

History of Study of the Sogdian Diaspora at the Greet Silk Road

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ABSTRACT: A lot of monographs and articles have been written about Sogdians on the Great Silk Road, devoted to the problem of development of the Great Silk Road itself and functioning, the nature of goods transported along it in different eras, diplomatic and cultural contacts, cities on its routes, and the history of the Sogdian diaspora on it etc. Nevertheless, the problems of periodization of the history of the Great Silk Road, it's scientific discovery and the history of studying by scientists in the second half of the 19th and 20th centuries, the revival of the significance of the Great Silk Road at the end of the 20th century's related issues were studied in historical and historiographic literature of the 20th century mostly fragmentary.

KEYWORDS: Great Silk Road, Uzbekistan, China, West, Sogdians, Hotan, Central Asia, Samarkand, Sogdian diaspora, India.

I. INTRODUCTION

Individual studies related to this topic touched upon these problems mainly within the framework of oriental studies, or concerned specific regions (for example, East Turkestan). Despite the fact that the Great Silk Road must be considered as a historical, socio-economic and cultural phenomenon, that has not only regional, but also global significance. The question of periodization of the history of the Great Silk Road as a whole and its study in the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as about the prospects of his revival in particular but in the aggregate was not raised. The material accumulated by historical science made it possible to approach differentially the coverage of the role of individual regional centers in the implementation of trade contacts, to reveal the assortment of goods in demand, and to specify some of the problems associated with the directions of trade communications. In our opinion, the issue of the role of the Great Silk Road in the cultural interaction of the peoples of Eurasia is less studied.

And the problem of its importance in the establishment and functioning of the structure of global interaction in the era of late antiquity and throughout the Middle Ages, the structure that encompassed civilizations, nomadic peoples and tribes from Europe to China, from Hindustan to the Urals and Siberia, remains practically unlighted.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

There was also no integrated research related to the prospects of the revival of the Great Silk Road, in general, and international cooperation in its cultural and scientific renaissance, in particular.

All available scientific literature on the history of the Great Silk Road represents a wide variety of opinions and methodological approaches to the study of this problem. In the process of studying and analyzing scientific literature, the author considered it is possible to subdivide them into four main groups: *a) studies of the colonial period; b) research of the Soviet era; c) works written after Uzbekistan gained independence; d) foreign historiography.*

In the studies of the Imperial-era, the ideological scheme of the civilization mission of the Russian Empire in Asia is clearly traced. The works of this time represent the initial stage of historical understanding of the important problems associated with the history of the Great Silk Road, in particular, cities and urban culture on its routes. In most of the works of this group, factual material prevails over its theoretical understanding.

III. DISCUSSION

Many of the works of that time were mostly journalistic, popular science, informational rather than scientific research, which also determined the state of historical and graphic thought. From a special historiographic perspective, questions of studying the Great Silk Road were not developed at that time. They were covered, mainly fragmentarily, from a general historical perspective.

In this group, the works of N.S. Lykoshin [1], V.A. Obrucheva, V.V. Bartold, I.V. Mushketov, in which an attempt was made to make a brief historiographical review, but it was greatly come down to a simple mention of the works devoted to certain issues related to the study of the distant past of the peoples of Central Asia, without their proper scientific and historiographic assessment.

The accumulation and systematization of historiographic knowledge is observed in the historical literature of the Soviet period. However, the historiography of this period was characterized by the official assignment of conceptual assessments and conclusions, the priority of ideology, which was clearly reflected, first of all, in the works devoted to the contribution of some Western scholars (for example, S. Gedin [2]), interpreted by "ideological enemies", into the study of the Great Silk the way. At the same time, a number of historians and researchers managed to deviate in their works to a certain extent from orientation toward a party-class approach, artificially fitting history to given scholastic schemes.

Soviet-era studies, which include diverse fields of work, also contain rich information of evidential material that has not lost its historical value up to date. Among these studies, it is necessary to highlight the fundamental works devoted to the history of East Turkestan in antiquity and the early Middle Ages and the history of East Turkestan in relationship with Central Asia [3] They include the history of the study of the Great Silk Road, i.e. materials of travels, expeditions, archaeological works in these regions, and analysis of finds in linguistic, ethnographic, anthropological terms. However, the complex of these richest materials, as applied to the history of the Great Silk Road, has not yet been systematized, and their comparative analysis is practically absent. Interesting material about expeditions and travels, in fact, on the first discovery for the scientific study of the routes of the Great Silk Road, was collected in the works of I.P. Magidovich[4].

Valuable information about scientists, travelers and just amateurs who studied cultural and city monuments on the Central Asian routes of the Great Silk Road is contained in the works of B.V. Lunin [5].

At the peak of trade along the Silk Road, the Sogdians were the most influential foreign community in China. Many Sogdians settled permanently in Turfan on the northern path of the oasis, where they were engaged in various activities, including agriculture, keeping inns, treating animals and trading. In 640, when the troops of the Tang dynasty conquered Turpan, all its inhabitants came under direct Chinese control. Due to the extremely dry climate conditions of Turfan, an unusually large amount of documentary evidence of the everyday life of the community in the zone of the Silk Road lies.

Despite the fact that the Chinese gained a reputation as a people eschewing migrants, in the first millennium, especially after the surrender of Samarkand to Muslim invaders in 712, large foreign communities moved to China. The most interesting archaeological finds of recent years were made during the excavation of burials of foreign residents in the territory of the capital of the Tang dynasty of the city of Changan or modern Xi'an. About 40 thousand documents from the library cave of Dun Juan, make up one of the most interesting treasure collections in the world, which contains the oldest printed book on the planet called The Diamond Sutra. In the monastery vault, in this cave library, there were not only Buddhist treatises: on the back of Buddhist texts, many inscriptions of all kinds were found. Cave paintings in Dunhuang are considered the best preserved and richest in content compared with all other Buddhist residences in China. The rulers of Dunhuang maintained close ties with the population of the Khotan oasis, which lies on the southern route of the Silk Road just west of Niy Oasis. Among the documents found there are manuals for studying foreign languages, according to which one can imagine how Khotan students mastered Sanskrit, which was used in almost all monasteries, and Chinese was widely used in Western regions. Residents of the Khotan conquered in the year of 1006 were the first to accept Mohammedanism in the territory of present-day Xinjiang, and today tourists see evidence of the great influence of Islam here. This chapter concludes with a review of the history and commerce of the area since the introduction of Islam on its territory.

From 705 to 715, the Arab commander Kuteib ibn Muslim engaged in the conquest of Sogdiana and in 712 he conquered Samarkand. The largest part of the documents in the Sogdian language found on the territory of Sogdiana refers precisely to this period of history. In 1933, Soviet archaeologists discovered a rare cache with almost a hundred documents on Mount Mug, located 120 km east of Samarkand in Tajikistan. [6] These documents contain unique messages about the Islamic invasion.

As the great Soviet Arabist Krachkovsky I.Yu (1883-1951), explains in his memoirs the key to determining the time of appearance of documents can serve as only one document in Arabic. [7]

Devashtich's letter to the Arab ruler of Khorasan al-Jerry was written in flawless Arabic, that is, it can be assumed that he used the services of a clerk. Calling himself a "Mawla," or a client of this ruler, he suggests sending him security for the sake of the two sons of the previous Khan of Samarkand-Tarhun. After reading this letter I.Yu. Krachkovsky recalled that the great historian At-Tabari mentioned in his writings the Samarkand nobleman who fell into disgrace by the name of Divashni, who resisted the Arab invasion in 721-722. In light of this conjecture, the leadership of the Academy of Social Sciences of Leningrad sent an expedition to Tajikistan led by the leading Soviet specialist in Sogdians A.A. Freiman (1879-1968). In November 1933, Freiman for two weeks led specialists from the Academy of Sciences who excavated on the spot. [8]

A number of articles in journals and monographs are devoted to the study of the Great Silk Road in the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, as well as to the activities of individual scientists who studied it, among which the most interesting are the works of N. A. Lebedeva, D.N. Anuchina, N.P. Kochergina S.I. Goldfarba [9]. The main stages of the study of East Turkestan and the study of the routes of the Great Silk Road in domestic and foreign science are to some extent disclosed in the articles of A.N. Bernstam and B.A. Litvinsky [10].

Exclusive interest in terms of raising the problem of the revival of the Great Silk Road is the publication in Tashkent in 1990 under the editorship of Academician G.A. Pugachenkova collective work "On the Central Asian routes of the Great Silk Road. Essays on History and Culture [11].

" In the same year, an international UNESCO seminar "Formation and development of the Great Silk Road routes in Central Asia in antiquity and the Middle Ages [12],"

was held in Samarkand, where directions for further research were determined. These publications are valuable because they include found extracts from the materials of medieval Arab and Chinese authors who described trade routes, goods, cities, etc. Questions of trade and cultural ties of Central Asia with neighboring states, the history of the study of trade routes that took place here in antiquity and the Middle Ages are reflected in K.A. Adylova, K.M. Baipakova, N.N. Akramova, H.F. Pirumshoeva, E.V. Rtveladze, A.S. Sagdullaeva, E.I. Lubo-Lesnichenko, G.A. Agzamova, T.V. Raufova.[13]

Assessing, in general, the state of the historiographic understanding of the problem under consideration during the Soviet period, we can conclude that, thanks to the search work of scientists, certain successes were achieved: firstly, in the study of ancient and medieval sources, historical literature of the 19th and early 20th centuries; secondly, in the interpretation of archaeological finds and works in the study of the Great Silk Road; thirdly, in the development of a holistic picture of the origin, development, functioning and decline of this transcontinental road.

Substantial changes in the nature of scientific knowledge emerged after Uzbekistan achieved independence. In recent decades, many scientific works have appeared in which the nodal plots of the history of the Great Silk Road are analyzed in line with the global principles of scientific knowledge. Among the studies devoted to the problems of the Great Silk Road, written during the years of independence, a special place is occupied by a number of works by academician E.V. Rtveladze, in particular, his fundamental work "The Great Silk Road" [14], which shows the significance and role of representatives of various countries and peoples, especially Greece, Rome, China and Sogd in its creation. Special attention paid to the interaction of ancient cultures of the West and the East, as well as Central Asia, as a link between these cultures. The encyclopedic dictionary at the end of the book provides an opportunity to obtain information about a number of European scientists who studied the Great Silk Road. The work also raises issues of periodization of the Silk Road, the history of its functioning in various historical eras.

Of fundamental importance for the study of trade routes and the cities of Maverannahr on the Great Silk Road are the work of Academician Y.F. Buryakova. [15] In the works of the synologist A. Khodjaev, a large amount of data from Chinese sources on Central Asia were introduced into scientific circulation, problems related to the preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of the Silk Road in China, the influence of China on modern processes in Central Asia, etc. are considered. [16] Various aspects of the history of the Great Silk Road were touched upon in the dissertations of A. Aitbaev, U. Mavlonov, N. Karimova, D. Makhkamova, R. Mirzaev and others.[14]

Some problems of the revival of communications, the development of tourism on the Great Silk Road are investigated in the works of both domestic and foreign experts in geopolitics and the global economy. [17] It should be noted that many of the works of this group are characterized by open bias or caution of estimates, especially in the study of the prospects for the revival of the Great Silk Road. In this regard, the work of R. Mirzaev "The Great Silk Road: the

realities of the 21st century¹” compares favorably, in which, based on materials from the UN, UNESCO, the World Trade Organization, the World Tourism and other international organizations, and a large amount of statistical data, an analysis of the current state and prospects of the revival is presented transport communications and tourism development on the Great Silk Road.

A characteristic feature of the scientific life of Uzbekistan in the period of independence was the appeal to the studies of foreign scientists, which have accumulated rich experience in a systematic analysis of the processes associated with the functioning of the Silk Road, and given their own interpretation of the problems of studying its history, economy and culture. In these works, in particular, some questions of the history of studying the routes of the Great Silk Road in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the stages of its functioning, and the study of monuments of material and spiritual culture are reflected. To date, foreign historiography were represented by an extensive array of works written in Russian, English, German, French, Japanese, Chinese and other languages.

In the 90s of the XX century and the beginning of the XXI century, a number of special studies were published in the Russian Federation that reveal important moments in the history of the Great Silk Road. In particular, in the work of B.Y. Stavisky raised questions of its periodization. [18]

N.Kh. Akhmetshin, in two of his monographs, studied not only the study of the Silk Road, but also paid considerable attention to clarifying the names, dates, geographical names in the past and present, the history and politics of China.[19]

In the dissertations of K.Sh. Khafizova, S.V. Lapteva, Liu Gang, O.V. Shklyayeva, Van Don May, H.E. Mukhamadiyev and other researchers studied the political, cultural and economic aspects of the interaction of China, Central Asia, and Russia along the ancient and reviving Great Silk Road.[20]

Extensive monographs by K.M. Baipakov are devoted to the cities and steppe routes of Kazakhstan on the Great Silk Road.

Among the works of other foreign scientists of the twentieth century. It should be noted the monographs of J. Baker, A. Hermann, E. Schaefer, [21] in which an attempt was made to generalize both the study of the Silk Road and its history. However, since these specialists are primarily synologists, they paid more attention to the history of the Great Silk Road in the context of China's international relations.

One of the latest publications about Sogdians on the Great Silk Road is a book by American scholar Valery Hansen. The monograph “The Great Silk Road” was published in English in 2012, translated from English into Russian by S. A. Belousov in 2014. The book received the prize of the international convention of scientists of Asia in the field of humanitarian research.

The book begins with a description of the first alleged contacts between representatives of China and the West in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, and the narrative ends with the beginning of the 11th century, that is, the time to which the last documents obtained during excavations in Dunhuang and Khotan belong. Each chapter in chronological order describes the oases on the Silk Road, chosen because historical documents were discovered there. In the north-west of China are Niya, Kucha, Turpan, Dunhuang and Khotan. Samarkand in Uzbekistan, and the nearby oasis on Mount Mug - across the border in the territory of modern Tajikistan. A seven ho as is called Changan the capital of the Tang Dynasty, was located in Shaanxi Province in Central China.

The first traces of Sogdians in the archaeological description come from the oldest cultural layers in Samarkand dating back to the 7th century BC. Centuries later, the biographers of Alexander the Great described the fierce and resistance of the inhabitants of Marakanda (as the Greeks called Samarkand) who ultimately surrendered to the mercy of Alexander. After the death of Alexander, representatives of various dynasties came to power here, and most of the time the city was under the rule of the Haganate, the capital of which was the current Tashkent. [22]

Until recently, scientists considered the abandoned bag of mail that Aurel Stern unearthed near Dunhuang in 1907 to be the oldest surviving array of materials in Sogdian, but archaeologists who excavated the Kultobe site (located near Chimkent on the Arys River) in southern Kazakhstan Between 1996 and 2006, they found 10 fragments of burnt clay

tablets with Sogdian inscriptions on them. After a careful analysis of all these materials, Nicholas Sims-Williams, considered the world's leading specialist in Iranian dialects of Central Asia, determined that they appeared before letters from that same mail bag. At the time of the construction of this wall, there were at least four Sogdian city-states, only the texts seem so fragmented that it is not possible to obtain significant information about them.

Judging by these letters, at the beginning of the 4th century, Sogdian communities existed in Luoyang, Chanan, Lanzhou, Uwe, Jiuquan and Dunhuang. During these centuries, distinguished by frequent political shifts, Sogdians gradually settled territories from Samarkand to Bukhara. In the 5th century and beyond, Sogdians created their settlements on the Zeravshan River, where they built buildings of Sogdian architecture and laid irrigation systems. In the fifth century, economic growth accelerated, and by the sixth and seventh centuries. Sogdiana has become the richest country in Central Asia [23].

At the beginning of the new millennium, a number of summarizing works of prominent foreign researchers on the history of the Silk Road were published. These are monographs by American and English scientists A. Giuliano, J. Lerner and J. Tucker, [24] as well as Chinese Zhang Ji Ping and Liu Zhi Juan, [25] devoted to the history of cultural contacts, stages of functioning, silk weaving techniques and the history of the study of the Great Silk Road.

V. CONCLUSION

However, in all these studies, the sources and problems of the scientific study of the Sogdian diaspora on the Great Silk Road, in fact, its discoveries for science, questions of periodization, the importance of its revival at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, are only partially addressed. In addition, in these works the human factor was practically not reflected in the study of the Silk Road, despite the fact that since the second half of the 19th century, researchers and experts from different countries took part in the study of the Great Silk Road. These were people of different nationalities, different faiths, adherents of various scientific schools, with individual characteristics of character, among them were champions of science and ambitious pursuers for fame, all this, of course, left a definite imprint on the study of the history of the Sogdian diaspora of the Great Silk Road. With all the many publications examining various aspects of the functioning of the Great Silk Road, as we can see, there are still no generalizing works in Russian historiography devoted to such important historical problems as questions of periodization, a comprehensive analysis of the history of the study of the Silk Road, and the prospects for its revival in XXI century., As well as a comparative analysis of the degree and level of knowledge of the routes of the Great Silk Road, uniting for centuries the vast expanses of the Eurasian continent.

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