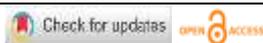


## Problems of Development of The Great Silk Road in The Geopolitical Region of Central Asia

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This article examines the challenges and opportunities involved in revitalizing the Great Silk Road within the geopolitical context of Central Asia, focusing on its potential to enhance regional connectivity, economic development, and cultural exchange. **Method:** Employing a qualitative historical and geopolitical analysis, the study synthesizes archival records, policy documents, and international cooperation initiatives, such as UNESCO programs and the TRACECA corridor, to assess the strategic significance of Silk Road restoration. **Results:** Findings reveal that despite Central Asia's central role in the historic Silk Road network, modern geopolitical constraints – especially limited access to global maritime routes – impede regional integration. However, recent infrastructure projects, including the Tejen-Serahs-Mashhad railway and the Andijan-Kashgar route, alongside coordinated multilateral efforts, demonstrate practical steps toward reinvigorating trade and diplomacy. **Novelty:** The article contributes a comprehensive, multi-dimensional perspective by bridging historical insights with contemporary political developments, highlighting Uzbekistan's pivotal role in connecting continents through strategic policy and infrastructure. This integrated approach advances understanding of the Silk Road's revival as a catalyst for international tourism, regional cooperation, and global trade, offering valuable implications for scholars and policymakers engaged in Central Asian geopolitics and economic strategy.

## INTRODUCTION

While many are familiar with the Silk Road, few possess a comprehensive understanding of its significance. The Silk Road is a vast network of trade routes that has existed for over 2000 years, linking the West and the East. The Ancient Silk Road evokes numerous beautiful images: lavish royal halls adorned in opulence, camel caravans crossing expansive deserts, and merchants negotiating in bustling, vibrant bazaars. Envision the scenario, and you can nearly perceive the fragrance, observe the dust, and sense the zephyr. The Silk Road, spanning from Italy to China and several locations in between, underwent continuous evolution, captivating travellers and intertwining the lives of diverse populations. Various civilisations, cultures, and faiths have been influenced by the events occurring along this route. While there is no conclusive definition of what constitutes the Silk Road or its participants, fundamental Asia is fundamental to its essence [1].

The issue of transport communications holds significant importance in the geopolitical landscape of the Central Asian region. The region's limited access to global

maritime routes presents numerous challenges for international trade and commercial interactions [2].

From this perspective, the mutual collaboration among the countries in the region is fundamental for addressing issues in this area. Historically, several trade routes have influenced the economic, political, spiritual, and cultural aspects of societies. The most renowned and extensive of them is the Great Silk Road [3].

This route linked the nations of the Asian continent from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, encompassing the Mediterranean and the Far East. It was not merely a road, but also a bridge linking the East and the West [4].

The 20th century is recorded as a period abundant in significant political and geopolitical occurrences. This century witnessed unparalleled alterations in the global political landscape. The populations of Central Asia are swiftly engaging in global integration processes [5].

This situation is not only a historical necessity, but also demonstrates that the region is a historical, economic, and political force of world significance. All the achievements made today in culture and other areas are the result of the interaction of peoples [6].

The significance of the Great Silk Road in these relations was unparalleled. This road functioned as a conduit linking the populations of China, India, Central Asia, the Central and Near East, and the Mediterranean during the early Middle Ages. Consequently, the revitalisation of the Great Silk Road holds significant relevance not only for the nations of Central Asia but also for the global community [7].

## RESEARCH METHOD

The methodology employed in this article is based on a qualitative historical and geopolitical analysis, using a document-based approach to examine the evolution, challenges, and revival initiatives of the Great Silk Road in Central Asia. The research draws primarily from archival records, official government documents, UNESCO reports, and international agreements that reflect both the historical legacy and modern geopolitical strategies concerning the Silk Road [8].

By analyzing specific case studies—such as the establishment of the TRACECA corridor, the Tejen-Serahs-Mashhad railway, and various presidential decrees on tourism development in Uzbekistan—the study integrates a contextual understanding of the road's strategic significance [9].

The author employs content analysis to interpret the implications of regional and international cooperation efforts, focusing on the economic, political, and cultural aspects of Silk Road restoration. Emphasis is placed on reviewing policy documents, international conference outcomes, and institutional activities (e.g., MITSIAI), which are critically assessed to evaluate their impact on regional integration and infrastructural development [10].

The research does not rely on statistical tools or primary survey data, instead utilizing interpretive methods to draw inferences from historical trends, institutional

engagements, and regional development policies. The methodology is designed to reveal patterns of international engagement, strategic positioning of Central Asian states, and Uzbekistan's specific role in these transformations. The overall approach enables a comprehensive understanding of the Silk Road's revival as a multidimensional project, integrating heritage preservation with modern connectivity initiatives [11].

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In light of the unparalleled significance of the Great Silk Road in global history, UNESCO has initiated a program titled "The Great Silk Road - a Road of Dialogue." This program aims to illustrate that both warfare and commercial contacts significantly influenced the cultural interactions among global populations, while also emphasizing the preservation and protection of historical monuments and tales along this route [5].

To achieve these goals, several expeditions and seminars have been organized. Among the eleven expeditions conducted, the following ones are of particular importance: In the footsteps of Marco Polo, Sea, Through the Republics of Central Asia, Journey to the Culture of Nomads, The Great Silk Road in Europe. Also, many scientific and practical international conferences were held [12].

Moreover, research institutes dedicated to the Great Silk Road have been founded in several nations, including China, India, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, and Japan. The Institute for the Study of Central Asia (MITSIAI) was established in Uzbekistan under the auspices of UNESCO. A team of its scientists is investigating the history of the Silk Road. The concluding conference on the history of the Great Silk Road occurred in Paris in 1997. An exhibition of novel discoveries was showcased at the event [13].

In May 1993, a summit convened in Brussels at the behest of the European Commission, with leaders from Central Asia, the Caucasus, and European nations. The gathering aimed to address the integration of autonomous Central Asian and Caucasian republics with Europe and the global community. The establishment of TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia) was discussed during the summit in Brussels. This constituted the initial pragmatic measure for the revival of the Great Silk Road. An accord was executed about economic collaboration between Central Asia and several nations [14].

The matter of constructing the Tejen-Serahs-Mashhad railway was addressed. On September 8, 1998, Islam Karimov attended the Great Silk Road Conference in Azerbaijan and declared that Uzbekistan would engage in the construction of the Andijan-Osh-Irkishtom-Kashgar and Bukhara-Sarakhs-Mashhad-Tehran roadways, in addition to the railway project. These highways are unequivocally an extension of the Great Silk Road routes and will substantially enhance our republic's external contacts with the global community [15].

## CONCLUSION

**Fundamental Finding :** This study demonstrates that the presidential decree issued on June 2, 1995, significantly contributed to revitalizing the Great Silk Road as a

strategic international tourism corridor, positioning Uzbekistan as a key player in the restoration and promotion of cultural heritage and tourism development. **Implication** : The findings imply that government-led initiatives and policy frameworks are critical in fostering international cooperation, attracting foreign visitors, and stimulating economic growth through sustainable tourism along historic trade routes. **Limitation** : However, the study is limited by its focus on policy analysis without extensive empirical data on tourism outcomes, which may restrict the understanding of the decree's direct impact on tourism dynamics and local communities. **Future Research** : Future research should incorporate quantitative assessments of tourism flows, socio-economic benefits, and challenges faced by stakeholders, as well as comparative studies with other countries along the Silk Road to develop comprehensive strategies for sustainable tourism development.

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