

## **KOKZHAR FAIR: HISTORY AND MODERNITY**

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### ***Abstract***

*The history of the Great Silk Road is an actual experience of mutually beneficial trade and peaceful cultural communication of the peoples of different countries. The Great Silk Road played the role of a link between countries of different civilizations and socio-economic systems. This huge system of caravan routes has existed for more than one and a half thousand years.*

*The Great Silk Road became a channel through which there was a constant exchange in the field of culture and art, knowledge and ideas, traditions and objects. It is known that not only the goods themselves, but also information about their production, were distributed along the Silk Road.*

*The scientific article presents a philosophical and cultural analysis of the interrelationships of cultures on the Silk Road, which ran through the famous Kokzhar fair.*

**Keywords:** *Silk Road, trade, architecture, culture, patriotism*

**JEL codes:** *N75, O14, F53, P33*

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### **1. Introduction**

As a result of the functioning of the Great Silk Road, for the first time in history, there was a tendency for cultures to converge in the process of intensive and regular world economic relations. A gradual unification of cultural components took place along the entire route of the Great Silk Road. Many researchers note that in the trade cities of Asia even developed the general features of the planning of temples, although they belonged to their own denominations. This rapprochement, however, was only a trend. Borrowing of cultural gains was limited. For example, such inventions: Chinese designations like typography and paper money did not become an object, even in Asian

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countries of the Silk Road close to China. Innovations in the socio-economic sphere were not adopted at all.

The Europeans showed much more active interest in the study of the countries of the East than the inhabitants of the countries of the East in Europe.

A characteristic feature of Kazakhstani society is polyapacity. The future of the country, its competitiveness, integrity are determined by such valuable components as readiness for mini-ethnic communication, tolerance for the national characteristics of various ethnic groups, respect for the cultural values of peoples living in different countries of the world, language tolerance, patriotism. These values are named as long-term priorities of the country in the message of the first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev in the Program "Kazakhstan - 2030".

Kazakh ethnos has a rich and unique cultural heritage, created by them in the process of historical development. Spiritual culture plays the role of guardian and translator of ethnic memory, allowing you to constantly reproduce the social experience of the ethnosocium and its spirituality.

Ethnic memory for a long time demanded in oblivion and itself remained only as part of social memory, which is a way of existence and functioning of any society and ethnic group, accumulating and successively transmitting material and spiritual values from generation to generation, from past to present.

Close intercultural contacts led to the creation of original works of art, in which the syncretism of Iranian, Chinese, Sogdian and Turkic cultural traditions was manifested. These elements are so closely intertwined that the researchers refer to the same phenomena to the western or, on the contrary, oriental, with equal reason, revealing what caused the appearance of wandering plots in the cultural peoples living along the whole Silk Road. It is also noteworthy that, despite the confessional differences, along the highways of the Great Silk Road.

It is also noteworthy that, despite the condissiotive differences, along the highways of the Great Silk Road, from Front Asia to East Asia, even general planning features of temple architecture are developed.

These words of the Kazakh people say: "There will be no winds without gusts, there will be no people without art. By watching the plants, know land; watching the swans, know the lake." In this regard, representatives of the clergy and other organizations are working hard to indicate the right way to stumble, so to speak, separating the wheat from the chaff. Today revived Kazakhstan has its centuries-old way of formation and development of architecture. Architectural art is a part of the history and life of all mankind; it makes it together with humanity. The purpose of architecture is the organization and implementation of human life and activity through the material structure.

Sacred places are the deep roots of our nation. Our ancestors defended the land with the powers of their hearts and souls. Thus, we are obliged to restore these names and to have the recognition, reconstruction of images of our history.

The architecture of Kazakhstan is a part of the general architecture, developed since the formation of many states, along with its natural and distinctive features.

Indeed, in Kazakhstan there are more than 25 thousand historical and cultural monuments of the ancient era, a variety of habitats of people of ancient times, menhirs, dolmens, mounds, paintings, burial grounds, mazars, mosques and other examples of architecture. From the VI century buildings are built (bath Taraz, etc.) with decorated ornaments on them. In subsequent years, the Kazakh national ornament in the cities of Otrar, Sauran, Sygynak showed its signature. For example, the dome Aisha Bibi is rich in geometric rhythm. Samples of ornaments of the local population were also used on the monuments of Khoja Ahmed Yassau. Thus, the developing art of ornament in VIII-IX centuries had its continuation in the arts of sarmats, kimaks, kipchaks and others; people who had been living on Kazakh lands. This is known in the work "History of arts and crafts of Kazakhstan" by .A. Margulan.

In the V-VII centuries the construction of stone was especially developed. According to old data, at this time stone-masons were special masters. This is evidenced by the monuments of fine art and various remains of various stone ornaments and monuments.

During this period, carpeting or women's jewelry made of bones and other decorative and applied arts were made. The architectural monument of IX-XII centuries of Kazakhstan, which has reached the present time, has the highest artistic value. Kozy Korpesh-Bayan Sulu in the East Kazakhstan region (IX-X centuries), burial ground - a wonderful monument that has been preserved since the Karluk era. In 1856 stone statues lying next to this ancient grave were written by Sh.Valikhanov. Mausoleum of Aisha-Bibi (XI-XII centuries) was built of burnt bricks. Patterns of burnt clay behind the wall are fully combined with the Kazakh national ornament. Such amazing and beautiful architectural monuments contributed to the development of the art in Kazakhstan.

In the XIV-XV centuries after the liberation from the Tatar-Mongol invasion, the former urban culture was restored and dynamically developed in Kazakhstan. The architectural art renewed. The construction of the Mausoleum of medieval poet, philosopher, Saint Khoja Ahmed Yassau began at the end of the XIV century in Turkestan (ancient Yassy). The mausoleum of Ahmed Yassau as a result of the development of medieval tradition was among the best examples of world architecture. Stone, stone floors, stone vault, masonry masts, making benches in the architectural art of the Kazakh people prove the ancient art of stone masters. To the list of such sacred places we may add Alashkhan in Karaganda region (XIIIc.) , Ahmet Yassau in Turkestan (XIV c.), Abat-Baytak in Aktobe (XIV), Sundet (XVII c.), Karasakal (XVIII) and others which o still require a lot of research.

In the manufacture of products from such items as gold, silver, horn, bone, people combine a variety of methods of decoration with precious stones, create fashionable products, and sometimes decorate them with gold, silver, bones, plastic, leather items. By working with stones such as marble, ceramic stone, white stone they used to make various sculptures and toys. Artisans widely used diamonds, brilliants, pearls, water stone, ruby, koktas, sparkling stone, stone. Kazakhs present a variety of subjects from gem stone: rings, earrings, pins, bracelets, decorations for saukele, warriors' wrist straps, pendants, takias etc. These stones were widely used in the decoration of the household products as well as men's and women's accessories. To add more, they were also used to decorate cultural places and were used as a special gift for winners in horse races. Likewise, they had been passed to generations as a heritage and were the main decoration for different cultural monuments and buildings. From the stone there were made writing utensils, stone jars, boxes, stands, sculptures.

Deed history of architecture is to reflect the history and trends of architecture of any country with the other historical events of the time, social construction and economic field.

By turning into permanent settlements in the valleys the places started to be rich in cultural palaces and other various, wonderful constructions.

Architects, builders along with experts of the great historians, writers, scientists, and artists made a huge contribution to the development of architecture and its recognition. Today we are working on how to raise our culture to a new level.

The fair Kokzhar (Oyil), which has become a unique monument of the Ancient Great Silk Way, has survived to this day without losing its impression.

Spiritual modernization is important to combine different poles of national consciousness. It is a platform of memory of the nation, which harmoniously combines the horizons of history, creation of today and bright future. I want every step to go with confidence to the future, making a solid core of further development of national traditions and customs, not interrupted since ancient times and rich history of my people. It did not seem vain that it said "Have a flag on the native land". Patriotism begins with a love of the land, where the umbilical cord pays off. Its scale is expanding and moving to the "home country". Mother land is where we are and were born, it is where you start crawling and make your first steps; it is where you lead your entire life. One can't live a life anywhere else without remembering and having his homeland at the bottom of his heart. Commitment in native land's culture, traditions and customs is one of the most important manifestations of true patriotism. Not only did our ancestors protect unusually vast territory, they protected the future of the nation, the future of our generation and us. Defending its every centimeter they left the land for us to inherit. What does the love for the native land mean, what is the essence of the spiritual modernization program as a whole? This involves large-scale local history work in the field of education, environmental improvement and improvement of settlements, restoration of historical

monuments and cultural objects at the local level. Every lowland and cliff, mountain and river of the native land has a history. There are many legends and stories related to them. Each region has great heroes whose names are preserved in the memory of the people. All this should be known to the younger generation. We must instill in the minds of the people the concept of national heritage places. Every nation, every civilization has common sites that every citizen of this nation knows. This is one of the main foundations of the spiritual tradition. We are a country with a vast land and a rich spiritual history. The vast territory of the great steppe, with spiritual sources, played different roles in history. But, people inhabiting this spiritual geographical zone lived as one on the vast territory. (Nazarbayev N.A.)

Space is the measure of all things, and time is the measure of all events. The history of the nation begins when the horizon is at the junction of space and time. It's not just an aphorism. In fact, if we look at the calendars of German, Italian or Indian peoples, they have the question that many of the great achievements in their history, spanning thousands of years, belong to the territories where these countries now live. This is the right approach to history. This way we are able to know our roots, learn our national history. In this regard, the History of Kazakhstan as a whole should be clear from the point of view of modern science, and but not with individual endings. This has all the necessary arguments as a proof. (<http://aikyn.kz>> 2018/11/21) Aktobe region is a region rich in cultural heritage, natural resources, having a huge economic and tourist potential. Once, the region was the center of Sarmat culture. Aktobe is the birthplace of the prominent khans, the brave warriors, great philosophers, poets, zhyrshy-zhyraus, famous writers, prominent scientists and poets of art.

The main advantage of the region - the geographical location is very convenient: at the junction of Europe and Asia. The Great Silk Way passed via the territory connecting various cities and states. Still it does... Currently, the region has highways, Railways from North to North, from West to East. The largest of them is the international transportation "Western Europe-Western China". Railway lines are located in all directions of the Eurasian continent. And the nature of Aktobe, located in a large area, is very picturesque. About a hundred rivers, lakes, springs, artificial seas, reservoirs are a wonderful gift of the nature. From the territory of the region it is possible to carry out an inventory of all minerals contained in the Mendeleev table. "Aktobe is the locomotive of the country's economy." Aktobe is a sacred place where unity and harmony are created. The population of the region reaches 850 thousand people. Representatives of more than a hundred nations and nationalities live here together. The region has a lot of attractions that give an unforgettable impression and amusement. Kazakhstan's unique and rare architecture monuments – the mausoleum of Abat Baytak, monument Eset Batyr, the ancient fair of Kokzhar, Oyil Mosque, etc. are the most attractive places to have a flow of tourists each year.

One of the largest shopping centers of West Kazakhstan region is Kokzhar fair in Oyil. The main provisions of the Kokzhar were approved by the Minister of internal Affairs of Russia on September 7, 1866. (Picture .1) Kokzhar was officially opened in the spring of 1867 in Kazbek district of the Ural region. About it in the explanatory note the Commission on preparation of the draft of rules of management of the Kazakh steppe noted: "for the first time with the permission of chiefs fair was opened in the spring of 1867 on the river Oyil in the Orenburg steppe. It imported goods worth about 250 thousand rubles, of which about 100 thousand rubles were sold and exchanged and up to 20 thousand different types of cattle were purchased... »

"Ural Military" newspaper (№31 from 1867) about the Oyil fair, opened in Kazbek in 1867: "the opening of the fair is very important for the Kazakhs. The fair will save the Kazakhs from people (mainly Tatars), who in the Kazakh steppes exchanged and sold their goods from Orenburg, Samara, Ural merchants". In 1869, the Oyil fair, which was opened in Kazbek in 1867, was transferred to the Barkyn cliffs near the Oyil fortress as a convenient place to ensure "safety, free movement of Russian merchants and fast and full sale of goods." Oyil fair was held in the buildings, which were located oppositely, the length of 400-500 meters. In this row there were the largest shopping buildings with about 30 shops alongside.

*Picture no. 1 Kokzhar fair, 1937 year*



The building of the fair of burnt bricks has survived to the present time. (picture.2 - 3) In 1870 for the position of Chairman of the Oyil trade fair was elected Mendybay Kumisbekuly. He held this position for more than 40 years. The fair had merchants from Orenburg, Sarytau, and Samara. Likewise, from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

A well-known scientist-traveler who explored the Western region of Kazakhstan P.S. Pallas, Falk, G. Georgi, P. I. Rychkov and others left in their notes a lot of information about trade routes and centers. Famous scientist Yermakhan Bekmakhanov, who studied the history of the Kazakh land, told about the opening of this fair: "for the first time in the order of the authorities was a good result of trade fair, which was opened in the spring of 1867 near the river Oyil in the Orenburg steppe." The first studies were conducted in 1973 and the passport of the monument was made.

On the state and prospects of the new Oyil fair at the Oyil fortress, adjutant general Kryzhanovsky wrote: "upon arrival at the Oyil fortress (May 20, 1870), I came to the fair, opened here on May 15. Due to the fact that the fair began to function since 1868 and in connection with last year's censuses, I noticed that a lot of people gathered at the fair this year. Only for the first 6 days more than 8 thousand men and women gathered at the fair. They brought to the fair a large number of sheep, horses, cattle, as well as skins, wool and other products made by the Kazakhs. I was surprised: at the fair I saw 44 Russian shops, which were open to meet the domestic needs of the Kazakhs. To learn more about the terms of trade at the fair, I looked around the shop, located in yurts, and asked all arriving traders about the progress of trade. All of them are happy with the fair, highlighted that the trade is booming, the Kazakhs buy a lot of goods for money, as well as exchange goods for livestock, wool and other products. At the beginning of the fair, Russian traders said that they brought 12 rubles of goods. But it was really reduced amount and it was said that they deliver many more products than that. The fair has a large area on the valley of the river Oyil, which is located 1.5 km from the fortress. Despite how many cattle were driven to the fair, pastures along the river are sufficient for grazing. Of course, we can believe that in the near future the fair will be launched in large numbers, at a reasonable price, that all counties of the Ural region have a large number of opportunities for Kazakhs to purchase the necessary items in very large quantities."

*Picture no. 2 Kokzhar fair, 2019 year*



With the opening of the Oyil fair, it became a very profitable shopping center for Russian merchants. In the years 1869-1874 Russian merchants at the Oyil fair sold various items in the amount of 746 889 rubles. The trade turnover of Russian merchants was growing at a very good pace every year. If in 1869 the fair was held the product of 6095 rubles, for the next two fairs in 1870, the trade turnover reached 52527 rubles. In 1871, the turnover increased by 2.5 times, and in 1872 the total volume sold by merchants increased by 4 times and amounted to 208,520 rubles. At the Oyil fair you can see that the pace of trade of Russian merchants developed especially. In the autumn of 1869, Russian merchants sold products of only 6,905 rubles to Kazakhs, and in 1873, at the spring fairs, the size of products sold by Russians increased to 147,730 rubles.

Oyil fair worked cooperatively with Gurev, Ural, Aktobe districts and the cities of Orenburg, Samara, Troisk. An official of the tsarist government, adjutant general N. Kryzhanovsky: "Kazakhs of three districts moved along the river Oyil and its tributaries. Their trade relations are closely connected with Uralsk, where they buy their cattle and buy the goods they need."

A.Polenov, The Doctor of Medicine, wrote in his work of „Trade and industrial roads in Bokey and the places bordering it" drew attention to the geographical position of the Oyil Fortress.:

"In the 218 km East of Uralsk is situated the fortress of Oyil. In the West and East about 200 kilometers has Temir fortress. Both settlements are the centers located on the other side of Ural and has a vital importance, as they are located along the shopping streets of Hua, Bukhara, Persia to Orenburg, Ilek and Ural, as well as annually held various fairs.

In his writings A.Polenov highlighted the advantages of the Oyil fair: "at the fair people gather a lot and actively trade. In particular, the trade in cattle was put on a good path, part of the purchased cattle is taken to the North-West from Ural and the depression to the North – Orenburg through the roads leading to these settlements."

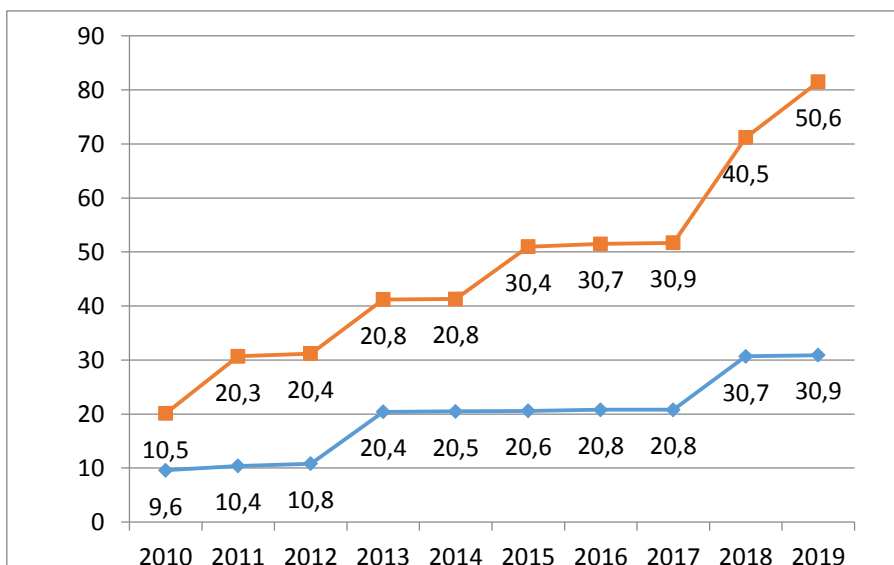
Kokzhar fair has become not only the largest trading place in Kazakhstan, but also one of the centers of art, which contributed to the development of Kazakh art. The fair was a great influence on the development of creativity of poets, zhyraus, who lived then, as well as a special place in the performance of the spiritual needs of the common people. Kerderi Abubakir, a poet wrote his poems based on the fair and accurately describes the life of the fair.

Kyzyl Turdauly was one of the brightest performers of the time who presented all the colorfulness of the fair in his poems beautifully. His song "Sarah Iek", "Kogazhai", "Zhangak" were the most beloved music to the ears. Kyzyl's "Kamshyger" was the favourite song to sing for the fair comers. Also, Abis Asan Kaigy, the great philosopher of nogai nation wrote and sang about the fair in his poems.

Before the Soviet Union, according to the Aktobe regional archival documents, 200 mosques served for the local people until 1917. Under the Soviet government, the clergy



were repressed; the domes of mosques were destroyed, turned into warehouses and premises. Most of the 200 mosques were demolished and only a few survived. Their attractions are the mosques of Aktobe and Oyl. It is known that the Great Silk Way with a length of more than 7000 km crossed the Kazakh land. Since Kokzhar is directly connected to the way there is no value for word descriptions of Asan Kaigy. The history of the construction of one of the oldest mosques in Aktobe region, the Oyl mosque, is connected with the trade and colonial policy of tsarist Russia. One of the mosques, built in the middle of 19th century, and became the main center for people without losing its value is the Oyl mosque. In the history of the construction of the mosque Oyl are shown three different years. These are: 1863, 1893, and 1912. Based on the evidences let us conclude the accurate date: if we look at the data from 1893, “to meet the requests of the merchants of the trade fair, the basement was built of burnt bricks and the woods were delivered from Orenburg by camel carts in 1893.” (Mosques of Aktobe region, 2000, p. 168) This fact is repeated in other works as well. "The history of the names", published in 2007 in Aktobe: „it began to build in 1893. The Foundation was laid with a wild stone, on a stone of red brick, on a cart from Orenburg. Iztleuov Sagidolla, the first Imam, is a literate person who speaks Arabic, Persian and Russian. After him was Hazret Hassan. In the 30s of the twentieth century, the religious features of the mosque were destroyed, turned into a house of Drama Theater, technical and economic warehouse. At the end of the twentieth century, that is, in 1999 it was renovated and restored.



- Visitors to Oiyil mosque
- People who know about Kokzhar fair.

## Discussion

The Great Silk Road influenced not only the fusion of art by masters of fine arts, architecture and sculpture, but also contributed to the formation of the first originals of the mobile folk theater.

So, for example, the Great Silk Road ends in Byzantium, where the East and the West merge together. At the festivities in Constantinople, clowns, dancers, acrobats of all stripes performed before the people. In 1161, by order of the emperor, representatives of all famous peoples of the world in their national costumes came to the square and showed their art. Together with caravans, loaded goods, art people and singers constantly wandered throughout Eurasia. They demonstrated their art both before the Sassanian Iranian shahs, at the weddings of Sogdian farmers, at the reception of the Umayyad caliphs, and at the feasts of the rulers of Turan.

The Great Silk Road favorably acted upon the cultural exchange between peoples of folklore styles and contents. These epic phenomena are reflected in other art forms. In most parts of Eurasia, cultural artifacts based on Turkish epics were spread.

In 1866, on the bank of the Ob River, a silver bucket was found depicting the struggle of two riders: you can see from the pile of hair that they are from Turkic tribes, and one of them is man and the other is woman. Analyzing the drawing, we came to the conclusion that the motive was taken from the book *Korkyt ata*, namely from the ballad about *Bamsa-Beyrek*. G.Potanin, who was seriously engaged in studying the commonality and the wandering of epic culture subjects, came to the conclusion that Eastern epics had a great influence on Western epics.

According to the mythological structure, the Turkish fairy tales are related to the tales of other nations, which proves the common humanity in the development of culture and continuity. Fairy tales, in the main, tell about the awesome force. about fantastic characters. A person has not yet fully distinguished in the objective world the ideal concepts from the subject, his ideas. The beauty of consciousness is cognized from the visual side, the truth is cognized by comparing and supplementing the basic qualities. For example, Levi-Strauss spoke about the sequence and similarity of the characters of world culture. And such a character as Cyclops is found not only in Greek legends, but also in the legends of Central Asia. Since man was everywhere in a state of eternal struggle with nature.

About this critic and cultural critic Z. Serikkaliyev wrote: "In ancient times, artistic culture proved the superiority of man over nature and beasts. Recall the famous legend of Orpheus, based on the harmonious symmetry of the feelings of the Greeks with the world of nature. Beautiful sounds of song with languor listen to the river, forest and fields. The descendants of Apollo and Klion, with sweet songs, enchanting melodies, moved huge rocks and pacified wild animals. The theme of the glorification of the organizing abilities of man in the world of nature is becoming more and more widespread and becomes the

main direction of artistic creativity of the era of Hellas. Later, the culture of Hellenism in the II century BC. left a legacy of the acropolis of Pergamum.

This is an immortal monument of the greatness of human skill, praising the selfless struggle of man against the elements of nature.

The theme of opposition to the great gods, giants, lasted a long time. For a long time, art has depicted the element of nature, insuperable forces, terrible monsters and strange animals. For victory over the mysteries of nature before humanity lay whole epochs.

*Thanks.* Great help in researching and writing articles and information about the Uil Mosque and the Kokzhar Fair was made by the Uil Central Library and the Uil Art Museum named after Bersiyev. We express our deep gratitude to the S. Baishev Aktobe Scientific Universal Library.

## **Conclusion**

The Kokzhar fair, located within the borders of the Urals, the Guryev and Temir districts of the former Urals region and the Aktyubinsk district of the Turgai region, became the largest socio-political and economic center of Western Kazakhstan in the last quarter of the 19th century.

The Kokzhar fair as a special type of trade in the second half of the XIX century had a positive impact on the development of Western Kazakhstan, especially the economy.

The Kokzhar fair played an important role not only in trade, but also in sustainable economic cooperation with the neighboring countries of Russia, Khiva and Bukhara. Tashkent merchants said about this: "The final rapprochement with the peoples of our region largely depends on the development of our trade relations, along with the development of trade other relations began. Along with the exchange of goods, we will discuss various issues."

The Kokzhar fair had a definite influence on the development of trade relations in the Ural, Guryev, Temir districts of the Urals region, Aktyubinsk and Irgiz districts of the Turgai region. The Kokzhar Fair became the center that promoted the popularization of folk art and culture in Western Kazakhstan. Trade at the Kokzhar Fair, in turn, contributed to solving the most important social problems within the country.

The Great Silk Road is geographically favorable, that is, the country's location in the center of the Eurasian continent contributed to the emergence in antiquity of transit "corridors" between various states and civilizations.

The steppe belt linked the civilizations of China, Indian, Persian, Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Slavic. During the reign of the Turks of Central Eurasia, the Great Silk Road reached the point of prosperity and contributed to the development of the

economy and the development of culture on an international scale. Since our era, these land roads have become truly the Great Silk Road.

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