

## Contemporary cultural dialogue: institutional frameworks and new opportunities for the technologies of international public relations

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**Abstract.** The article shows the role of culture in international relations. The authors describe the activities of various organizations whose mission is to develop the intercultural dialogue. The conclusion is made that contemporary examples of mutual enrichment of culture and politics, culture and economy prove the value and opportunities of culture in contemporary international relations. Today's culture is an independent branch of foreign cultural policy, basis for active multilateral cooperation. However, culture and cultural events have also a specific social significance and are able to give a new status to any political and economic developments and to actualize a business program. Today it is possible to note the consistent expansion and adoption of various cultural projects in international public relations projects.

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### Introduction

In modern international relations and foreign policy of states, an increasingly important role is played by cultural exchange, which takes place at the multilateral and bilateral level and covers various aspects of modern life [1]. Cultural cooperation is not only a self-sufficient and independent vector of international relations, but also it integrates other areas of cooperation, becomes the basis for the development of dialogue in the political and economic sphere, and is continued in online communications [2].

The cultural diplomacy acquires an independent significance, which is a kind of trend in international relations. Culture, cultural achievements and successes are becoming brands in many countries in the beginning of the 21st century [3].

The importance of cultural cooperation today is confirmed by the gradual development of such direction as foreign cultural policy, the aim of which is associated with the formation of a positive image of the country in the foreign audience [4]. Cultural centers, institutions, foundations, that are most significant organizations of foreign cultural policy, play a big role in the practical implementation of cultural exchanges, international cultural cooperation and promotion of national culture [5].

### Methods and methodics

The main research method that can be used for the study of contemporary cultural dialogue is institutional analysis. At the same time, very efficient are event analysis and comparative analysis of the

activities of different cultural centers and organisations.

### Findings and discussion

Cultural centers and cultural institutions trace their history from the end of 19th century. In 1883, there was opened Alliance Française, and in 1889, the Dante Alighieri Society was established. Today, these organizations have been set up in many countries around the world, they operate successfully abroad and integrate their activities in various areas: educational, informational, and cultural [6].

Despite the universal nature of these organizations, each country seeks to identify priority areas of its work, to note the projects and organizational techniques that demonstrate most clearly the achievements of the country. For example, the Italian Institute in Saint Petersburg focuses primarily on the artistic and musical projects, Alliance Française – on the classical heritage of the country and the Austrian Library – on the literary traditions. Activities of cultural centers aimed at creating an attractive, recognizable image of their country in the world. In fact, they are involved in foreign PR of the state and contribute to the formation of a positive opinions about state from the foreign audience. Cultural activities conducted by them easily attracted large audiences and the press. There are a few basic technologies that promote the image of the country: organization of art and photography exhibitions, concerts, films, festivals, performances, lectures, seminars, meetings, presentations, publishing, international prizes.

All cultural centers combine language-training programs that are aimed at the aspiration, precisely through language courses, to acquaint foreign audiences with the culture and achievements of modern states.

Various foundations that have been created by well-known representatives of politics, business, culture and art, are also independent actors in cultural cooperation in contemporary international relations. Such organizations are generally known for their founders' credibility and popularity and operate in addressing the important social, political problems, issues of cultural cooperation.

For example, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, one of the largest foundations in Germany, operates in such areas as health, strengthening of mutual understanding between peoples, training and education, arts and culture, as well as humanities, social and natural sciences.

These directions are a reflection of the social position of its founder Robert Bosch – a German industrialist, engineer and inventor, founder of Robert Bosch GmbH [7].

Objectives of the International Charitable Foundation of the famous musician and public figure Vladimir Spivakov are consistent with the interests of the founder and creative tasks of foreign cultural policy in modern Russia. The Foundation provides assistance to children, gifted in music and fine art, in development of their talents, organizing their creative process in Russia and abroad. Independent direction of the organization is to preserve and promote cultural values, as well as providing comprehensive support for the charity.

In 2014, the Foundation celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. For 20 years, it has been recognized in Russia and abroad. With the direct involvement of the Spivakov Foundation there were prepared numerous festivals and contests, many gifted children were able to continue their education in a variety of recognized music and art schools around the world [8].

Activity of foundations confirms the trend of institutionalization of international cultural cooperation, which is of particular importance in contemporary international relations. It should be noted that many experts consider the establishment of charitable, educational, non-political organizations and foundations abroad, dedicated to strengthening international relations in the spheres of education, science and culture, is an effective tool of foreign PR state policy.

Cultural cooperation in the 20<sup>th</sup> - beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century became also an important part of economic, political and sporting events.

Today, many major international meetings are held with the participation of representatives of culture, accompanied by bright concerts, exhibitions, performances of stars on the world stage. A significant event of international economic cooperation since late 20<sup>th</sup> – early 21<sup>st</sup> century would be not an exaggeration to call the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum, which brings together guests from more than 60 leading world powers. Forum participants are heads of major Russian and foreign companies, heads of state and political leaders, prime ministers, deputy prime ministers, ministers and governors. The economic effect of holding this event is very significant. Only in 2013, 102 participants signed agreements totaling 9.6 trillion rubles [9].

Despite the economic activities orientation in recent years, an increasing role is played by the cultural program of the Forum, which is designed for a broad audience and brings together stars of the world stage on the grounds of St. Petersburg. Concerts, prepared for a major event, have become a completely independent phenomenon of cultural life in the northern capital. At the same time, a cultural program provides the Economic Forum with a different status, making it more a meaningful and anticipated event.

Outdoor concerts at the Palace Square in Saint Petersburg, with the participation of famous Russian and foreign artists, held since 2007, confirm public importance of the Forum. Residents of Saint Petersburg and guests of the Northern Capital remembered the concerts of groups “Scorpions” and “Robin Gibb Of The Bee Gees” accompanied by a symphony orchestra and chorus of the Mariinsky Theatre with Valery Gergiev conducting in 2007, the show of one of the founders of Pink Floyd, Roger Waters in 2008, the performance of the famous British group “Duran Duran” and of the American pop singer Anastacia in 2009, a concert of the British electronic band “Faithless” with a new album “The Dance” in 2010, the performance of the British rock musician and actor Sting in 2011, a joint project of Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Sumi yo and 12-year-old Jackie Ivanko in a joint concert “Bouquet of the Opera” in 2012, the concert “The triumph of Classics”, where the quartet “Il Divo” and the Italian band “Le Div4s” were accompanied by the State Symphony Orchestra of Saint Petersburg in 2013 [10].

The stars of world culture and art in their concerts confirm the economic event status, which is held in the beautiful city of the world, the cultural capital of Russia.

Special attention is paid to the issues of culture and cultural cooperation in the practice of

international sporting events. Sporting events are, certainly, in the broad sense, the important phenomenon of cultural life of the planet, reflecting the success and achievements of different countries. Today, however, none the biggest sporting event is held without an independent, original cultural program.

The countries, participants within the framework of world championships, present their achievements in the cultural sphere, and the countries-organizers seek the opening ceremony to remind the world of its most striking successes, especially in the sphere of culture.

An increasingly important role is played by the factor of culture in the Olympic movement. The discovery of the Olympics itself is a great multi-genre festival, the story of the host country of the games, its history, culture and traditions, which is intended for the widest audience. Today, the states, sparing no means, strive to make the event memorable and vivid, colorful and expressive. This is, really, an exceptional chance to express themselves, to conduct a large-scale image-forming program. The attention of a wide audience, for which the country-organizer, namely in the cultural program, is revealed multifaceted, is attracted to television broadcasts of the Olympics.

National houses, open to the widest possible audience, operate as part of the Olympics. Artists perform, days of national cuisine are held, meetings with the athletes and representatives of culture are organized there.

According to opinion of Simon Anholt, who is a well-known expert in the sphere of national branding, sport is the one of the most important characteristics of a state brand and it is effective way to create a positive image of a country [11].

The 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi expanded significantly the cultural component of the sports festival. The Cultural Olympiad "Sochi 2014" began long before the sports and the Games themselves and became a kind of culmination of the Cultural Olympiad. Every year of the Cultural Olympiad was devoted to a different art: 2010 – Year of Cinema, 2011 – Year of Theater, 2012 – Year of Music, and 2013 – Year of Museums [12].

Guests and participants of the Games were offered vivid and memorable events on the richness and diversity of culture of Russia, which were held in dozens of scenic sites, as well as in museums located in the Greater Sochi and Krasnaya Polyana. The cultural program was attended by 83 regions of Russia [13].

One of the central events of the Cultural Programme of the Games became the seventh already International Winter Festival of Arts of Yury

Bashmet, which took place from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2014 in Sochi (Winter Theatre, Debol'skii Hall of Organ and Chamber Music and other platforms). The festival guests are jazz bands, music and dance bands, drama theaters and "night movie marathon". In addition, a series of exhibitions was held at the festival, and master classes and meetings with the world's leading musicians were organized at the Organ Hall.

The cultural program of the Winter Theatre included Gala Concert of Russian and British ballet soloists and the concerts of Igor Moiseyev State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble. The museums of the city of Sochi presented works of art of all kinds, genres and techniques, created by the leading and still quite young contemporary artists from different corners of Russia. The best teams from all, even the most remote regions of Russia, were represented on the area of celebrations and awards in the Olympic Park (Medals Plaza).

In one word, the cultural program in Sochi caused no less enthusiastic response than sporting events.

## Conclusion

We can cite many examples of mutual enrichment of culture and politics, culture and economy. All they prove conclusively the value and opportunities of culture in contemporary international relations. Today's culture is an independent branch of states foreign cultural policy, the basis for active multilateral cooperation of the international community. However, culture and cultural events have also a special social significance and are able to give a new status to any political and economic developments and to actualize a business program.

Today it is possible to note the consistent expansion and adoption of various cultural projects in international relations that speaks about the expansion of policy tools, and consistent attention to cultural factors at the national and international levels.

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