

# IV ● INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

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## **Exploration of Kazakhstan's Position in the World Political - Informational Space from the Standpoint of Political Theories**

**Abstract.** In the foreign policy of Kazakhstan, one of the most priorities it is a construction the image of the country abroad. Foreign citizen's ignorance about Kazakhstan became one of the specifics of Kazakhstan's citizens abroad. On this basis, and are composed of various stereotypes about Kazakhstan. The article reveals why Kazakhstan in the framework of the world information space was in such a situation. Kazakhstan's geopolitical attitude within Eurasian landmass made it in some extent its image in the global information space with its own political and cultural features. Wide concepts of political stereotypes are closely linked with Kazakhstan's foreign policy in some extent reminding situation with other regions around the globe, like Middle East and etc. Each political theory provides its approach to the disclosure of this phenomenon.

**Key words:** Foreign policy of Kazakhstan, World Political, Informational space, Political theories, Geopolitical space.

### **Introduction**

In the foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, one of the priorities in the realization of foreign policy priorities, it is the building of Kazakhstan's image. World system as a geopolitical links shaped its own separate environment, in spite of the international law. If in the international legal level, the relations between states are regulated through political institutions and diplomacy, meanwhile the shaping of the geopolitical process have a more complex character and it involves whole nations, their type of thinking, their outlook, historical, cultural memory and another substances. Kazakhstan is in the specific situation, separately from other countries of the world within global informational space and appropriately with subsequent in this situation with perception of Kazakhstan in the outer space. Dedication of this article it is the explanation of why Kazakhstan and Central Asian region have such position in the world politico-informational space.

### **Methods**

According to the theory of psychology, stereotype thinking is especially conditioned by our con-

sciousness in order to be able to orient in any kind of conditions for identification of subjects for their recognition. This mechanism of thinking is also suitable not for only for human relations, but for intercultural communication too.

### **Main body**

#### **Cultural- Geographic positioning of Kazakhstan in the World Informational Space**

In the sense of definition of the politico-geographical position of Kazakhstan, there are most four prominent culture-geographic spectrums: first – Borat movie; second – East Asian identity; third – identification with Russia and fourth – identification with the Middle East. First type of perception is rooted from the movie of British comedian Baron Cohen's on Kazakhstan. This movie has a strong effect inside in Kazakhstan. Figure, which was played and embodied by Baron Cohen in the face of Borat Sagdiyev, had firmly introduced to the view of foreigners stereotype thinking who is not a citizen of Turkey or any post Soviet country. Borat's outlook on Kazakhstan in the world informational space has a more exotic form originating from movie's sense.

Second trend is defined by racial factor when Kazakhstanis citizens are recognized as habitants of East Asian region. Many citizens of Kazakhstan, who went abroad, note the fact that they were perceived as Chinese, Koreans or Japanese.

Third trend – it is identification with Russia. This phenomenon is explained by that Kazakhstan in the long historical interim, it was a part of Russian Empire and Soviet Union. In the West as a former ideological adversary of the Soviet Union, in perception of the USSR the terms «Soviet» and «Russian» are identical for each other. For instances: in the national movements of Baltic peoples in the USA it was a trouble of perception the Soviet Union by Americans, because all nations habituating in the Soviet Union were perceived as Russians. This fact in informational sense complicated political activity of Baltic national movements inasmuch as many Americans could not know concretely on these countries (Baltic states) [1].

Fourth trend – it is identification with different «stans». In this sense broad role is played by such states as Pakistan and Afghanistan due to the conflict potential. «Stan's» identification is related with two tendencies: historical and security. Prefix «stan» in Turkic languages has a Persian or Indo-European origin [2].

This is explained that Iran historically had a broad cultural influence within the region and part of Iranian «cultural power» was projected to adjusting neighbors. Another factor within this trend is related with security factor, and as a result of American presence in the region and its subsequent coverage in the world mass media.

That is why Kazakhstan is not a competent subject of the international informational space (do not confuse with the term of «international community»). This phenomenon can be explained throughout various political theories predominantly by geopolitics, describing one or the other mechanism of this trend formation.

### **Halford Mackinder's Geopolitics. The Concept of «Heartland»**

Sir Halford Mackinder is the most prominent thinkers of geopolitical thought of the XX century. His famous work issued in 1904 «Geographical Pivot of the History» explains world order from the standpoint of political geography. According to «Heartland» concept, the world is divided to the three spheres: first – «Heartland» internal areas of Eurasia which are composed of Ural, Western and Eastern Siberia, Far East (Russian), Central Asia and Caucasus; second – «inner crescent» – outer ar-

reas of Eurasia which are washed by World Ocean: Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, Indochina and Eastern Asia; third – «outer crescent»: North and South Americas, Sub Saharan Africa and Australia with Oceania.

Mackinder noted in its geopolitical concept the central position of «inner crescent» for the development of world history, not for «Heartland». General his argument for this, it is historical fact that areas of the «inner crescent» always were under strong pressure and influence from both sides: from the Sea and from the Continent which thereby made political, economic, social and cultural development of the «inner crescent» more rich and dynamical with comparison with another regions [3]. The main historical processes developed exactly in the areas of «inner crescent».

Not last role in this sense was a historical circumstances within «Heartland» itself. The Soviet Union from the standpoint of geopolitics is perceived as a continental power. Central Asia as a indispensable part of «Heartland» was in the composition of the Soviet Union and closeness of the Soviet regime due to the facts of internal political security did not allow to open its border to the outside world. Argument for this statement that in the course of cold war, there were only approximately 5 experts on Central Asia [4].

Eurocentric model of the international relations which has existed since the period of XV-XVI centuries is rested on leading European empires. As a result, objects of expansion of European empires are the subject of the international cultural-informational space. Why such countries like Pakistan, India or Congo are famous around the globe? First – they were in the past colonies of leading European powers, British and French empires respectively; second it is a conflict potential which is broadly shown by mass media with conducting of various operations under the leading Western states.

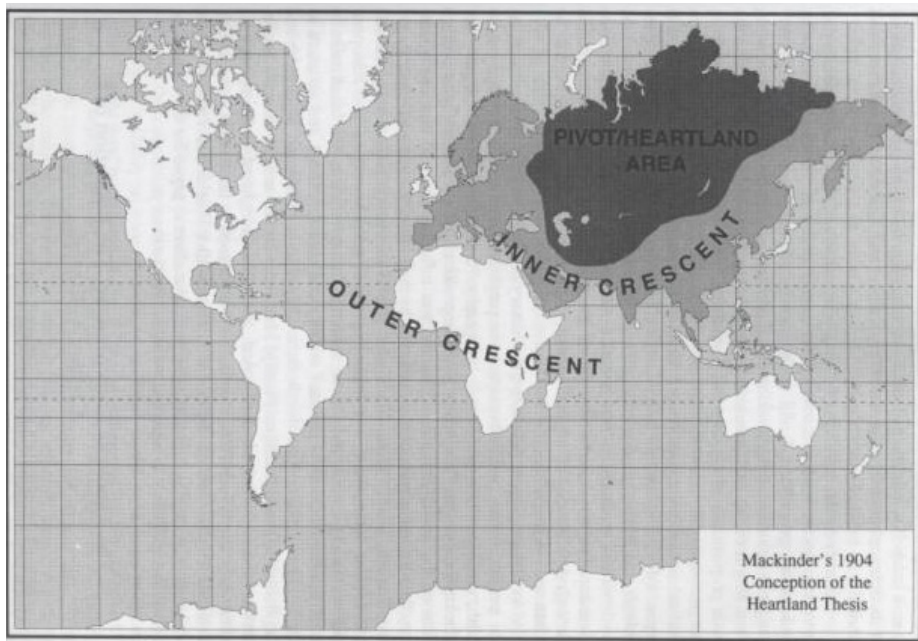
In relation to Kazakhstan, consideration in the framework of «Heartland» is that, the Soviet Union was a close state and besides a central pivotal state – Russia, the other republics within the USSR for ordinary people in the globe and in the West were unknown. It means that network of world processes, which played crucial role in the development of world history according to Mackinder's view were in the areas of «inner crescent» and «outer crescent» and that's why in that areas all (under all is meant countries and nations) know each other meanwhile in «Heartland» on the dynamics of political processes

(development of dynamics of the political processes does not mean that historical processes and events are underestimated, it just means that their links with the global (global means *western*) empires lower, which than had a strong effect on perception of these countries in the world informational space) less active.

Conclusion: Central Asia and Kazakhstan as a part of «Heartland» and as a part of the Soviet Union

were closed geographically and politically, that's why in the international community information about Central Asian countries are not widespread.

**Map 1.** In this map is outlined the construction of the world according to Mackinder's view. Here, we can distinguish geographical dimensions in their regional classification



Source: [https://www.academia.edu/8271412/Geopolitics\\_of\\_Eastern\\_Partnership](https://www.academia.edu/8271412/Geopolitics_of_Eastern_Partnership)

**Map 2.** In this map is clearly exposed geopolitical position of Central Asian states and Kazakhstan particularly. Main historical and geopolitical

mechanism which formed contemporary position on acknowledge about Kazakhstan is rooted in its distant area from inner crescent.



Source: [http://www.ca-c.org/journal/2005/journal\\_eng/cac-04/02.megeng.shtml](http://www.ca-c.org/journal/2005/journal_eng/cac-04/02.megeng.shtml)

### **Barry Buzan. Regions and Power. The Structure of the International Security**

Barry Buzan it is one of the most outstanding scientist in the field of IR theories. Barry Buzan is the one of the founders of Copenhagen school of IR and the concept of «securitization» which is related to constructivism within IR. Here, basic role plays the Theory of Regional Security Complex) where the international system is rested on regional systems and subsystems. The concept of securitization is composed of two general pillars: first originates from political realism where the basic actors are states, the second originates from constructivism itself where various constructions of perceptions related with security are constructed.

Perception of security threats could change and evolve in the course of historical period, for instances: for Russia in the period of Soviet Union existence major threat was imposed by the United States and NATO and by maoist China. For the West, USSR. In the period after the end of cold war, threats became transnational, for instances: for Russia – secessionism, uncontrolled migration and hypothetical Chinese threat as a expansion or huge scale military conflict. The process of securitization is very important and central for security dynamics in Eurasia that is predominantly is featured as a «security regime».

Utility of the RSCT (Regional Security Complex Theory) for Kazakhstan is linked to its geographical identification. Every geographical region in the framework of RSCT has its own borders, which are rested on common historical, civilizational, social and cultural links, which were developed in the certain period. In order to understand Kazakhstan's informational position in the framework of RSCT or another country it is need to differentiate two approaches: first it is approach of the ordinary citizen whom knowledge of political geography is restricted by his own home region.

For instances, citizen of Argentine knows enough about his home region – South America or in other words Latin America, but he/she does not have sufficient knowledge about the other regions of the world, for instances of Central Asia, Africa or South-East Asia. Second approach – it is club of great powers whom contribution to the world history is high, from significant historical events till technologies, culture, economy and etc. Due to branding of those countries, economic brands of whatever product defines the image of that country.

Such states like the United States, Germany, Italy, and Japan have a huge soft power, which is generated by their national economies. For instances,

Japan has a huge soft power potential which is presented by its economy, to say precisely economic brands, culture – language, history, popular culture, anime and etc. which is worldwide known and recognized.

The countries that are less developed economically and in terms of the process of production, of course, are less popular. By this fact is explained knowledge on particular country. Samuel Huntington mentioned in his famous book «The Clash of Civilizations and Remaking of World Order» «soft power becomes power, only when it is based on hard power» [5]. Describing above-mentioned situation, for ordinary citizen the world is not composed of the whole globe, but it is confined by home region, meanwhile about outer part of the world ordinary citizen possesses scare notion.

According to Buzan, there are distinguished next regional complexes: East Asian RSC, South Asian RSC, Middle Eastern RSC, West African proto-complex, and Horn proto-complex, Central Africa RSC, Southern Africa RSC, post- Soviet RSC, European RSC, North American RSC, and South American RSC. From the standpoint of the RSCT, Kazakhstan is related to the post- Soviet RSC. Post- Soviet RSC takes a large part of the Eurasian space, its hinterland. Post-Soviet or Eurasian RCS or in other words – the common geopolitical space is composed of Eastern Europe (Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, European part of Russia), Caucasus (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia), Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) and Russian internal areas (Ural, Siberia and Russian Far East).

Central or pivotal geopolitical place within the post-Soviet geopolitical space is belong Russia. Ultimate formation of Eurasian geopolitical space was in XX century. Formation of Eurasian geopolitical space was developed in two levels: since XVIII till end of XX century, the Russian Empire conquest of Eurasian hinterland areas and the second period, whole XX century, especially the Soviet period when all conquered territories and nations habituating there were under Russian cultural influence: language, social communications, social institutions, ideology, mentality and other influences. Important role between interstate and inter people's communication within RSC or the common geopolitical space play a people's movements. This allows to boost inter regional links among sub regions.

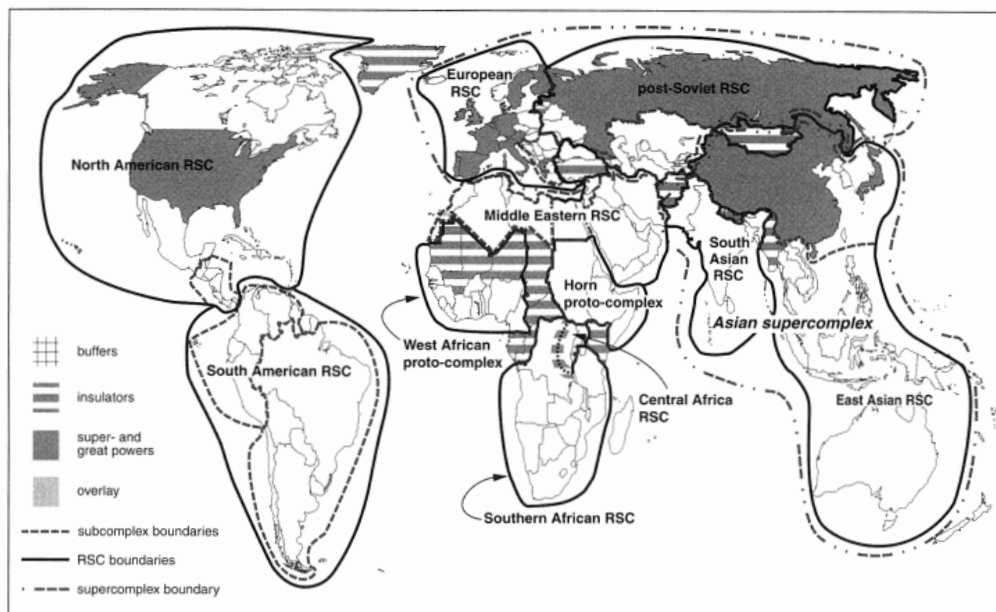
For instances, great amount of Americans have German ancestors or Irish or Italian ancestors. Kazakhstan it is a multinational state, many peoples of non-Turkic origin were brought into Kazakh-



stan, from Caucasus, Eastern Europe and Russian Far East. In this sense of world, Regional Security Complexes Kazakhstan is known for post-Soviet RSC and Turkey due to the common ethnic origin. In this sense, we have to differentiate some features of such terms like a Regional Super Complex and the Common Geopolitical Space. Regional Security Complex inherently is related to security issues

meanwhile Common Geopolitical Space considers over human relations based on same cultural and identity links.

**Map 3.** In this map various global RSCs are displayed as well as this map can depict the Common Geopolitical Spaces around the globe.



Source: <https://policytensor.com/2011/11/17/the-persian-gulf-as-a-regional-security-complex/>

What does the Common Geopolitical Space mean? It means that particular RSC was developed under certain period and it accumulated some similarities in social institutions. Mass Medias clearly expose this factor; people who are unified by one language, mentality are able easily to understand each other.

In the shooting of American movies, participate many non-US citizens as well as citizens of the British Commonwealth, from Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and other European countries. If to judge in the context of Kazakhstan's geopolitical position, it could be explained why nobody knows about Kazakhstan around the world? Below are displayed factors and daily life examples that explain this situation:

1) As was mentioned by Samuel Huntington in his book «The Clash of Civilizations and Remaking of World Order»: history of mighty states became world history. This quote explains that Western

powers put themselves at the «center of the world»;

2) From Halford Mackinder's geopolitics of Heartland, global leading powers positioned within «inner» and «outer» crescents. That is why Great Powers know about each other and their domains. Why such states like Algeria, Pakistan and India have not gone under «Borat's phenomenon»? Because they were domains of leading Great Powers and their presence is known for their former metropolises;

3) If some bright events happen in Kazakhstan or in any Central Asia states, in the world (world means western) mass media will be noted event itself, but not exact the country. Instances: first, in one western report was noted on CCP Leader Xi Jinping's first official speech on the OBOR. In the report was mentioned Xi Jinping's speech and aspiration on OBOR policy but not the place of his speech. Second, during heavy rains in Almaty, Tesla model car has shown its effectiveness meanwhile other cars stalled. Leader

of «Tesla Motors» company in his twitter has mentioned about the effectiveness of his company's car, but he did not mention the place where it was. In addition, in the news the place where this situation happened was described as Russia;

4) In general for Western narrow person Kazakhstan is the some kind of exotic country existing in outer world even where the law of physics on the other. That is why success of «Borat movie» in psychological sense is necessary for narrow person, because he or she intends to see other world with its strangers and may be looking for it. In some extent, Borat's movie resembles movie «Alice in Wonderland». However, Borat's movie on its story is rigged to modern culture, which is rested on low morality and hedonism. That is why Western narrow person is searching some kind of land of weirdness.

### Conclusion

The situation for Kazakhstan around its position within world-informational space is stalemate. In this situation faces two significant factors, on the one hand, this fundamental geopolitical processes that have evolved over a long historical period, on the other hand, it is high intensity globalization. Fundamental geopolitical processes as was mentioned above it is a Heartland theory geographically and the post- Soviet RSC politically. Due to it, Kazakhstan remains unknown country for outside world. In opposite to this process is the globalization, which appear in the development of tourism, education, social networks and more increasing of foreign tourists' visits to Kazakhstan in recent time. Barrier still exists but during some period it decreases in its size.

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