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**LANGUAGE PLATFORMS AND ENERGY COOPERATION:  
COMPARATIVE FUNCTIONS OF CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES IN  
CENTRAL ASIA AND NORTH AFRICA**

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**Abstract.** First introduced in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has come to encompass a wide range of activities, from large-scale infrastructure projects and expanding trade relations to cultural and educational exchange across Eurasia and Africa. Although these dimensions are well covered in the existing literature, the more routine and practical roles of Confucius Institutes (CIs) - especially where energy cooperation intersects with vocationally oriented language training - remain comparatively underexplored. Drawing on a qualitative comparative design, this study examines the distribution and everyday operation of Confucius Institutes in Central Asia and North Africa using institutional materials, official trade statistics, and recent academic work.

Rather than following trade volumes in any straightforward way, the presence and orientation of Confucius Institutes appear to be shaped by a combination of host-country policy priorities, labour-market needs, and the sectoral profile of ongoing energy and infrastructure projects. In Central Asia, CIs are commonly embedded in pragmatic language training linked to employment in oil, gas, and transport-related fields. In North Africa, Confucius Institutes are frequently involved in cultural programming and business-oriented events. Much of this activity takes place alongside language teaching and includes public lectures, exchanges, and occasional discussion of sustainability-related topics.

The comparison points to differences in how similar institutional arrangements are taken up in different regional contexts. In some settings, Confucius Institutes are closely connected to local development needs and routine forms of cooperation, while in others they remain more loosely associated with cultural exchange activities.

**Keywords:** Confucius Institutes, Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Central Asia, North Africa, language education, energy projects, regional comparison, vocational training

### **Introduction**

Since 2013, the BRI has widened China's engagement in Central Asia and North Africa. Most writing follows the headline infrastructure - pipelines, rail links and ports. Much less is said about the educational institutions that develop alongside these projects, and cross-regional comparisons of Confucius Institutes

are still uncommon. That gap makes their role in preparing people for energy-related work easy to overlook.

Confucius Institutes (CIs) belong to this less visible layer of the BRI. Most are hosted by foreign universities, where they organise Mandarin classes, stage cultural activities and, in some cases, help arrange academic exchanges or joint degree programmes. Over the past two decades, they have grown into a network of more than 500 branches worldwide [1], and are frequently described in general terms as instruments of China's cultural diplomacy. That label captures part of what they do, but it does not tell the whole story. In a number of host countries, CIs are also woven into more practical agendas of technical training and professional skills development, helping to prepare local workers for projects associated with the BRI, particularly in energy and infrastructure.

Central Asia (CA) and North Africa (NA) offer two particularly useful settings in which to explore these dynamics. In CA, countries such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan either share land borders with China or are linked to it through overland transport and energy corridors. They hold substantial oil, gas and mineral reserves and host a number of flagships BRI projects, including the China-Central Asia gas pipeline. In North Africa, countries such as Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria sit astride major maritime routes linking Asia, Europe and Africa. Rather than relying solely on hydrocarbons, their economies draw on a broader mix of activities, including tourism, agriculture, manufacturing and a range of service industries. Placing North Africa alongside Central Asia, therefore, makes it possible to see how a similar institutional form - the Confucius Institute - can assume quite different functions in contrasting regional settings.

Comparing these two regions can clarify what shapes the presence and activities of CIs. Do institutes emerge mainly where trade with China has already reached high levels? Or are they more strongly associated with particularly close political relationships? A third possibility is that CIs follow more specific labour-market needs, for example when governments require Chinese-language training to staff joint projects. In light of existing research on the BRI and China's soft power, this article addresses three related questions: (1) how Confucius Institutes are distributed across Central Asia and North Africa; (2) whether there is a relationship between the number of Confucius Institutes and bilateral trade volumes with China; and (3) how Confucius Institutes contribute to energy cooperation and human capital development in the two regions.

Previous studies on the Belt and Road Initiative have largely focused on how infrastructure, energy, and trade corridors reshape regional political economy, with particular attention to pipelines and overland connectivity in Central Asia [2 - 3]. Official country briefs likewise emphasize education and cultural exchange as part of China's sustained engagement with the region alongside energy and transport cooperation [4]. In North Africa, policy-oriented analyses note a widening economic footprint that extends beyond hydrocarbons

into manufacturing and services [5]. In parallel, scholarship on soft power and public diplomacy treats Confucius Institutes as institutional channels of cultural outreach [6 - 7], while critical work highlights governance tensions and sensitivities around external funding [8 - 9].

Even so, genuinely interregional comparisons of Confucius Institute functions remain limited in the existing literature [10]. Du's discussion of the "Chinese + Vocational Skills" programme suggests that when institutes are embedded in vocational or technical settings, their activities tend to become more industry-oriented and skills-based than when they operate mainly as general cultural centres [11]. Building on this insight, the present study brings together evidence on CI distribution, trade magnitudes, and sectoral energy cooperation to compare Central Asia and North Africa, linking material projects under the BRI with the everyday work of language and cultural platforms [6 - 10].

### **Description of Materials and Methods**

**Data sources.** CI locations come from the CI Worldwide database [1], checked against institute websites and opening notices. Trade totals are reported on PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs country pages (2024-2025) [4]. Press reporting is used only as background (including re-export discussion), not for disaggregated figures.

Bilateral trade data come primarily from country pages on the website of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, complemented by press reports that summarize recent trends. For 2024, these materials report trade volumes of USD 43.8 billion with Kazakhstan, USD 22.7 billion with Kyrgyzstan, USD 13.8 billion with Uzbekistan, USD 10.6 billion with Turkmenistan and roughly USD 3.9 billion with Tajikistan (the latter figure is based on 2023 data) [4]. In the same year, China's trade with Egypt is said to have reached about USD 17.4 billion, with Morocco USD 9.0 billion and with Tunisia roughly USD 2.5-3.0 billion [4].

For additional context on recent trade dynamics and sectoral narratives, the article draws on press summaries that synthesise developments in China-Central Asia economic relations, especially the role of transit and re-export trade in shaping headline figures. Such sources do not provide detailed disaggregated statistics, but they help to contextualise official totals and identify recurring mechanisms discussed in the analysis [12].

**Methodology.** This article adopts a comparative case-study design. Central Asia and North Africa are treated as two regional clusters that are both deeply involved in the Belt and Road Initiative, yet differ in their historical legacies, institutional settings and patterns of engagement with China. Rather than aiming for exhaustive country coverage, the analysis focuses on a small number of cases in each region that are relatively well documented and that host Confucius Institutes. The goal is to identify recurring patterns and plausible mechanisms, not to produce definitive rankings or precise causal estimates.

The empirical discussion draws on three broad types of material. First,

data on the distribution of Confucius Institutes and classrooms are taken from publicly available compilations and institutional websites. Second, basic figures on trade volumes, energy cooperation and sectoral ties are assembled from official Chinese and host-country statistics, complemented by reports from international organizations. Third, the article engages with a growing body of secondary scholarship on the BRI, soft power and China's educational and cultural diplomacy in different world regions. These sources are read together to build an interpretive picture of how language and cultural platforms intersect with material forms of cooperation.

Inevitably, the empirical material is uneven: some countries are covered in much greater detail than others, and in places the available information is patchy or out of date. As a result, the argument should be read as exploratory and illustrative. It offers a structured set of observations and hypotheses about regional variation in the functions of Confucius Institutes, rather than a final verdict on their impact.

## Results

**Distribution of Confucius Institutes.** The current map of Confucius Institutes in Central Asia and North Africa reflects both the timing of China's engagement and the way host governments have set their policy priorities. In Central Asia, thirteen CIs are found in four states: five in Kazakhstan, four in Kyrgyzstan and two each in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan [1]. They are largely concentrated in cities that play a central role in energy and infrastructure cooperation with China. In Kazakhstan, for example, CIs are hosted by Al-Farabi Kazakh National University in Almaty, K. Zhubanov Aktobe State University in Aktobe, L. N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University in Astana, and several other institutions in different provinces. These universities train students who may go on to work in oil and gas companies, pipeline operations, logistics, or customs services. In Kyrgyzstan, CIs are similarly attached to universities in Bishkek, Osh and Jalal-Abad, providing relatively broad territorial coverage within the country.

North Africa has a smaller network. Egypt's four CIs are located at Ain Shams University, Suez Canal University, Cairo University and Alexandria University. Morocco hosts three institutes at Abdelmalek Essaadi University, Hassan II University and Mohammed V University. Tunisia opened its first CI at the University of Carthage in 2019, and Algeria's institute at the University of Algiers II is listed in the 2024 compilations used for this study [1]. Rather than dispersing CIs across many secondary cities, North African governments have opted for a more selective approach, concentrating institutes in a limited number of high-profile universities that function as symbolic "gateways" for cultural and academic exchange. One possible reading is that the demand for highly specialized, technical Mandarin training is lower in NA than in CA, where energy projects are more labour-intensive and require a larger pool of bilingual staff.

Central Asia has more Confucius Institutes (13 across four countries) and, in many cases, a stronger focus on practical Mandarin for work in energy, transport and related sectors. North Africa has fewer institutes (nine across four countries) and tends to prioritise cultural activities and general business communication, with vocational elements appearing less consistently. This provides the backdrop for the discussion that follows.

Figure 1 highlights a mismatch between CI counts and headline indicators of economic weight. Although Egypt’s economy is larger in absolute terms, China’s trade with Kazakhstan was substantially higher in 2024 (USD 43.8 billion versus USD 17.4 billion with Egypt) [4]. This implies that CI distribution is driven less by total trade volumes and more by host-government strategies and the demand for Chinese-language skills linked to particular cooperation projects.

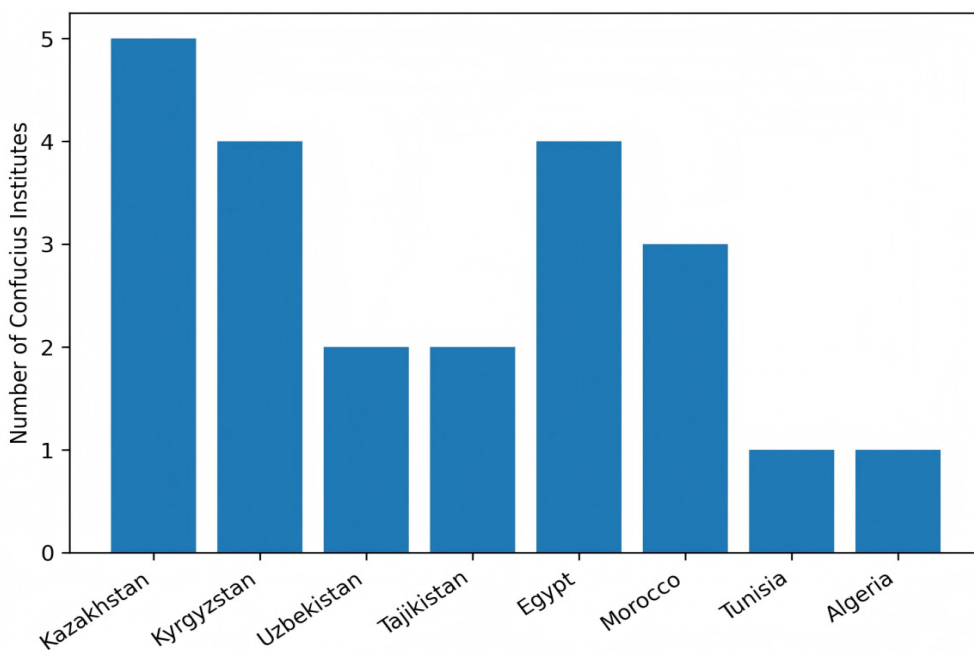


Figure 1. Distribution of Confucius Institutes in Central Asia and North Africa  
Source: CI Worldwide database, country totals counted by the author [1]

Trade magnitudes and sectoral patterns. The trade figures underline a basic point: economic engagement with China does not rise or fall in step with the number of Confucius Institutes (CIs) in a given country. In 2024 (except Tajikistan, for which the latest available figure is for 2023), China’s trade reached USD 43.8 billion with Kazakhstan, USD 22.7 billion with Kyrgyzstan, USD 13.8 billion with Uzbekistan, USD 10.6 billion with Turkmenistan, and roughly USD 3.9 billion with Tajikistan [4]. Turkmenistan is included here to reflect the regional trade structure, even though the CI distribution analysis focuses on the

Central Asian states covered in the institute dataset. Seen in context, the figures point to an established level of trade between China and Central Asia.

Trade with China differs among Central Asian countries. These differences can be seen in both exports and imports, which vary from country to country. Factors such as natural resources and existing industrial capacity play a role in shaping these trade flows.

In Kazakhstan, exports to China mainly include crude oil, natural gas, and uranium. These products account for a large share of total exports. Imports from China show a different picture and are largely made up of machinery, vehicles, and consumer goods. As a result, energy products dominate Kazakhstan's exports, while manufactured goods form the bulk of imports. This reflects the current structure of the economy and the way trade with China has developed over time.

Trade involving Kyrgyzstan shows a different pattern. Official statistics largely reflect re-export activity, as Chinese goods enter the country and then move onward to Russia and other neighbouring markets. Although Kyrgyzstan's domestic market is relatively small, these trade flows mean that the country is involved in the movement of goods across the region [12].

Central Asian trade with China varies. Kazakhstan mostly exports oil, gas and uranium and imports machinery and consumer goods. Kyrgyzstan's totals are lifted by re-exports, while Uzbekistan is more mixed. Turkmenistan is shaped mainly by pipeline gas, and Tajikistan trades on a smaller scale, exporting aluminium and cotton and importing construction and industrial equipment.

When the focus shifts to North Africa, trade appears more limited in scale. For 2024, China-Egypt trade is reported at around USD 17.4 billion, China-Morocco trade at about USD 9.0 billion and China-Tunisia trade at roughly USD 2.5-3.0 billion [4]. Egypt imports mainly mechanical and electrical products, vehicles and everyday consumer goods from China, and exports agricultural products and crude oil. Morocco's imports from China include manufacturing equipment and other industrial inputs, while its exports to China consist largely of phosphates and agricultural produce. In Tunisia, trade is shaped above all by Chinese exports of machinery and electronics, with Tunisian exports focusing on textiles and other light consumer goods. Overall, these patterns confirm that North Africa's trade with China is smaller in volume and, on the whole, more imbalanced than that of Central Asia.

Dynamics over time also differ between the two regions. In Central Asia, the recent increase has been driven by rising Chinese exports of machinery, electronics and consumer goods, alongside continued imports of natural resources. In Kyrgyzstan, rapid growth in transit trade has created demand for bilingual customs brokers and logistics staff - a niche that some CI graduates have been able to fill [12]. In North Africa, Morocco's trade with China nearly doubled between 2016 and 2024, supported by joint ventures in phosphate processing and automotive manufacturing. Tunisia's slower trade growth, by contrast, is partly related to the absence of large-scale energy projects. Overall,

these developments suggest that trade volumes and CI presence may reinforce each other in some cases, but the relationship is mediated by sectoral structures, labour-market requirements and broader political considerations rather than by simple numerical correlations.

Figure 2 reinforces this point by showing that strong bilateral trade ties with China do not necessarily translate into a denser Confucius Institute presence.

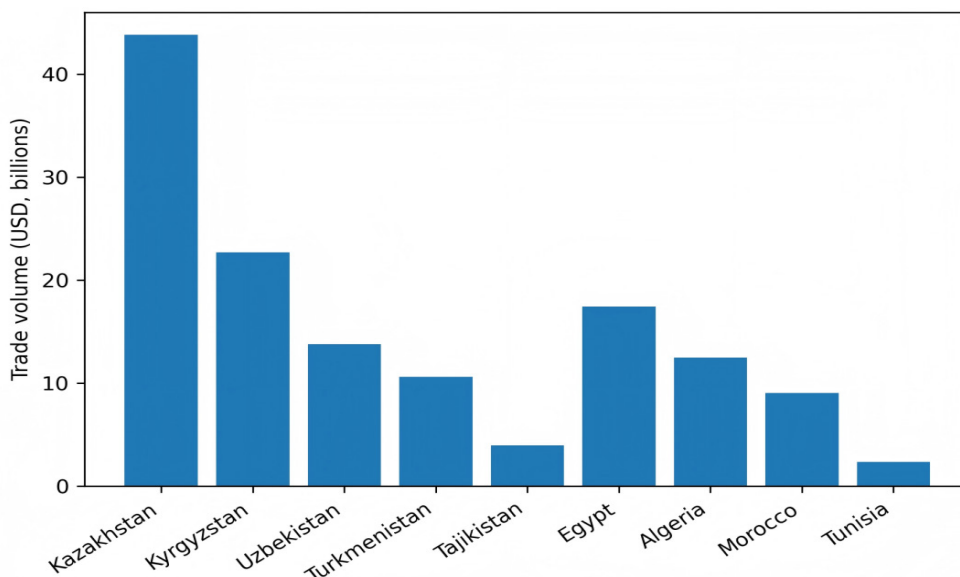


Figure 2. Bilateral Trade Volume between China and Selected Countries, 2024  
Source: PRC MFA; CI Worldwide; author's compilation [1 - 4].

## Discussion

Functional roles of Confucius Institutes. The everyday work of Confucius Institutes is closely entangled with local cooperation projects in both regions, but the emphasis differs. In Central Asia, large Chinese investments in pipelines, mines and hydropower plants have created a steady demand for local employees who can communicate with Chinese engineers and managers. Many CIs in the region therefore go beyond basic conversation classes. They offer modules that introduce technical vocabulary, workplace routines and safety procedures, often in cooperation with engineering faculties or partner firms. In several universities, internships and short placements with Chinese companies are advertised directly through the CI, which can make the transition from language study to work placements more straightforward for students. This mixture of language training and vocational preparation helps to explain why Central Asia hosts a relatively dense network of CIs despite its small and scattered population.

In North Africa, energy cooperation is present, but Confucius Institutes are more often used as broad cultural and educational hubs. They offer Mandarin for

students, officials and business audiences, and they also run public events and short courses linked to tourism, transport and general business communication. They are less often tied directly to specific energy projects.

Social and educational impacts. Beyond their immediate links to trade and investment, CIs play a role in the formation of human-capital networks. At the 2018 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, Chinese authorities announced expanded scholarship and training schemes for African youth. In some cases, Confucius Institutes act as a local point of contact: they share information, help with applications, and offer short pre-departure language and culture sessions.

In Central Asia, scholarship schemes often focus on engineering, logistics and related fields connected to pipelines, mining and transport corridors. Graduates who return to their home countries bring back both technical expertise and Mandarin skills that fit local labour-market needs. In North Africa, scholarship portfolios increasingly feature business administration, IT and environmental studies. Alumni frequently note that the benefits extend far beyond language: living and studying in China tends to strengthen adaptability, intercultural competence and project-management skills, which are valuable for managing joint ventures or coordinating supply chains.

Domestic education reforms have reinforced these dynamics. In several Central Asian universities, Mandarin has been made compulsory for particular majors in international relations, engineering or logistics, and some institutions now offer joint degree programmes that combine Chinese language study with law, IT or transport management. In this environment, students are inclined to treat Mandarin less as a purely cultural add-on and more as a practical skill that can improve their chances of working in state-owned enterprises, customs offices or government agencies.

In North Africa, the work of Confucius Institutes is no longer confined to university campuses. Many now cooperate with secondary schools and vocational colleges, offering elective Mandarin classes and short training modules. Summer camps, language contests, and cultural festivals attract wide participation and make learning Mandarin appear as a normal part of formal education, rather than a marginal or hobby-based activity.

Confucius Institutes (CIs) have increasingly become part of wider public conversation about modernisation and where culture fits within it.

In much of Central Asia, Mandarin is commonly approached in practical terms. Many parents treat it as a useful skill that may improve future job prospects, particularly in economies where Chinese-backed infrastructure projects and investment play a visible role. Media reports tend to emphasise scholarships, certification routes, and job-related opportunities associated with Mandarin learning.

In North Africa, views on Confucius Institutes are not uniform and differ across countries and contexts. In some settings, CIs are discussed in connection with education, training, and possible career opportunities, while in others they

are approached with greater caution. Public discussions sometimes refer to issues of cultural influence and to questions about the place of local or regional languages and traditions over time. These topics appear alongside more practical considerations and are mentioned as part of broader conversations, rather than being framed solely in terms of immediate economic outcomes.

Confucius Institutes are often linked to local partners, including universities and cultural organisations, in the delivery of routine activities. Collaboration with universities, museums, artists, and cultural organisations has become a regular part of their activities. Programmes are often put together jointly and may take the form of exhibitions, workshops, public talks, or small festivals. In practice, these activities tend to bring Chinese cultural practices into the same space as local traditions, encouraging interaction and shared interpretation rather than a one-directional presentation of culture.

At the same time, energy transition and green cooperation have become more salient within Belt and Road engagement. As attention has broadened from fossil fuels to low-carbon initiatives, geographic conditions increasingly shape what is feasible: Central Asia's steppe and highland environments support wind and solar projects linked to cross-border infrastructure, while North Africa's desert irradiance and coastal connectivity favour utility-scale renewables and grid-related development. Sustainability themes have therefore begun to appear more routinely in CI programming, though in different ways-skills-oriented modules and technical-university cooperation in Central Asia, and public-facing forums (conferences, lectures, workshops) in North Africa. Overall, the comparison points to a functional divergence: Central Asian CIs are more tightly embedded in vocational and technical contexts aligned with resource and infrastructure projects, whereas North African CIs more often operate as cultural-educational platforms with stronger emphasis on services, business communication, and increasingly "green" themes. The implication is practical: educational diplomacy is most effective when CI programming is fitted to local priorities rather than applied as a uniform template.

### **Conclusion**

This article has compared the roles and functions of Confucius Institutes in Central Asia and North Africa. On the figures available at the time of writing - 2024 trade totals as reported on PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs country pages [4] and CI location counts from CI Worldwide [1] - Central Asia has more institutes than North Africa (13 compared with 9), even though some North African economies - Egypt, for instance - are larger overall. Rather than simply mirroring trade volumes, the spread of CIs seems to follow labour-market demands and host-government strategies. In Central Asia, institutes are closely linked to energy cooperation, providing vocationally oriented language training and facilitating technical communication around pipelines, mining and infrastructure projects. In North Africa, CIs act mainly as cultural intermediaries but have begun to

move into business, digital and green themes as cooperation with China becomes more diversified. Trade data point to persistent asymmetries: Central Asian states export oil and gas to China and import manufactured goods, while many North African countries import considerably more from China than they export [4]. The evidence therefore suggests that cultural-diplomacy instruments are more effective when they are adjusted to the economic structures and political settings of each region.

The findings have implications for how Confucius Institute (CI) programmes are organised in different regional settings. In Central Asia, links between Mandarin instruction and vocational or technical education appear especially relevant, given the close connection between language demand and employment in energy, logistics, and related sectors. Where institutes, universities, and employers are able to work more closely together, the transition from classroom learning to project-based work tends to be more intelligible for students, rather than being left to individual initiative alone.

In North Africa, the broader labour market is often reflected in CI activities, which may include business communication, basic digital skills and, in some cases, sustainability-related topics, although this varies by country. This exploratory article focuses on Central Asia and North Africa. Trade totals are for 2024; other public sources were accessed up to January 2026. Further research could extend the comparison and use longer-term observation and interviews to see how CI work shifts as cooperation moves from project delivery to routine operation.

Viewed from this angle, differences can be noted across settings in the way educational cooperation is organised. Practices are not the same in all contexts and vary depending on local conditions and on how institutions such as Confucius Institutes are used in specific situations. In some cases, connections between education, economic activity, and sustainability take shape through locally defined arrangements, rather than through a single or standardised model applied across regions.

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## **ОРТАЛЫҚ АЗИЯ МЕН СОЛТҮСТІК АФРИКАДАҒЫ КОНФУЦИЙ ИНСТИТУТТАРЫНЫҢ САЛЫСТЫРМАЛЫ ФУНКЦИЯЛАРЫ: ТІЛДІК ПЛАТФОРМАЛАР ЖӘНЕ ЭНЕРГЕТИКАЛЫҚ ЫНТЫМАҚТАСТЫҚ**

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**Аңдатпа.** 2013 жылы алғаш рет ұсынылған «Бір белдеу, бір жол» бастамасы (BRI) уақыт өте келе Еуразия мен Африкадағы ауқымды инфрақұрылымдық жобаларды, сауда байланыстарының кеңеюін, сондай-ақ мәдени және білім беру алмасуларын қамтитын көпқырлы саясаттық шеңберге айналды. Бұл бағыттар әдебиетте кеңінен қарастырылғанымен, Конфуций институттарының (КИ) күнделікті және практикалық қызметі - әсіресе энергия саласындағы ынтымақтастық кәсіптік бағыттағы тілдік даярлықпен тоғысатын жағдайларда - салыстырмалы түрде жеткіліксіз зерттелген. Сапалық салыстырмалы зерттеу дизайнына сүйене отырып, мақала Орталық Азия мен Солтүстік Африкадағы Конфуций институттарының таралуын және күнделікті жұмыс істеу ерекшеліктерін институционалдық материалдар, ресми сауда статистикасы және соңғы академиялық еңбектер негізінде талдайды.

Сауда көлемдерімен тікелей әрі бірмәнді байланыс байқала бермейтін жағдайда, КИ-лардың болуы мен бағдарламалық бағыты көбіне қабылдаушы елдердің саяси басымдықтары, еңбек нарығының сұранысы және іске асырылып жатқан энергия мен инфрақұрылым жобаларының салалық құрылымымен айқындалатын сияқты. Орталық Азияда КИ-лар мұнай-газ және көлік салаларына қатысты жұмыспен қамтуға бағдарланған прагматикалық тілдік оқытуға жиірек кіріктіріледі. Солтүстік Африкада Конфуций институттары көбіне мәдени бағдарламаларға және бизнеске бағдарланған іс-шараларға тартылып, бұл қызмет тіл үйретумен қатар қоғамдық дәрістерді, алмасуларды және кейде орнықтылыққа қатысты тақырыптарды талқылауды да қамтиды.

Жүргізілген салыстыру ұқсас институционалдық үлгінің әр өңірде әртүрлі тәсілдермен қабылданып, әртүрлі функциялар атқаратынын көрсетеді. Кейбір жағдайларда Конфуций институттары жергілікті даму қажеттіліктерімен және ынтымақтастықтың күнделікті формаларымен тығыз байланысса, өзге контексттерде олар мәдени алмасу сипатындағы қызметпен неғұрлым босаң байланыста қалады.

**Тірек сөздер:** Конфуций институттары, «Бір белдеу, бір жол» бастамасы (BRI), Орталық Азия, Солтүстік Африка, тілдік білім беру, энергия жобалары, өңірлік салыстыру, кәсіптік даярлық

## **ЯЗЫКОВЫЕ ПЛАТФОРМЫ И ЭНЕРГЕТИЧЕСКОЕ СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВО: СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЕ ФУНКЦИИ ИНСТИТУТОВ КОНФУЦИЯ В ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ И СЕВЕРНОЙ АФРИКЕ**

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**Аннотация.** Впервые представленная в 2013 г., инициатива «Пояс и путь» (BRI) со временем стала охватывать широкий спектр направлений - от масштабных инфраструктурных проектов и расширения торговых связей до культурного и образовательного обмена в Евразии и Африке. Хотя эти измерения достаточно подробно отражены в существующей литературе, более рутинные и практические роли Институтов Конфуция (ИК) - особенно в тех случаях, когда энергетическое сотрудничество пересекается с профессионально ориентированным языковым обучением - остаются сравнительно недостаточно изученными. Опираясь на качественный сравнительный дизайн, данное исследование анализирует распределение и повседневную деятельность Институтов Конфуция в Центральной Азии и Северной Африке на основе институциональных материалов, официальной торговой статистики и недавних академических работ.

Вместо того чтобы однозначно следовать за динамикой торговых

объёмов, присутствие и программная ориентация ИК, по-видимому, определяются сочетанием приоритетов политики принимающих государств, запросов рынка труда и отраслевого профиля реализуемых энергетических и инфраструктурных проектов. В Центральной Азии ИК нередко встроены в прикладную языковую подготовку, связанную с занятостью в нефтегазовой и транспортной сферах. В Северной Африке Институты Конфуция чаще вовлечены в культурные программы и мероприятия, ориентированные на деловые контакты. Такая активность, как правило, сопровождается языковым обучением и включает публичные лекции, обмены и эпизодическое обсуждение тем, связанных с устойчивым развитием.

Сопоставление показывает различия в том, как сходные институциональные механизмы реализуются в разных региональных контекстах. В одних случаях Институты Конфуция теснее соотносятся с локальными потребностями развития и повседневными формами сотрудничества, тогда как в других они остаются более слабо привязанными к практикам культурного обмена.

**Ключевые слова:** Институты Конфуция, инициатива «Пояс и путь» (BRI), Центральная Азия, Северная Африка, языковое образование, энергетические проекты, региональное сравнение, профессиональная подготовка

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