruction of individual sections of roads.

In addition, almost all the states of the region attach great importance to developing cooperation with China in the field of security, in the framework of the SCO, and in a bilateral format. While the primary guarantor of regional security in Central Asia is still considered Russia, but cooperation of the Central Asian countries and China gives to the first additional financial resources and more opportunities for diplomatic relations between Moscow and Beijing in pursuing its national interests.

Conclusion according China in CA:

It's extremely difficult to predict what will China's growing economic presence will lead in the region. On the one hand, according to the large scale of the Chinese economy and the dynamic development of almost all branches of industry, namely China could come up the engines of economic (including innovation and industrial) development in Central Asia. This region can quite successfully fit into scheme of the Eurasian land transit, become important in the economic and political cooperation between China and other centers of power and economic blocs. On the other hand, given that there are significant problems in the way of development of the China, Beijing can build a more pragmatic scheme of relations with Central Asia.

In this case, China most likely try to make the best use of raw materials in the region for economic growth of their domestic territories. Respectively,

<https://assignbuster.com/russia-in-central-asia-politics-essay/>

will develop certain kinds of economic relations, including transport and communications in the Chinese direction. The forming as a regional security system in the framework of the SCO will provide security in the first place of Chinese interests.

It appears to provide long-term stability in the region and Xinjiang, as well as generally stability Chinese position in Central Asia, China is expedient to make the focus on building mechanisms multifaceted and mutually beneficial economic cooperation with Central Asian states and Russia. At an early stage framework of this cooperation would be full support China's idea of economic re-integration within the region or within the EurAsEC, and at later stages – the gradual integration within the SCO.

The U. S. presence in Central Asia

Until 2001, the U. S. presence in Central Asia (in contrast for example, of Eastern Europe and Caucasus) was basically economic character and perceived in Beijing relatively quiet. China's leaders “ in principle accepted the approaches of Washington, aimed at the development of market reforms in the countries of Central Asia.” But the events of 11 September 2001 and the subsequent Washington under the antiterrorist operation in Afghanistan has led to a dramatic increase the presence of the United States, which changed the balance of power in the region at a disadvantage for Beijing configuration.

In Beijing, with obvious anxiety perceived the fact that on the western borders of China in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan first appeared a large American contingent. These forces the bases in Afghanistan, according to

experts was enough that in case of necessary, conduct local military operations and to control the western parts of China, especially in Xinjiang, where the number of strategically important objects in military terms, including landfill “ Lop Nor” to test Chinese nuclear missiles. Furthermore, Washington has stepped up significantly its military cooperation with countries in the region, which has undermined the solidarity within the SCO and a certain political “ drift” of a number of states – members of the Organization to the U. S..

However, the policy of the United States after the September 11, 2001 under the slogan unity of action of the world against international terrorism, clearly demonstrated to Beijing that Washington would not mind radically expand its economic presence in Central Asia. In this case, appears to be of particular concern in China as a result the U. S. attempts to take control of strategic industries in the region. Later, a foothold in Central Asia and on the basis of their economic power, the United States by financial investments might be able to influence the political and economic situation in this segment of the post-Soviet space in its own advantage.

Conclusion

Despite the continuing set of complex problems in the way development of mutually beneficial economic cooperation between Russia, China and Central Asia and moreover, obvious pessimistic associated basic scenarios, the potential of this collaboration is still significant as the EurAsEC and the SCO. The key to this is the fact that Russia, China and Central Asian countries have a common objective long-term interest – joint economic development and the development of large intercontinental Eurasia.

In this regard can't be excluded possibility of realization a scenario where if the prevalence in Russia or China narrow national interests of any of those powers will seek to involve region into its sphere of the individual influence. In the case of competition between Russia and China for the influence in Central Asia can be threatened stability in the region. This, in turn, extremely negative affect the safety of the Russian and Chinese. Clearly, in these conditions prospects for Central Asia itself will be extremely pessimistic.