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СОДЕРЖАНИЕ

**Исследования материальной культуры
средневековых городов**

<i>Kang In Uk, Kim Jihon (Seoul, Korea), Aitbayeva Aigerim (Almaty, Kazakhstan)</i> Contemporary Status of Archaeological Research on Silk Road in Central Asia and Korea and A.N. Bernshtam's Researches.....	8
<i>Достиев Т.М. (Баку, Азербайджанская Республика)</i> Посудное стекло средневекового города Шамкир раннеисламского периода.....	18
<i>Никитина Т.Б. (Йошкар-Ола, Россия)</i> Арочные украшения из могильников Ветлужско-Вятского междуречья IX–XI вв.	32
<i>Иванова М.Г., Русских Е.Л., Сабирова Т.М. (Ижевск, Россия)</i> Клады X–XIII вв. из материалов Солдырского I городища Иднакар.....	43
<i>Бугарчев А.И. (Казань, Россия), Петров П.Н. (Алматы, Казахстан), Сингатуллина А.З., Ситдииков А.Г., Шайхутдинова Е.Ф. (Казань, Россия)</i> Булгарские монеты хана Пулада Измерского клада	53
<i>Крадин Н.Н., Бакшеева С.Е., Бондаренко О.В. (Владивосток, Россия), Ковычев Е.В. (Чита, Россия), Харинский А.В. (Иркутск, Россия)</i> Использование дерева в строительстве средневековых городов у монголов в Восточном Забайкалье (XIII–XIV вв.)	65
<i>Валиулина С.И., Нуретдинова А.Р. (Казань, Россия)</i> Техническая керамика гончарной мастерской Сарая ал-Джедид – Царевского городища	79
<i>Болдырева Е.М. (Москва, Россия)</i> Кашинная керамика из Царевского городища в хранении Государственного исторического музея.....	93
<i>Кирилло В.П. (Симферополь, Россия)</i> Хронологические парадоксы дюрбе Мухаммед-Шах-бея в г. Бахчисарай.....	107
<i>Бочаров С.Г. (Севастополь, Россия)</i> Эски-Крым: введение в историческую топографию города Крымского ханства	121

Изучение сельских округ городов Восточной Европы

<i>Яворская Л.В. (Москва, Россия)</i> К вопросу о функциях сельских поселений в экономической системе Золотой Орды.....	136
<i>Шполянский С.В. (Москва, Россия)</i> Села Суздальского Ополья и изменения в системе расселения во второй половине XIV–XV вв.	148

<i>Грибов Н.Н. (Москва, Россия)</i> Сельское окружение русского города эпохи Золотой Орды (по материалам памятников округа Нижнего Новгорода).....	164
<i>Кочкина А.Ф., Сташенков Д.А. (Самара, Россия)</i> Материалы к характеристике системы расселения в Самарском Поволжье в золотоордынский период.....	178
<i>Кубанкин Д.А., Зозырев Н.Ю. (Саратов, Россия)</i> Сырьевые источники строительных материалов округа Уека	193
<i>Бочаров С.Г. (Севастополь, Россия), Ситдииков А.Г. (Казань, Россия)</i> Археологические исследования поселения Песочное в Саратовской области (к вопросу о значении керамического комплекса при изучении золотоордынских сельских поселений)	203
<i>Бабенко В.А. (Ставрополь, Россия), Обухов Ю.Д. (Элиста, Россия)</i> Памятники округа Маджар (Северный Кавказ) Современное состояние изучения.....	216
<i>Масловский А.Н., Минаев А.П., Юдин Н.И. (Азов, Россия)</i> Сельская округа Азака по данным керамических и нумизматических находок. Взаимодействие города и сельского населения.....	231
Список сокращений	248
Правила для авторов	250

CONTENS

Studies of medieval towns material culture

<i>Kang In Uk, Kim Jihon (Seoul, Korea), Aitbayeva Aigerim (Almaty, Kazakhstan)</i>	
Contemporary Status of Archaeological Research on Silk Road in Central Asia and Korea and A.N. Bernshtam's Researches.....	8
<i>Dostiyev T.M. (Baku, Azerbaijan Republic)</i>	
Glassware of Medieval Shamkir Town of Early Islamic Period.....	18
<i>Nikitina T.B. (Yoshkar-Ola, Russian Federation)</i>	
Arched Decorations from Burial Grounds in the Vetluga-Vyatka Interfluve of 10 th – 11 th Centuries	32
<i>Ivanova M.G., Russkikh E.L., Sabirova T.M. (Izhevsk, Russian Federation)</i>	
Treasures of the 10 th – 13 th Centuries from Materials of Soldirskiy I Hillfort Idnakar	43
<i>Bugarchev A.I. (Kazan, Russian Federation), Petrov P.N. (Almaty, Kazakhstan), Singatullina A.Z., Sitdikov A.G., Shayhutdinova E.F. (Kazan, Russian Federation)</i>	
Bulgar Coins of Khan Pulad of Izmeriy Treasure.....	53
<i>Kradin N.N., Baksheeva S.E., Bondarenko O.V. (Vladivostok, Russian Federation), Kovychev E.V. (Chita, Russian Federation), Kharinskiy A.V. (Irkutsk, Russian Federation)</i>	
Evidences of Wooden Materials Utilization in Construction of Medieval Mongolian Towns in Eastern Trans-Baikal Region (13 th – 14 th CC.).....	65
<i>Valiulina S.I., Nuretdinova A.R. (Kazan, Russian Federation)</i>	
Technical Ceramics from the Pottery Workshop at Sarai-Al-Jedid – Tsarevskoye Settlement	79
<i>Boldyreva E.M. (Moscow, Russian Federation)</i>	
The Frit Ceramic from the Tsarevskoye Settlement in Storage of the State Historical Museum	93
<i>Kirilko V.P. (Simferopol, Russian Federation)</i>	
Chronological Paradoxes of Mohammed Shah Bey' Turbe in the Bahchisaray Town.....	107
<i>Bocharov S.G. (Sevastopol, Russian Federation)</i>	
Eski-Crimea: Introduction to the Historical Topography of the City of the Crimean Khanate	121

Exploring the rural districts of Eastern European cities

<i>Yavorskaya L.V. (Moscow, Russian Federation)</i>	
To the Question about the Functions of Rural Settlements in the Economic System of the Golden Horde	136
<i>Shpolyanskiy S.V. (Moscow, Russian Federation)</i>	
The Village of Suzdal Opolye and Changes in the System Resettlement in the Second Half of the 14 th – 15 th Centuries	148
<i>Gribov N.N. (Moscow, Russian Federation)</i>	
Rural District of Russian Federation Town of the Golden Horde Era (based on the materials of the archaeological sites of the district of Nizhny Novgorod)	164
<i>Kochkina A.F., Stashenkov D.A. (Samara, Russian Federation)</i>	
Materials for the Characterization of the Settlement System in the Samara Volga Region in the Golden Horde Period	178
<i>Kubankin D.A., Zozyrev N.Yu. (Saratov, Russian Federation)</i>	
Raw Materials Sources of Building Materials of Ukek Districts	193
<i>Bocharov S.G. (Sevastopol, Russian Federation), Sitdikov A.G. (Kazan, Russian Federation)</i>	
Historical Studies of Pesochnoe Settlement in Saratov Oblast (the issue of the significance of the ceramic complex in the study of the rural settlements of the Golden Horde)	203
<i>Babenko V.A. (Stavropol, Russian Federation), Obukhov Yu.D. (Elista, Russian Federation)</i>	
Monuments from Area Town of Madjary (the North Caucasus): current research developments	216
<i>Maslovsky A.N., Minaev A.P., Iudin N.I. (Azov, Russian Federation)</i>	
Rural Neighborhood of Azak According to Numismatic and Ceramic Findings. Interaction between the City and the Rural Population	231
List of Abbreviations	248
Submissions	250

Исследования материальной культуры средневековых городов

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CONTEMPORARY STATUS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH ON SILK ROAD IN CENTRAL ASIA AND KOREA AND A.N. BERNSTAM'S RESEARCHES¹

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This paper proposes three measures for a new archaeological study on the Silk Road. First, a systematic understanding is required for the archaeological achievements on the Silk Road made during the Soviet Era before the 1990s. Nowadays, many scholars in East Asia, including South Korea, rely on literature written mainly in English to study and understand the Silk Road. However, the Silk Road's archaeological excavations were mostly made before the 1990s, that is, they were not well known in South Korea and the West. Therefore, a systematic understanding of those achievements can be the basis of new international research. Bernstam's achievements representing the studies until the 1960s are good examples. They have recently led to the joint publication of an art catalog on South Korea and Kazakhstan's gold culture. Second, we should move away from the narrow nationalism advocated by now-independent countries and pursue the research at the international level. The real value of the Silk Road should lie in finding common ground beyond borders and ideology. Thus, it is necessary to understand the research trends in individual countries, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Russia. The Asian Archaeology conference held annually by the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage of South Korea is one of excellent examples of such an effort. Finally, archaeological research on the Silk Road should move forward not just as an academic pursuit but also as a means of global cultural cooperation. In this regard, active collaboration with international organizations, such as UNESCO, is crucial. As such, if these three aspects are considered together, the international archaeological research on the Silk Road led by South Korea in the new phase of the 21st century will contribute to the Silk Road research in the new era.

Keywords: archaeology, Silk Road, Central Asia, kurgan, UNESCO, Soviet Union.

Introduction

The term "Silk Road" was suggested at the end of the 19th century following the beginning of modern-era research on Central Asia. Gradually, the term came to represent the history of Central Asia and its surrounding regions (Kang 2018). However, the perspectives toward the Silk Road vary greatly by country because the Silk Road region was investigated predominantly by Western countries until the 1940s. Thereafter, the region was studied separately by countries on both sides of the Iron Curtain, including China and some of the former Soviet Republics, for more than 50 years. Since

the 1990s, confusions and discrepancies in views and approaches among the Silk Road researchers have resurfaced as many countries in Central Asia became independent. The volume of those countries' research on the Silk Road has greatly increased as well. Moreover, new derivative terms have appeared, such as the Maritime Silk Road and the Southern Silk Road, only adding the complexity of the Silk Road studies. They conducted a series of studies using the methodology of natural science to date ancient iron artefacts from medieval fortress site Talgar, located 25 km to the east of the city of Almaty and the medieval com-

¹ This work was supported by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea and the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF-2019S1A5C2A01083578)

plex Akyrtas in South Kazakhstan. This study has contributed to identifying the level of the local blacksmith craftsmanship in the region.

Despite increased interest on the Silk Road, actual substantive studies conducted by Korean scholars remain rare. Since 2015, South Korean excavation teams have been actively conducting researches in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and similar places. An archaeological survey conducted by the National Institute of Cultural Heritage of South Korea on a kurgan in Katar-Tobe is the best example. Additionally, many research teams have been conducting surveys every year. However, high-quality finds for the Silk Road scholarship are still rare. This is because it has been difficult for them to reach archaeological sites within the former Soviet Union when the studies on the Silk Road were at their peak. Furthermore, because they could not correctly access literature written in Russian, the region could only be understood through English or Japanese. Under these circumstances, it was challenging to train researchers properly. Lack of substantive studies is also attributed to the different perspectives on the Silk Road by country, such as the former Soviet Republics, the West (including Japan), and individual Central Asian states. During the Soviet era, the concept of the Silk Road was used to describe part of Middle Azia (Central Asia in Russian) history, which fell into the category of “regional studies”. In other words, the Steppe Route along the northern part of Central Asia was an important research topic for the scholars in the former Soviet Union, and the studies on the Silk Road and the Steppe Route were considered as “regional studies.” As such, “Silk Road” studies by the Western countries focused on the desert regions, including the oases in Central Asia. This paper examines the archaeological studies conducted on the regions that were parts of former Soviet Central Asia and

investigates their characteristics from the perspective of new research trend on the Silk Road in the 21st century.

Main achievements of the Silk Road archaeology of Central Asia

Comprehensive studies on the Silk Road have been carried out largely by countries in Central Asia that include Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. However, the direction of the research differed according to the individual studies and their regional scope.

Kazakhstan and A. N. Bernshtam's contribution to the study of the Great Silk Road

The history of archaeological study of Kazakhstan is connected with the names of such prominent scholars as A.X. Margulan, S.S. Chernikov, A.N. Bernshtam, S.P. Tolstov, and K.A. Akishev. Among them, A.N. Bernshtam who devoted more than 20 years of his life studying archaeological sites in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan is of particular importance. Under his leadership, an archaeological expedition to Semirechensk was launched in 1933. Taraz, one of the most important sites of the Silk Road in Kazakhstan was also explored under his leadership. In the 1940^s, remains of a bath house with the original plan, the rich murals of geometric and vegetative motifs from the 11th and 12th centuries were discovered at the citadel fort of Taraz. This was the first bathhouse ever excavated in the region of Central Asia (Bernshtam 1941, p. 54). From this excavation, Bernshtam formulated the concept of the Saka-Wusun continuity in relation to the Wusun problems. In particular, he traced the genesis of the Saka-Wusun and their participation in the processes of formation of the ethnic genesis of the Kushans, Hephthalites, and Turks. Furthermore, Bernshtam identified the Wusun territorial culture. He paid particular attention to studying the Kangui tribes which the modern

Kazakhs believe to be their ancestors. The names Kanli and Uysun have been preserved until now as the names of the founding clans of the Kazakh people. Based on Chinese chronicles, there on the territory of Semirechye, Bernshtam proved the coexistence of the Wusuns and the Kangui (Kangju in Chinese) and that the boundaries between them expanded along the valley of the Talas River. In contrast to many researchers of the time, Bernshtam rejected the idea of the Wusun migration and proposed that they were an autochthonous tribe.

The most famous Kazakh monument from this period is the burial of the priestess Wusun, dated to the 2nd century BC – AD 1st century, discovered in the gorge of Kargaly in 1939. Archaeological finds, such as a golden diadem with a rectangular openwork plate decorated with floral ornaments, images of animals, birds and fantastic anthropomorphic figures of demons, were discovered during the study of this monument. Bernshtam, who speculated that the Wusuns spoke a Turkic dialect, uncovered the meaning of the Kargaly diadem on the basis of Turkic-Mongolian mythology and ethnicity. According to him, the diadem bore emblems of happiness and well-being and symbols of elements of the heaven and earth that were closely related to the shamanic beliefs of the local nomads. The diadem combined images and motifs characteristic of Chinese art (for example, dragon and the “world mountain”), with features resembling the Saka, Wusun, and the Xiongnu art (such as images of deer, goat, wild boar, tiger, and griffin). It is assumed then that the artefacts from the Kargaly site were made by local craftsmen with the use of Chinese art traditions (Bernshtam 1940, pp. 23–31).

Bernshtam was also engaged in the study of controversial issues such as the Sogdian influence on local Central

Asian culture. During the excavation of Semirechye cities, Bernshtam tried to collect evidence of Sogdian resettlements along the Seven Rivers and its consequences. He believed that the Sogdians who had the tradition of agricultural and urban culture had been the builders of the cities. Withstanding later evidence and postulations, Bernshtam’s hypothesis and schemes of development, continue to dominate the archaeological studies of the region still today.

The new rise of the Silk Road research in Kazakhstan came in the late 1980^s, when the UNESCO suggested that international research be conducted on the topic of the Silk Road. In 1988, in the framework of the World Decade for Cultural Development (1988–1997), UNESCO officially launched a project entitled “Integral Study of the Silk Roads: Roads of Dialogue,” and it continued until the 1990^s. Under the project, a series of inter-disciplinary seminars and meetings with local specialists were organized and expeditions along the main Silk Roads were conducted to provide the opportunity to produce documentary films, publications and exhibitions, as well as to launch new field studies (<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000159312>).

First, excavations of the nomadic kurgans in the north was led by Z.S. Samashev from 1997. The Berel cemetery excavation was jointly conducted with French scholars. As a result of the project, burials in the permafrost region of Altai in Kazakhstan were researched and a series of findings and scholarly works were published (Samashev *et al.* 1998, pp. 174–175). A Kurgan 11 of Berel cemetery gained an international fame because it is a burial ground of a couple with a stone-reinforced, wooden chamber. Also significant was the discovery of rugs, pelts, and wooden sculptures that were considerable rarities and were

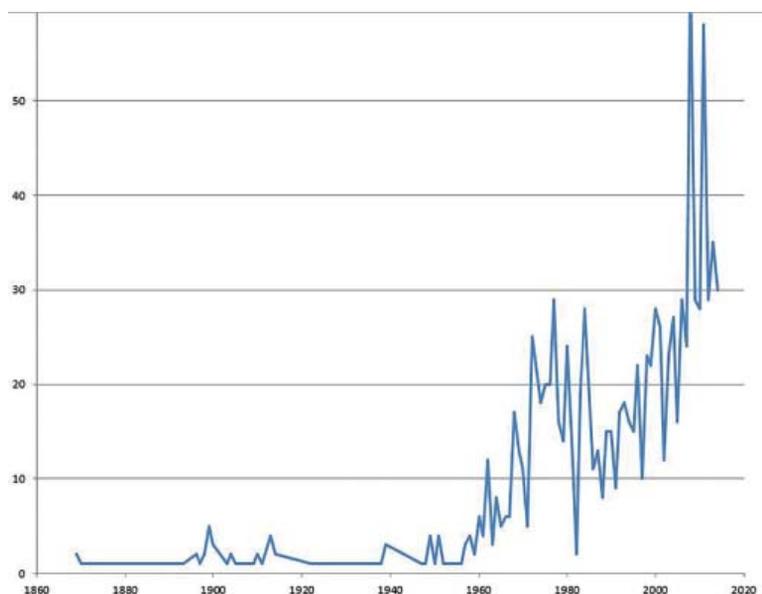


Fig. 1. Trend in studies relating to the Silk Road cities in Southern Kazakhstan over the past 160 years, calculated by the author based on literature represented in (Kuznetsova, O.V., 2014)

Рис. 1. Тенденция в исследованиях, касающихся городов Шелкового пути в Южном Казахстане за последние 160 лет, рассчитанная автором на основе литературы, представленной в монографии Кузнецовой О.В. (Кузнецова О. В., 2014)

similar to the relics of the Russian Altai Pazyryk cultures (Samashev and Frankfort 1999, pp. 33–37; Samashev *et al.* 2000, pp. 33–37). A vivid example of the variety of gold relics of the Saka period is the burial mound 5 of the Taldy 2 burial ground, located in the Karaganda region of Kazakhstan, studied by A. Beysenov. More than 200 large and 30,000 small fragments of gold ornaments, dated 5th – 4th century BC were found during his search (Beisenov 2011).

The series of studies conducted in the 1990s did not end only with the joint investigations by UNESCO, but continued with activities to transform these sites into tourist attractions and as sources of collective historical heritage of the Central Asian Turkic nations after the fall of the Soviet Union. In 1998, Kazakhstan catalogued 30 Silk Road remains and sites in a publication entitled “Silk Road, the Birth of a Historical Center, Growth of Turkic Cultural Heritages and Development of

Tourism Resources.” Moreover, some of the sites and relics of the Silk Road have been subjects of long-term investigations (Baipakov and Pleteneva 2001, p. 8). A good example of such case is the Bestamak barrows, which have been studied for the past two decades. Starting from the 2000^s, efforts for international joint-studies have increased. Cooperation with Japan was particularly notable. Through the Japanese Funds-in-Trust, a UNESCO international project for the restoration of the ancient city of Otrar, Kazakhstan, was undertaken from 2001 to 2004.

It is difficult to a present accurate statistics on the trend of archaeological research of Kazakhstan. However, there are comparatively detailed references on the research on Otrar, an important urban heritage site, for example. Figure 1 shows the numbers of Kazakh archaeological studies over the past 160 years.

From 2015 to 2018, a significant project in the form of an art catalog

publication and exhibition of the gold culture of Kazakhstan was undertaken, in which the first author of this paper (In Uk Kang) was involved. The National Institute of Cultural Heritage has summarized the gold artifacts of the Xiongnu culture and Saka culture in Kazakhstan's kurgans and published books in Korean and Kazakh. Moreover, in December 2018, a special exhibition was held at the National Museum of Korea under Kazakhstan's title, *The Cradleland of the Golden Man*. They combined archaeological achievements in Kazakhstan over the past 100 years. Furthermore, these works would have been impossible without the research by pioneers such as Bernshtam.

Moreover, the book *The Silk Road of Kazakhstan* by Karl Baipakov was translated and published in 2017. The first author of this paper performed editorial supervision and provided explanatory notes. This book, almost 600 pages long, systematically contains Kazakhstan's archaeological achievements up to the 2000s.

In sum, studies conducted during the time of the Soviet Union and after the Soviet's collapse are not entirely disconnected; therefore, the trend shows a gradual increase in volume.

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan shares its border with Kazakhstan to the north and Xinjiang of China to the east. The Silk Road archaeology of this region is represented by research on the Tian Shan mountain range. It shares a lot of archaeological similarities with Southern Kazakhstan including the Andronovo culture inherited by the Saka culture. The focus of Kyrgyz archaeological research is concentrated on the Fergana region. In particular, the southern regions of Kyrgyzstan were developed around an oasis with booming agriculture while in the northern region nomadic culture flourished. As such, the archaeological studies of Kyrgyzstan provide important

information on the development of agriculture in the oasis regions, introduction of the nomadic lifestyle, and coexistence of the agricultural and nomadic lifestyles.

As for the UNESCO World Heritage, Kyrgyzstan inscribed "The Silk Roads: Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor," in cooperation with China in 2014. It covers an expansive road that spans approximately 5,000 km, as well as the artefacts surrounding it. It starts in Chang'an, the ancient capital of the Han and the Tang Dynasties, which corresponds to today's Xi'an, and extends to western Kazakhstan and Zhetysay in modern-day Kyrgyzstan. Its temporal scope ranges from the second century BC to the AD 16th century, or from the Han and then Tang Dynasties to that of the Ming (Kang, 2019).

Archaeological investigations of the Kyrgyzstani Silk Road comprised of various studies done by several scholars. This established the overall structure of archaeological studies of Kyrgyzstan during the Soviet period with A.N. Bernshtam serving as a leading scholar. Between the 1940s and the 1950s, Bernshtam engaged in a number of archaeological expeditions including those of the Tian Shan mountain range (1944–46, 1949), the Pamir Mountains (1947–48), and the Fergana Valley (1950–52). Bernshtam classified a group of nomadic and sedentary peoples of the Kirgiz regions as belonging to the Wusun-Saka culture. Regionally, Bernshtam's research covered key heritage sites including Karachako kurgan from the 500s BC to the 400s BC around the Ili River and the Chui River regions; Berk-kara 1 and Naryn kurgans of the 400s BC to the 300s BC. These burials were examples of typical Saka culture, represented by artefacts with brilliant golden animal decorations. This culture spread to the Ordos region in North China.

Bernshtam's research also extended to the Wusun culture of settlers: most of

the tombs found at the Chui River and the Lake Issyk-Kul from the 2nd to the 1st century BC that included the Berkkara-2 relics that belonged to this culture. These tombs also included golden relics, which show the influence of the steppe route. Key examples include Karachoko-2 and Kargaly-2. Aside from these examples, there are also a number of relics from the 1st century BC to 2nd century AD around the Ili River region that are also significant.

In the Ili region of Xinjiang, which shares a border with Kyrgyzstan, there are ancient tombs similar to those of the Wusun culture. Overall, these can be placed in the same category as the ancient tombs (kurgans) built by the nomadic peoples in the Southern Siberia-Kazakhstan regions. These tombs are orthogonal to the river, with typically 20 tombs laid out from south to north. In terms of the size of each tomb, a large tomb is over 260 meters in circumference, a medium-sized tomb is between 100 and 150 meters in circumference, and a small-sized one is around 50 meters in circumference. There are not many relics left because the tombs were raided extensively.

Kyrgyzstan research on the oasis cities was conducted by scholars including M. Masson, Yu. Buryakov, and Yu. Zadnevrovsky. Masson studied cities in the southern region of Kyrgyzstan, such as Burany, Ak-Beshim, and Uzgen (Masson and Goryacheva 1985; Goryacheva, 1983). Another significant archaeological research on the oasis cities has been carried out by Zadnevrovsky, who focused on the oasis region of Osh-Karasuu. He suggested that the oasis cities in the Fergana Valley could be divided into different eras: the Ailata era of 700 BC to 500 BC, the Marhama era of 300 BC to CE 200, and the Kassan era of CE 200 to CE 500.

Another phenomenon around the switchover period between BC and AD in Kyrgyzstan is the emergence of cata-

comb culture. It is thought to have been left behind by the settlers of the Tian Shan mountain range. One leading example is the Kenkol kurgan excavated by Bernshtam in beginning of the 1930s. Based on excavation results, the Kenkol culture became a separate designation for catacomb culture. The relics date from the late 1st century CE to the early 2nd century CE when the Huns of the north lived in the region. These tombs are thought to be remains of the regional settlers influenced by the northern Hun culture (Aitbayeva, 2017. Pp. 23–28).

Other regions have also been subjects of research, contributing to the setting of the archaeological cultures of each region. In 1963, archaeological research on the Talas Valley was produced, followed by the findings on the Issyk-Kul region in 1975 and on Ketmen-Tyube regions in 1977. These investigations finally resulted in the establishment of an overall cultural chronology of each region. Since the 1990s, a general overview on the whole Kyrgyzstan has published in several times (for example, Tabaldiev, 2011).

Perspectives on Silk Road studies and role of Korean archaeology and UNESCO

Tasks for understanding the archaeology of the Silk Road

As demonstrated above, the Silk Road research, which has recently attracted significant interest from across the world, including South Korea, can never be completed by a few countries' efforts in a short period. The research is mostly based on archaeological studies from the Soviet Union and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries, which have been conducted continuously since the early 20th century. An excellent example of this is the study of Bernshtam, who worked actively in the vast regions of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The significant fields of excavations and research conducted in many Central Asian countries, including

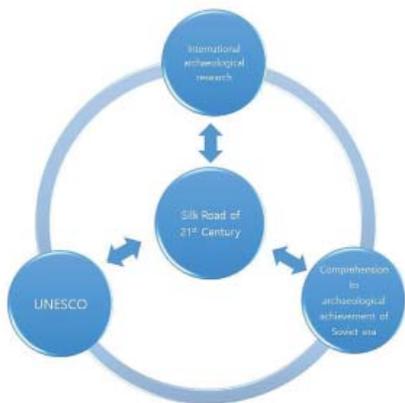


Fig. 2. Perspectives on the Silk Road study of 21st century.

Рис. 2. Перспективы изучения Шелкового пути в 21 веке.

South Korea, are kurgans and Xiongnu-era gold cultures. It should be noted that Bernshtam's research on the culture of the Xiongnu era was not limited to one country in present Central Asia and serves as a bridge connecting the east and the west of Eurasia.

Furthermore, after the late 20th century, it has led to joint research with many countries, including South Korea. With such far-reaching interests, research on the Silk Road has been expanded in quantitative terms in recent years. However, these archaeological achievements are not widely shared worldwide, and the idea of the Silk Road, that is, exchange and coexistence of the eastern and western civilizations, is not widely disseminated. The role of UNESCO as an international mediator of conflicts is emphasized in this context. In other words, various international archaeological projects surrounding Eurasia can contribute to a global plan called the Silk Road, as illustrated in the figure.

To summarize the Silk Road studies in Central Asia, we must consider the following issues when conducting research on Central Asia.

First, the Silk Road is not a 'separate piece' of history but a complex place where the civilizations of the east and

west collided. As such, an understanding of their geo-cultural backgrounds must precede with the research. The Central Asian cultures can largely be divided geographically and culturally into the plains culture of the north and the oases of the dry lands, Bactria and Kushan, in Southern Kazakhstan. In other words, it can be divided into the plains, the caravans, and the Southern part of the Silk Road that connect to the Tea Horse Road. As their archaeological and geographical origins differ from one another, the academic approach to the topic of the Silk Road must be taken after a correct understanding of history and culture of Central Asia and its neighboring areas.

Second, an understanding of relevant Russian scholarship is critical. While there is only English and Japanese literature mainly available for researchers in Korea, Russia has accumulated an immense amount of studies on the history of the Silk Road throughout the past centuries. Moreover, the relevant literature produced during the Soviet-era is being increasingly revisited and actively utilized. In practice, studies by S. Hedin, A. Stein, and others are merely discussed as part of research history in the international academic scene with very little actual significance highlighted. Ultimately, the understanding of Russian texts will greatly complement the research undertaken by different countries, for example, those conducted by the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage in Korea.

Third, understanding on the relationship between Russia and China as well as the dynamics within Central Asia states is crucial. Certainly, international activities of academic and cultural institutions are not directly related to politics; yet, the Central Asian region hosts a set of very complex political relations among Muslims, Russians, and Chinese, and one must always be mindful that consideration on these issues may influence the research on cultural heritage.

Fourth, Korea and many other countries must be able to provide the infrastructure and technology of cultural heritage research in joint excavations with the local and international scholars. However, as the cultural heritage in the Silk Road draws international attention, many scholars have taken a look at it. From the points of view of each Central Asian country, however, we should consider how those studies could benefit from joint excavations with other countries. Generally, the similarities of countries that have been engaged in multi-year joint projects, such as Germany and Japan, can be drawn that they do not simply conduct excavation projects but that they also involve the continuous exchange of human resources and conservation techniques; this must be considered strategically. If joint activities, such as interpersonal exchanges and conservation technology research, are accomplished instead of short-term joint excavations joint excavations, a more long-term approach can be adopted for collaboration on the Silk Road research in different countries.

Fifth, the cultural heritage projects of Central Asia must not end by themselves but must be linked with other areas of cultural exchange. While this cannot be achieved solely by one country in the short term, the close cooperation between non-governmental academic institutions, such as universities, research institutions involved in Eurasia projects will lead to great results. Collaboration with the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the advisory organization for cultural heritage to UNESCO, will be another good partner to work with in studying the Silk Road from a different angle.

Conclusion

The Silk Road is a representative cultural agenda of Eurasia, in which international organizations such as UNESCO and various countries are actively engaged. In this paper, the prospects were discussed from scholars' standpoint in South Korea, one of the leading countries that is actively involved in archaeological research in Eurasia.

For Korea and many countries, the Silk Road still retains a strong symbolism of the Western adventurer. However, Russian scholars have conducted practical in-depth studies on the Silk Road in Central Asia for the past 150 years. For example, in the 19th century, N.N. Pantusov, who studied the peoples and cultures of the Silk Road while being stationed in Kazakhstan, followed in the footsteps of Przewalski, who discovered Lop Nor and first found evidence of the dispersion of Christianity (Nestorian) to the east through the Silk Road. However, the Silk Road research of Central Asia in the past 100 years remained largely in the dark due to the Russian language barrier. The Silk Road studies in the 21st century refuse to host an imperialistic view that focuses on the power of individual nations; nor does it reflect the ideological barrier that was set during the Cold War. A new balanced view on the diverse cultures and exchanges among people is required. To achieve this, we need diverse points of view on the Silk Road that transcend borders and prejudices. This is why we must understand the archaeological research on Central Asia since the Soviet Union era, which have been overshadowed by the Western-focused Silk Road studies.

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**СОВРЕМЕННОЕ СОСТОЯНИЕ АРХЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИХ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЙ
НА ШЕЛКОВОМ ПУТИ В ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ И КОРЕЕ
И ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ А.Н. БЕРНШТАМА**

Кан Ин Ук, Ким Чжи Хен, Айтбаева Айгерим

В этой статье предлагаются три меры для нового археологического исследования Великого Шелкового пути. Во-первых, необходимо систематическое понимание археологических достижений на Шелковом пути, сделанных в советское время до 1990-х годов. В настоящее время многие ученые в Восточной Азии, включая Южную Корею, полагаются на литературу, написанную в основном на английском языке, чтобы изучить и понять Шелковый путь. Однако археологические раскопки на Шелковом пути велись в основном до 1990-х годов, то есть они не были хорошо известны в Южной Корее и на Западе. Систематическое понимание этих достижений может стать основой для новых международных исследований. Хорошим примером могут служить достижения Бернштама, представлявшие исследования до 1960-х годов. Недавно был издан художественный каталог о золотой культуре Южной Кореи и Казахстана. Во-вторых, мы должны отойти от узкого национализма, пропагандируемого ныне независимыми странами, и заняться международными исследованиями. Истинная ценность Шелкового пути должна заключаться в поиске точек соприкосновения за пределами границ и идеологии. Таким образом, необходимо понять тенденции исследований в отдельных странах, включая Казахстан, Кыргызстан, Узбекистан и Россию. Азиатская археологическая конференция, ежегодно проводимая Национальным научно-исследовательским институтом культурного наследия Южной Кореи, является прекрасным примером таких усилий. Наконец, археологические исследования на Шелковом пути должны продвигаться вперед не только как академическое занятие, но и как средство глобального культурного сотрудничества. Таким образом, активное сотрудничество с международными организациями, такими как ЮНЕСКО, имеет решающее значение. Таким образом, если эти три аспекта рассматривать вместе, то международные археологические исследования Шелкового пути, проводимые Южной Кореей на новом этапе XXI века, внесут свой вклад в исследования Шелкового пути в новую эру.

Ключевые слова: археология, Шелковый путь, Центральная Азия, курган, ЮНЕСКО, Советский Союз.

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