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Traditional ecological culture of China and Kyrgyzstan as a fundamental basis for the development of modern ecological civilization

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Abstract

Relevance. The relevance of this study is due to the deteriorating environmental situation both globally and in Kyrgyzstan and China.

Purpose. This article aims to examine the traditional ecological cultures of these countries and compare them in order to identify the most sustainable and harmonious way of coexistence between society and nature.

Methodology. Comparison was chosen as the leading method of research of this problem, which allowed for a comprehensive comparison of all key elements of the traditional ecological cultures of Kyrgyzstan and China. The following were also used: analysis, historical method, synthesis, method of systematization, deduction, and classification.

Results. The study revealed the essence of the traditional ecological cultures of China and Kyrgyzstan, their historical roots and sources of formation, analysed the contribution of classical Chinese philosophers to the development of the philosophy of reverence for nature, and cited quotes from their works reflecting the desire for balance and harmony in the use of natural resources. The study also revealed the historical background and symbols embodying respect for nature among the Kyrgyz, revealing the influence of shamanism and animism on the ecological culture of this people. The paper described the symbolic aspects related to animals and revealed their significance for the ancient Kyrgyz. A detailed comparison of the traditional ecological cultures of China and Kyrgyzstan included analyses of historical, natural, religious and social factors, which made it possible to identify the key features and principles underlying the harmonious relationship between man and nature in these countries.

Conclusions. The research materials can be integrated into contemporary environmental policy and practice, as they reveal valuable knowledge for promoting a sustainable ecological future of society.

Keywords: sustainable future; ancient knowledge and philosophy; comparative research; environment; nature and society.

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Introduction

Traditional ecological culture, which originated in the totemic era of mankind, has played an important role in understanding and co-existing with nature. However, with the socio-economic development of society, as a result of the achievements of modern science and technology, environmental pollution has assumed global proportions, leading to environmental degradation, depletion of natural resources and frequent disasters, hindering social progress and irreversibly affecting the health of humankind. Traditional cultures place great emphasis on respect for nature and biodiversity, which is crucial in the context of contemporary environmental challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss [1]. The traditional ecological cultures of China and Kyrgyzstan also contain a wealth of valuable knowledge and practices that contribute to environmental sustainability. Learning from these cultures can help modern societies develop more sustainable ways of utilizing natural resources. China and Kyrgyzstan have a long history of close political, economic, social and cultural ties. The unique traditional ecological cultures of the two countries have long influenced each other, contributing to the harmonious coexistence of man, nature, and society. The concepts of “unity of heaven and mankind”, “submission to nature”, and “parents of mountains and waters” embody a profound ecological philosophy. Despite their different natural conditions, customs and religious beliefs, as well as differences between cultures, they cherish and respect nature. Studying and comparing the traditions of China and Kyrgyzstan can contribute to cultural exchange, understanding and strengthening diplomatic and cultural ties.

The problematic of this study is that modern societies are facing rapid and complex changes in environmental conditions such as climate change, depletion of natural resources and loss of biodiversity. These factors create an urgent need to develop sustainable environmental management strategies and practices. In this context, the traditional ecological cultures of China and Kyrgyzstan represent a valuable resource that often remains undervalued within contemporary environmental studies. These cultures include a wealth of knowledge and experience that can offer valuable lessons and inspiration for developing sustainable solutions in today’s world.

The challenge of maintaining environmental sustainability in Kyrgyzstan has ancient roots in the traditional culture of this country, which has always placed great importance on respect for nature. However, with the development of modern industrialization and urbanization, Kyrgyzstan, like many other countries, has faced a number of environmental problems [2]. One of the most pressing challenges is climate change, the impact of which is acutely felt in Kyrgyzstan and manifests itself in harsher winter conditions, less stable weather patterns and threats to agriculture and water resources. The country is also facing the depletion of natural resources such as water and forests, which may lead to long-term consequences for ecosystems [3]. The loss of biodiversity is also a serious problem. Uncontrolled development and anthropogenic activities threaten local ecosystems and their ability to support diverse life forms. At the same time, environmental pollution due to uncontrolled deforestation,

water and air pollution and inadequate waste management creates environmental challenges for the country [4].

In the article by T. Bazarkulova et al. [5], the authors examined the process of modernization of traditional society in Kyrgyzstan through changes in the socio-cultural sphere, economy, and state policy that accompany the modernization process. The authors studied the impact of modern technology, globalization and other factors on traditional values and structures of society, and revealed the challenges and opportunities that arose as a result of this modernization. In the study by N. Dzhumagazieva [6], the author analysed in detail the criteria and aspects of environmental journalism in the context of the works of Kyrgyz authors and revealed their importance for effective coverage of environmental issues and promotion of sustainable development in the region. The work of M. Kizanlikli et al. [7] analysed environmental practices of hotels and their perception among customers. The authors presented an eco-labelling model for hotels in Kyrgyzstan to help identify sustainable hotels and facilitate choice for environmentally conscious customers. The study emphasizes the importance of sustainability in the hospitality industry and provides a practical tool to improve environmental performance and encourage responsible and sustainable practices in the Kyrgyz hotel industry.

Various aspects of handicraft tourism in Kyrgyzstan were investigated by Ch. Beksultanova et al. [8]. The work considered the unique features and potential of this type of traditional culture in the context of attracting tourist flows, and described the prospects for the development of handicraft tourism. J. Umuhoza et al. [9] have devoted their research to the study of issues related to the carrying capacity of mountain pastures in Central Asia on the example of Kyrgyzstan. The authors analysed the factors affecting the ability of pastures to feed animals and revealed the ways to maintain ecological sustainability and effective use of mountain pastures in the region.

Thus, taking into account the reviewed studies, this paper aimed to analyse traditional approaches to human interaction with the environment in Kyrgyzstan and China to identify the most environmentally friendly way to overcome the challenges of the current environmental crisis.

Materials and Methods

The following valid methods of theoretical research were used in writing this study: analysis, historical method, comparison, synthesis, systematization method, deduction, and classification. The historical method of research was aimed at collecting information about the traditional ecological culture of China and Kyrgyzstan from the point of view of different ecological and cultural features of these two countries. It was used to gather various information about the traditional ecological cultures of China and Kyrgyzstan: traditional ecological cultural ideas of Chinese Confucianism and Taoism, as well as data on the rich ecophilosophical wisdom contained in the traditional culture of Kyrgyzstan. The method of synthesis was used as an auxiliary method of scientific cognition, making it possible to combine a variety of historical and cultural data and identify common patterns in human

attitudes to nature, which contributed to a deeper understanding of issues related to environmental culture.

Using the method of comparison, the study compared the traditional ecological cultures of China and Kyrgyzstan. It revealed that similar aspects of the traditional environmental cultures of China and Kyrgyzstan include a deep respect for nature and an understanding of the importance of the balance between humans and the environment. It also revealed the difference in the formation of nature cults and religious beliefs, which in turn influenced the lifestyles and environmental practices in both countries, and was an important factor in understanding the similarities and differences between the traditional ecological cultures of China and Kyrgyzstan. In particular, the reverence and love of life in the Chinese Confucian concept of environmental ethics, and the cult of nature and animals in Kyrgyz environmental culture. The application of the method of analysis allowed arguing and structuring the process of development and formation in the traditional ecological cultures of China and Kyrgyzstan, which helped us to better understand their fundamental principles and values in relation to nature and the environment.

Using the systematization method, this paper examined the interrelationships between the different components of traditional ecological cultures in China and Kyrgyzstan, and their influence on people's behaviour and attitudes towards the environment. This method allowed presenting the system of beliefs, values, and practices that make up the environmental culture in each country and to identify the key elements that determine attitudes towards nature and natural resources. This systematic approach allowed for a deeper understanding of how traditional environmental cultures were formed in China and Kyrgyzstan, and how they interact with socio-cultural and natural conditions to influence environmental decisions and actions. Using the classification method, this paper categorized different aspects of traditional environmental culture in China and Kyrgyzstan. This method allowed organizing the many factors influencing attitudes towards nature in both countries into groups according to the following characteristics: historical background, natural environment, social customs and religious beliefs. In this way, it was possible to qualitatively structure the data and identify the leading elements in the context of traditional ecological cultures. Using the method of deduction, it was concluded that, according to the principles of traditional ecological culture in China and Kyrgyzstan, man should follow the inherent laws of nature to coexist with it, and on this basis build a community of life between man and nature.

Results and Discussion

Traditional ecological culture of China

In the long history of China's existence, people have developed a reverence and love for nature. Chinese civilization dates back more than 5000 years and has accumulated extensive ecological wisdom and a rich traditional ecological culture. The concept of "the unity of heaven and mankind" is central to ancient Chinese philosophical thought, and its meaning is that it advocates the harmonious coexistence of man and nature, based on the development of all things in accordance with the laws

of nature. It stresses the necessity of following the objective laws of nature, adhering to the behaviour in accordance with the laws of nature, and carrying out production activities based on the ideas of preserving the natural world. Chinese philosophical literature asserts the existence of the objective law of nature and emphasizes the need for humans to follow these laws so that all things can co-exist and flourish with the natural world [10].

In the Rhetorical Biography of the Zhouyi series, there is a famous saying, "The great virtue of heaven and earth is birth". The meaning of this saying is that the greatest virtue of heaven and earth is to provide human beings with an environment in which all kinds of life activities can have their own corner and live in peace. Such is the salutation of life in ancient Chinese philosophy. Zhouyi also says, "To be born is to be light" [11], which refers to the eternity of creation and new birth, the long flow of the water of life which is in constant change. Lao Tzu's famous saying: "Man follows the law of the earth, the earth follows the law of the sky, the sky follows the law of the Tao, and the Tao follows the law of nature" conveys the meaningful thought of Chinese philosophy on the rational utilization and rational development of natural resources, which shows the vision of Chinese philosophy in understanding the relationship between man and the world [12]. Taking "man" as the point of reference, this view links all things to the survival, development, and even destiny of man, believing that man and all heavenly and earthly things possess a coherence of nature and a commonality of emotions and constitute a natural commonality of destiny.

The environmental ethics of traditional Chinese culture is based on reverence and benevolent attitude towards nature, which is particularly characteristic of Confucianism [13]. Equal respect for all living things reflects the ecological and ethical values of traditional culture, i.e. "life" is the law of nature and "benevolence" is the correct methodology for treating all living things. The philosophers of the Song and Ming dynasties took "unity of all things" as the basic annotation of the idea of benevolence, and C. Zhang put forward the concept of "harmony between people and things" [14]. These classical traditional ecological concepts are still the sources of traditional wisdom and ecological philosophy. Taoist thought is also imbued with deep humanistic ideas of respecting life and caring for all living beings. As the Taoist spokesman Lao Tzu said, "The Tao is great, the sky is great, the earth is great, and man is also great." Man is only a part of the natural world between heaven, earth and nature, and as the highest form of life, he should undertake the natural mission of caring for life and maintaining the ecological balance of nature [12].

Traditional Chinese eco-philosophy talks a lot about reducing consumption and conserving resources. While advocating the rational use and development of natural resources, one should, however, do so in a measured manner, consider the scale, conserve nature, and avoid irrational behaviour. As Confucius said, "Fishing but not scribbling, the eagle does not shoot in the night", Zeng Zi said that "trees should be cut in time and animals should be killed in time", and Guan Zhong, a famous prime minister during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, formulated the idea of "forbidding the use of nature in time", emphasizing that natural resources should not be

exploited at will, but in accordance with the order of the times and the laws of nature should be respected in this regard [15]. Xunzi said that natural logging should be done in a way that “does not interrupt its growth or cut it off” and if one disregards the laws of nature and logs immoderately, one will be punished by nature. Mozza also advocated “moderation in use” and emphasized the importance of combining moderation in use and love. He believed that the best way to care for the future generation is to conserve the resources of today and leave them for future generations [16]. This ancient Chinese ecological wisdom emphasizes the need to make wise use of nature, focusing on solving the problem of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature.

Traditional ecological culture of Kyrgyzstan

Since ancient times, Kyrgyzstan has been known as the “land of pastures” where nomadic people lived. People living here have a natural affection for nature and a sense of reverence for it. In traditional Kyrgyz culture, nature has been honoured and revered since ancient times. The Kyrgyz are a nomadic people and their survival is closely linked to nature. In the eyes of herders, the alternation of sun and moon, wind and rain, thunder and lightning, the change of seasons and other natural phenomena had sacred significance, and all of them were objects of their worship. The Kyrgyz believed that the clan to which they belonged was inevitably connected with certain creations of nature. Fire for the Kyrgyz is a symbol of purity, beauty, and freedom. The primitive ancestors of the Kyrgyz believed that fire could wash away all uncleanness and even banish the devil, who is the most sacred power of the sky, symbolizing the darkness of disease and the antithesis of light. That is why the Kyrgyz in ancient times honoured cremation, they believed that fire could cleanse the sins of the living so that the soul returned to purity. As it can be seen, the Kyrgyz respect, and worship fire, fire guides people to new movements and changes, which is the dialectic of life.

Star worship is one of the most common types of nature worship. In the context of Kyrgyzstan, this indicates that the Kyrgyz had a practice of observing natural phenomena, i.e. astrolatry was developed. The Kyrgyz believed that the stars and people had a close relationship: the stars personified the soul of the deceased, which did not want to leave, and even sent good wishes and thoughts to loved ones. Stars were seen as guardians and symbols of life. Wind and waves had their own meaning – they pointed the way home, symbolized hope and blessing. The Kyrgyz also believed in the “Father of Mountains and Mother of Waters” symbols of mountains and water, which have extraordinary power, causing worship and admiration. Mountains are majestic and beautiful, and water is majestic and secretive, nourishing life and man, but at the same time it is difficult and dangerous and has destructive power. The Kyrgyz believed that water was the source of life, the material basis for the survival of all things in the world. Water was considered pure and holy, symbolizing salvation and rebirth, as the Kyrgyz believed that it could drive away diseases and bring people back to life. At the same time, water is mysterious and uncontrollable, it symbolized death and danger. This suggests that there are

mysterious forces in nature and that man both honours and fears nature.

The Kyrgyz are deeply influenced by “animism”, everything natural is honoured by them, and animals are of exceptional importance to the Kyrgyz, who are mainly engaged in animal husbandry. Their beliefs and attitude to animals formed a unique totem culture with religious colouring. On the territory of ancient Kyrgyzstan, many written evidences of beliefs in the form of totem animals – lions, tigers, snow leopards, dogs, wolves, golden eagles and others – have been preserved. In some clan tribes, animals used as totems were not allowed to be killed, they were considered the primordial beginning of the clan, and people demonstrated their connection with this clan and their descent from it by organizing a number of sacrificial rituals. In the primitive religious system of the Kyrgyz, animals and plants were depicted and honoured as images of various gods.

Since the Kyrgyz were traditionally a nomadic people, the horse was of exceptional importance to them and was extremely revered. The horse was symbolized with a deity and was a symbol of divine luck and mysterious power. For example, in the Kyrgyz heroic epic *Manas*, the horse, known as “the wings of the warrior”, appears to the hero in the process of performing great feats [17]. The deer is also one of the most important totems of the Kyrgyz people, often perceived as the mother of nature, symbolizing holiness, good luck and maternal love. At the same time, the deer personifies beauty, kindness, aura, supernatural abilities and other symbols. The epic poem “*Manas*” says: “*Manas* said that to eat the flesh of a deer means to eat the flesh of his ancestors, and that he would not eat the flesh of a deer even if he dies”. In Ch. Aitmatov’s *The White Steamboat* [18], the culminating work of the famous Kyrgyz writer, thinker and humanist, it is stated that “the deer in the hearts of people is a creature like ancestors, and to kill the deer is to kill the ancestors of humanity, to interrupt the life force of the continuation of life”. This indicates that in the Kyrgyz view, animals are endowed with the power of God and good expectations.

The wolf is another of the revered animals among the Kyrgyz, who admired its resourcefulness, bravery and perseverance, and respected its mother, who not only loves her children but also cares for other people’s cubs. In the cultural concept of the Kyrgyz people, man and nature are identical in the essence of life, and there is an innate mutual understanding and emotional exchange between man and animals. Man has no right to harm other living beings and deprive them of their right to life; man is not supreme, but man and animals are in one home on Earth, and they must love and cherish nature. Otherwise, the harm done by man to nature will eventually turn against himself, so living in harmony with nature is the only right way out for the survival and development of human society.

Comparison of traditional ecological culture of two countries

When generalizing the traditional ecological culture of China and Kyrgyzstan, it can be seen that the traditional ecological culture of these countries has common features in historical background, natural environment, social customs, religious beliefs and other aspects, but it also has its own significant features. The ancient Chinese

civilization developed as an agrarian society, whose survival and development depended to a large extent on agriculture. This close connection to the land and dependence on natural resources led to a deep understanding of seasonal patterns, sustainable agricultural practices and the need to maintain ecological balance for long-term survival.

The historical background to the formation of Kyrgyzstan’s traditional ecological culture stems from a nomadic way of life, engaged in the movement of livestock (mainly horses, sheep, and yaks) between seasonal pastures in the mountains and valleys. This has formed the Kyrgyz people’s close connection with nature and a deep understanding of the environment and its resources. China and Kyrgyzstan have unique natural environments due to their geographical location, topography, climate, and ecosystems. China is a country with a large land area. Its landscapes are diverse: mountains, plateaus, deserts, forests, grasslands and coastal zones. Kyrgyzstan, on the other hand, is a small landlocked country with a predominantly mountainous terrain, occupying a significant part of the Tien Shan and Pamir mountain ranges. China is a vast country with diverse ecosystems. It is home to a wide range of flora and fauna, including iconic species such as the giant panda, golden monkey and Siberian tiger. Kyrgyzstan’s biodiversity stems from its mountainous terrain and includes species such as the snow leopard, Marco Polo sheep and many bird species. These differences in the natural environments of China and Kyrgyzstan have led to the formation of their respective traditional ecological cultures.

The ecological culture of ancient China was influenced by many social practices, among them feng shui, an ancient Chinese practice concerned with the placement of structures and objects in relation to their natural surroundings in order to harmonize energy (qi). It involves the careful study of landscapes, bodies of water and topography in order to create spaces that are favourable to humans and the environment. The five element theory is a fundamental concept in traditional Chinese thought and represents the five basic elements: wood, fire, earth, gold, and water. These elements are believed to interact and influence the natural world, including climate, seasons, and ecosystems. There is also Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), which is related to traditional Chinese environmental culture. Traditional Chinese medicine, including herbalism and acupuncture, is deeply rooted in an ecological understanding of the relationship between the human body and nature. It emphasizes the balance of yin and yang and the five elements in the body, and uses natural resources for healing.

The nomadic and semi-nomadic lifestyle of the Kyrgyz has left a great imprint on the self-awareness of the Kyrgyz, who have a great respect for the land and the natural environment. They have developed norms and customs that ensure the rational use of natural resources, avoiding overgrazing and allowing pastures to recover in cycles. Since water is a valuable resource in the mountainous

regions of Kyrgyzstan, the Kyrgyz have developed traditional water management practices, including the construction of irrigation canals and reservoirs, to ensure efficient use of water in agriculture. Traditional Kyrgyz holidays and celebrations often include rituals and ceremonies expressing gratitude to nature and blessings for future prosperity. Festivals such as the New Year – Nooruz and various equestrian games and competitions demonstrate the importance of nature and animals in their cultural identity. The yurt is a portable traditional Kyrgyz dwelling, ideal for a nomadic lifestyle and reflecting their harmonious relationship with nature. The use of natural materials in the construction of yurts reflects their close relationship with the environment.

Traditional Chinese environmental culture has been shaped for thousands of years by Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and other indigenous beliefs and practices that promote environmental stewardship and sustainable development. The ancient Chinese often worshipped nature gods and honoured their ancestors. Rituals and sacrifices were aimed at honouring the spirit of the earth and ensuring harmony between humans and nature. Throughout Chinese history, the traditional ecological world-view of “the unity of heaven and mankind” has embodied the basic principles of traditional Chinese ecological culture, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all things in the universe and the importance of living in harmony with nature to ensure ecological balance and social prosperity. Although modernization and urbanization have led to significant changes in China, elements of traditional ecological culture continue to influence the Chinese way of life and are increasingly recognized as key to addressing contemporary environmental issues.

The ancient Kyrgyz held shamanistic and animistic beliefs. They believed in spirits living in natural elements such as mountains, rivers, and trees. These beliefs influenced their customs related to nature worship, conservation, and rituals aimed at maintaining ecological balance. Kyrgyz people have historically lived in harmony with the land, adapting their practices to the changing seasons and environmental conditions. They apply sustainable development practices, moving livestock to different pastures according to seasonal changes to ensure sustainable grazing. Despite the impact of modernization and urbanization, elements of Kyrgyzstan’s traditional ecological culture remain an integral part of the identity and lifestyle of a good deal of Kyrgyz. As the country faces contemporary environmental challenges such as climate change, land degradation and water scarcity, the importance of preserving traditional ecological knowledge and integrating it into modern conservation and sustainable development strategies is increasingly recognized.

To summarize briefly, it is possible to include all the aspects of the environmental culture of the two countries discussed and add to them the resource use practices and environmental customs that are part of all other aspects to form Table 1.

Table 1. Common and different attitudes of the Kyrgyz and Chinese towards the environment

Aspect	Common features	Significant Features
Historical background	Both regions have ancient cultural roots and a rich history of interaction with nature	China and Kyrgyzstan have different historical periods and influences from neighbouring civilizations

Natural environment	Both regions are rich in natural resources, including mountains, rivers, and lakes	The topography and climate of China and Kyrgyzstan are different, which affects local ecosystems
Social customs	Both countries have a tradition of respect for nature and natural objects	China and Kyrgyzstan have different social norms and practices regarding nature
Religious Beliefs	Both regions have elements of Buddhism and totemism that emphasize harmony with nature	Religious practices and beliefs vary and include local traditions
Resource Use Practices	China and Kyrgyzstan have historical methods of agriculture and natural resource use	Farming and animal husbandry methods vary due to climatic conditions
Ecological customs	Both regions have a tradition of conserving natural resources and nature	Specific customs and rituals vary by region

Source: compiled by the author.

Comparison of the results

The role and importance of restoration technologies in the context of the development of ecological civilization in China have been discussed in the study by L. Zhen et al. [19]. Ecological civilization is a concept that calls for the harmonious coexistence of man and nature and sustainable development, which required the authors to consider issues related to the application of modern technologies and methods to restore and protect vulnerable ecosystems, including the restoration of forests, aquatic ecosystems, and measures to conserve biodiversity and rare species. As China is actively working to build an ecological civilization and attaches great importance to environmental protection, this article analysed the existing experience and effectiveness of such technologies in the context of vulnerable ecosystems. In addition, this study provided an analysis of the restoration methods used, project examples, and described practical recommendations for further efforts in nature conservation and ecological civilization development. The reviewed work emphasized the importance of using modern methods and technologies to restore and protect vulnerable ecosystems. This is an important step towards harmonious co-existence of man and nature. Compared to the traditional ecological culture of Kyrgyzstan, where more traditional methods of nature protection are common, China's approach places greater emphasis on modern technology and innovation to achieve environmental sustainability and conservation.

The basics of cultural ecology, a field of study that examines the interaction between culture and the environment, was covered in the work of M.O. Sutton and E.N. Anderson [20], and included key concepts and methods used in cultural ecology, as well as different cultural practices and their impact on the environment. The authors analysed how different cultures interact with nature, how they shape their environmental beliefs and practices, and how these interactions affect the environment, looking at a variety of aspects including traditional knowledge, religious and mythological beliefs, farming practices, resource use, and more. The results of the study showed that cultural ecology reveals the importance of cultural factors in shaping attitudes towards the environment and sustainable use of natural resources. This study confirms that a nation's culture shapes its perceptions of nature, and that changes in cultural practices can affect the environment.

In the research paper by P. Huang and L. Westman [21] investigated issues related to the "Ecological Civilization" policy in China, its impact on the environment and the

people of this region. The article analysed the emotional and political aspects of the implementation of the Ecological Civilization policy in Xinjiang and what reactions it elicits in the population, including issues related to land use, water resources, and impacts on local communities. The researchers concluded that Ecological Civilization in China is a concept that seeks to strike a balance between economic interests and environmental protection. However, it can also generate unrest and debate, especially in the context of regions where compliance with environmental standards can have social and economic consequences. The reviewed study emphasizes the importance of balancing economic interests and environmental protection, which also correlates with the concept of respectful and thrifty treatment of natural resources presented in this paper.

In her research paper, G. Salimjan [22] investigated the impact of the Chinese policy of "Ecological Civilization" on the Xinjiang region. The article emphasized that the Chinese approach to ecology in the region is accompanied not only by environmental improvement, but also by negative social and political consequences. The author highlighted that during the implementation of "Ecological Civilization" in Xinjiang, "natural violence" occurred in the form of discrimination and repression against local ethnic minorities. The article also analysed the emotional component of this policy, highlighting the impact it had on the local population. The author found that these policies provoke negative affective reactions, which ultimately oppresses the local population and creates tensions in the region. This article has provided a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between environmental policies and social processes in Xinjiang, as well as highlighting aspects that often remain hidden or underestimated, because despite positive environmental changes, the application of these policies can cause negative social consequences, including discrimination and repression of local minorities. In the context of this study, this article adds to the understanding of sociocultural and social issues related to ecological civilization in China and can serve as an additional dimension in analysing the influence of environmental and social factors on the development of ecological culture.

The Decade of Ecosystem Restoration approved by the United Nations calls for global efforts to restore damaged ecosystems. Ecosystem restoration strategies and approaches to support the United Nations Decade for Ecosystem Restoration have been reviewed and described in the article by J. Aronson et al. [23]. The paper presented

six different strategies and methods that can be used to achieve the goals of the Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, focusing on efforts in the areas of efficiency, traditional ecological knowledge, cooperation, popularization of science, education, and research. The authors have provided detailed analyses of these restoration strategies, examples of successful projects, and recommendations for states and international and national organizations to implement these strategies to achieve the goals of ecosystem restoration and support sustainable development. This work has provided information on existing aspects of sustainability and ecology, and has added to the global picture of ecosystem restoration approaches by enriching it with information on international efforts and strategies.

In their research paper, D. Ludwig and P. Macnaghten [24] investigated the role of traditional ecological knowledge in managing innovation in a responsible and equitable manner. The scholars drew attention to the fact that traditional ecological knowledge accumulated by local communities over generations can be a valuable source of information for designing and implementing innovations that not only foster economic growth, but also promote citizens' rights, maintain local community interests and preserve environmental sustainability. The paper proposed a framework that helped to integrate traditional ecological knowledge into innovation management processes. This framework centred on responsible and equitable innovation implementation, taking into account socio-cultural and environmental aspects. This study confirmed the assumption of the importance of preserving traditional ecological knowledge in China and Kyrgyzstan and its significance in balanced development and environmental sustainability.

The reviewed studies draw attention to the role of ecological civilization and the importance of balanced development that takes into account environmental interests. All works emphasized the growing interest in this concept from different perspectives: political, scientific, social and economic.

Conclusions

This study analysed the traditional ecological cultures of China and Kyrgyzstan and compared their similarities and differences. Considering the traditional ecological culture of China, in the process of the study it was found that Confucian and Taoist philosophical traditions are deeply rooted in this country. These philosophical traditions emphasize respect for the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, and call for respect for natural rhythms and balance. Confucian ethics emphasize the importance of human relationships with the environment, including respect for elders and younger generations, as well as natural gods and spirits, while Taoist philosophy aims for harmony with nature and emphasizes the importance of inner peace and balance.

In contrast to the traditional ecological culture of China, in Kyrgyzstan, shamanistic and animistic beliefs have been

more influential in shaping cult practices related to nature. Shamanism inspired the veneration of natural objects such as mountains, rivers, and trees as gods and spirits with whom one should maintain a harmonious relationship through rituals and ceremonies. Animism, in turn, suggested that many animals were nature spirits or possessed sacred qualities. In this cultural environment, animals such as horses, wolves, deer, and others were honoured, which played an important role in religious and ritual practices. That is, in traditional Kyrgyz culture, nature is seen as an animate actor with whom it is important to maintain interaction and mutual understanding. These philosophical and religious traditions through the ages have influenced the behaviour and practices of interaction with the environment in each country, and emphasize the importance of respecting nature and seeking ecological balance.

The purpose of this study was to examine traditional approaches to human interaction with the environment in Kyrgyzstan and China to identify the most ecological way to overcome the challenges of the current environmental crisis. The results of the study revealed a deep cultural heritage, shared values of "respect for nature", "caring for nature", and "honouring nature" in the traditional environmental cultures of both countries. However, the study also highlighted that due to differences in historical context, natural environment, domestic customs and religious beliefs, the traditional environmental cultures of Kyrgyzstan and China have their own characteristics. The analyses contributed to a better understanding of traditional approaches to sustainable interaction with nature, taking into account the rich cultural heritage and contemporary challenges. The study also emphasized the importance of creating a "human-nature" community where environmental conservation and sustainable development become a priority. This approach can serve as a model for the development of environmental and sustainable practices in the modern world, including a greater understanding of and respect for nature. The comparisons made helped to gain a deeper understanding of the environmental context and history of each culture, which can contribute to the dissemination and preservation of cultural values related to environmental culture.

It is recommended that further research should focus on the development of universal public programmes and strategies aimed at harmonious coexistence of man and nature, joint solutions to environmental problems and sustainable progress of humankind.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Традиційна екологічна культура Китаю та Киргизстану як фундаментальна основа розвитку сучасної екологічної цивілізації

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Анотація

Актуальність. Актуальність даного дослідження обумовлена погіршенням екологічної ситуації як у світі, так і в Киргизстані та Китаї.

Мета. Метою статті є дослідження традиційних екологічних культур цих країн та їх порівняння з метою виявлення найбільш стійкого і гармонійного способу співіснування суспільства і природи.

Методологія. Провідним методом дослідження даної проблеми було обрано порівняння, що дозволило всебічно зіставити всі ключові елементи традиційних екологічних культур Киргизстану та Китаю. Також були використані: аналіз, історичний метод, синтез, метод систематизації, дедукції та класифікації.

Результати. У дослідженні розкрито сутність традиційних екологічних культур Китаю та Киргизстану, їх історичне коріння та джерела формування, проаналізовано внесок класичних китайських філософів у розвиток філософії благоговіння перед природою, наведено цитати з їхніх творів, що відображають прагнення до балансу та гармонії у використанні природних ресурсів. У дослідженні також розкрито історичні передумови та символи, що уособлюють повагу до природи у киргизів, виявлено вплив шаманізму та анімізму на екологічну культуру цього народу. Описано символічні аспекти, пов'язані з тваринами, та розкрито їхнє значення для давніх киргизів. Детальне порівняння традиційних екологічних культур Китаю та Киргизстану включало аналіз історичних, природних, релігійних та соціальних факторів, що дозволило виявити ключові особливості та принципи, які лежать в основі гармонійних відносин між людиною та природою в цих країнах.

Висновки. Матеріали дослідження можуть бути інтегровані в сучасну екологічну політику та практику, оскільки містять цінні знання для сприяння сталому екологічному майбутньому суспільства.

Ключові слова: стале майбутнє; античні знання і філософія; порівняльні дослідження; навколишнє середовище; природа і суспільство.