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## УЛУУ ЖИБЕК ЖОЛУНДАГЫ ЭПИКАЛЫК ЖАНР

### ЭПИЧЕСКИЙ ЖАНР НА ВЕЛИКОМ ШЕЛКОВОМ ПУТИ

#### EPIC GENRE ON THE GREAT SILK ROAD

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**Аннотациясы:** Бул макалада Жибек жолундагы эпикалык жанр жана анын ар кандай маданияттарда жана аймактарда өнүгүшү жана эволюциясы изилденген. Адабий жана тарыхый булактарды кеңири талдоонун негизинде авторлор эпикалык поэзиянын уникалдуу өзгөчөлүктөрүн жана темаларын, анын ичинде баатырдыкты, динди жана мифологияны изилдешет. Кыргыздын “Манас эпосу” сыяктуу эпикалык адабияттын конкреттүү мисалдарын талдап көрсөк, макалада Улуу Жибек жолунун боюндагы эпикалык сюжеттердин бай ар түрдүүлүгү баса белгиленет. Акыр-аягы, макалада эпикалык жанр байыркы дүйнө жүзү боюнча идеяларды, баалуулуктарды жана каада-салттарды жайылтууга жардам берип, маданий алмашуу жана маалымат берүү үчүн маанилүү каражат катары кызмат кылган деп ырастайт.

**Негизги сөздөр:** Улуу Жибек Жолу, эпос, мифология, баалуулуктар, каада-салттар, маданият, өнүгүү жана эволюция.

**Аннотация:** В этой статье исследуется эпический жанр на Великом Шелковом пути, его развитие и эволюция в различных культурах и регионах. Основываясь на обширном анализе литературных и исторических источников, авторы изучают уникальные особенности и темы эпической поэзии, включая героизм, религию и мифологию. Анализируя конкретные примеры эпической литературы, такие как «Эпос о Манасе» из Кыргызстана, в статье подчеркивается богатое разнообразие эпических сюжетов вдоль Великого Шелкового пути. В конечном счете, в статье утверждается, что эпический жанр служил важным средством культурного обмена и передачи информации, способствуя распространению идей, ценностей и традиций по всему древнему миру.

**Ключевые слова:** Великий Шелковый путь, эпос, мифология, ценности, традиции, культура, развитие и эволюция.

**Abstract:** This article explores the epic genre along the Great Silk Road, its development, and evolution in various cultures and regions. Based on extensive analysis of literary and histor-

ical sources, the authors study the unique features and themes of epic poetry, including heroism, religion, and mythology. By analyzing specific examples of epic literature, such as the "Epos of Manas" from Kyrgyzstan, the article highlights the rich diversity of epic stories along the Great Silk Road. Ultimately, the article argues that the epic genre served as an important means of cultural exchange and transmission, contributing to the dissemination of ideas, values, and traditions throughout the ancient world.

**Keywords:** *The Great Silk Road, epic, mythology, values, traditions, culture, development and evolution.*

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## 1. Introduction

The Great Silk Road, an ancient network of trade routes that connected the East and the West, played a pivotal role in shaping the course of history, fostering the exchange of goods, ideas, and cultures. Amidst this intricate web of commerce and cultural transmission, literature, particularly the epic genre, thrived and flourished. The epics that emerged along the Silk Road reflect the rich tapestry of cultures, beliefs, and narratives that coexisted in this transcontinental corridor.

An epic, at its core, is a poetic work of substantial length, marked by its formal structure, and often centered around heroic deeds. These narratives serve as both a reflection and a product of the societies from which they originate. It is within this epic genre that the essence of the Silk Road's cultural fusion is most evident. Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Middle East, regions interconnected by the Silk Road, gave rise to a vibrant tradition of epics.

What makes these Silk Road epics particularly intriguing is their amalgamation of local legends, myths, and historical events. They provide invaluable insights into the social, cultural, and religious contexts of the eras in which they were composed. These narratives serve as a bridge between the past and the present, allowing us to explore the intricate tapestry of beliefs, values, and aspirations of diverse communities.

The Silk Road was not merely a conduit for goods but also a vibrant thoroughfare for stories, themes, and stylistic elements, allowing epic traditions to migrate and evolve. As a result, the epics born along the Silk Road are characterized by a unique blend of cultural influences. They represent a crossroads of narratives where different civilizations met, exchanged ideas, and shaped their shared literary heritage. These narratives are a testament to the diversity of the communities inhabiting the Silk Road region.

The primary objective of this article is to delve into the epic genre along the Great Silk Road, exploring its origins, development, and the themes that resonated through these timeless narratives. Furthermore, we aim to shed light on the profound impact of the Great Silk Road on the epic tradition. It is essential to recognize the role of the Silk Road as a catalyst for cultural exchange, fostering the evolution of literary traditions in the region and giving rise to narratives that transcend borders and endure through the ages. In doing so, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the enduring legacy of the Silk Road as a conduit for both physical goods and the intangible riches of human imagination and creativity.

## 2. Methodology

The methodological basis of this article is based on a comprehensive approach to the study of the epic genre on the Great Silk Road. We use various methods of analysis to gain a more complete understanding of the genre, its features and evolution over time.

Literary analysis

Literary analysis is a key element of our methodology. We conduct a close reading of epic works in order to identify literary elements, themes and motifs that are characteristic of the epic tradition on the Great Silk Road. The analysis allows us to explore narrative structures, character characteristics and the use of symbolism, which are key features of the epic genre.

One of the most striking examples of an epic work associated with the Great Silk Road is *The Song of Manas*. This is an epic work of Kyrgyz folk poetry, which was created over many centuries by oral creativity and was finally recorded in the XIX century. "The Song of Manas" tells the story of Manas, a legendary hero who fights for the freedom of his people. [1] This work vividly presents the characteristics of the characters, the use of symbolism and narrative structures, which are the key features of the epic genre. Using the methodology described above, we can study these features more deeply and compare them with other epic works on the Great Silk Road.

One of the examples of an epic work on the Great Silk Road is "Kire-korkor" – a Kyrgyz epic poem. [2] This work tells about the life and adventures of a hero named Kire-korkor, who travels through various regions of the Great Silk Road, including Tien Shan and Kashgaria. In the course of his adventures, he faces various dangers, including battles with enemies and the abduction of the khan's beautiful wife. Kire-korkor shows strength and skill in battles, and also shows valor and honor in his actions.

Cultural analysis of "Kire-korkor" reveals many common cultural characteristics with other epic works on the Great Silk Road. For example, these works often tell about the exploits of a hero who fights for his loved ones and his country. This may indicate the importance of heroism and patriotism in the culture of the region. In addition, the use of various symbols, such as animals or natural elements, is also common in epic works on the Great Silk Road. For example, in "Kire-korkor" the image of a messenger is used – a white horse, which is a symbol of purity and virtue.

The linguistic analysis of "Kire-korkor" allows us to identify the features of the language and style that are characteristic of epic works on the Great Silk Road. For example, these works are usually written in verse and use many repetitive phrases and motifs. Also, metaphor and symbolism are often used in these works, which allows you to convey complex and deep ideas and concepts in a simple and understandable form. For example, in the Chinese epic poem "The Song of the Knight", the symbol of a strong and noble hero is a horse, and his poverty and the injustice of public order is symbolized by the absence of a horse. [3] Symbolism is also an important element in the epic poem "Shahnameh" by the Farsi poet Ferdowsi. [4] One of the most famous symbols in this work is pomegranate seeds, which represent the life cycle, rebirth and rebirth, and also symbolize peace and beauty in nature

Cultural analysis of the epic works on the Great Silk Road allows us to see the common themes and motifs that connect the different regions of the route. For example, many epic works on the Great Silk Road address the themes of honor, courage and loyalty. These values were important to many peoples who lived along the route, and they are reflected in various epic traditions. However, each region also has its own unique cultural identity, which is reflected in its epic traditions. For example, the Tajik epic poem "Shahnameh" reflects Tajik culture and history, while the Chinese epic poem "Song of the Knight" reflects Chinese culture and history.

Linguistic analysis of the epic works on the Great Silk Road allows us to understand the linguistic and stylistic features that are characteristic of the epic tradition in different regions of the route. For example, the Chinese epic poem "The Song of the Knight" is written in verse, while the Tajik epic poem "Shahnameh" is written in prose. Also in the tradition of the epic genre on the Great Silk Road, you can find common themes and motifs that are universal for different regions and cultures. One of these motives is the struggle for power and influence. Many epic works describe the conflict between various states, peoples and leaders who are fighting for their

interests. This reflects the real political and social conflicts that have existed on the Great Silk Road for many centuries.

Another common motif in epic works on the Great Silk Road is the struggle for love. It can be love between two people, or love for their homeland, for their culture and traditions. This motif is often used to express deep feelings and emotions, as well as to show that a person is ready to go to great lengths for the sake of his love or respect for his culture and heritage.

In addition, symbols and metaphors are widely used in the epic tradition on the Great Silk Road. They help authors convey their ideas and thoughts more clearly and emotionally. For example, in the Chinese poem "The Song of the Knight", the hero is compared to a dragon, which reflects his strength, power and invincibility. In the Tajik poem "Shahnameh", the use of colors and natural elements helps to convey mood and emotions, as well as symbolize various aspects of life.

The study of the epic tradition on the Great Silk Road also includes an analysis of the language and style of epic works. Each region and culture has its own unique linguistic and stylistic features that can be found in epic works.

### **3. Results**

The integrated approach to the study of the epic genre on the Great Silk Road involves a multi-faceted examination of this literary tradition, combining various methods of analysis. By doing so, it has yielded a more comprehensive understanding of the genre, its distinctive features, and its evolution over time.

- **Literary Analysis**

Through literary analysis, scholars have delved into the various elements that define the epic tradition on the Great Silk Road. This includes identifying recurring themes and motifs that are characteristic of these epic narratives. Close readings of these epic works have unveiled intricate narrative structures, character archetypes, and the use of symbolism, which are integral components of the epic genre. The literary analysis has helped us appreciate the richness and complexity of these narratives and how they resonate with the cultural and emotional landscape of the regions connected by the Silk Road.

- **Historical Analysis**

Historical analysis plays a pivotal role in understanding the socio-cultural and political factors that have shaped the development of the epic genre on the Great Silk Road. This method has allowed researchers to draw connections between pivotal historical events, cultural practices, and traditions and how they have influenced the evolution of the genre over time. By tracing the historical context, we gain insight into the dynamic interplay between the epic tradition and the societies in which it thrived.

- **Cultural Analysis**

The Great Silk Road was a melting pot of diverse cultures and civilizations, each contributing to the rich tapestry of the epic tradition. Cultural analysis reveals the common cultural heritage that binds the regions along the Silk Road, while also highlighting the unique cultural identities of each locale. By undertaking comparative analyses of various epic traditions, researchers have unearthed both the similarities and differences between these narratives, shedding light on their connection to a broader cultural and social context. This form of analysis is crucial for understanding the cross-pollination of ideas and narratives along the Silk Road.

- **Linguistic Analysis**

Linguistic analysis focuses on the language and style employed in epic works. It unveils the linguistic and stylistic features that are characteristic of the epic tradition on the Great Silk Road. Researchers have examined the nuances of language, including archaic terms, regional dialects, and poetic devices. This level of analysis deepens our understanding of how language and style were harnessed to convey the epic narratives and underscores the artistry of these works.

In sum, the integrated approach to studying the epic genre on the Great Silk Road offers a holistic understanding that goes beyond mere literary analysis. By incorporating literary, historical, cultural, and linguistic analyses, scholars have unveiled the multi-dimensional nature of these narratives and how they were both shaped by and contributed to the vibrant crossroads of civilizations that was the Great Silk Road.

#### **4. Discussion**

Based on our comprehensive study of the epic genre along the Great Silk Road, we can draw a compelling conclusion that this genre held a paramount significance in facilitating cultural exchange and the transmission of ideas and values across the ancient world. Our research reveals that the epic works along the Great Silk Road served not only as repositories of historical facts but also as profound reflections of crucial cultural and religious traditions, as well as a repository of myths and legends.

One of the defining characteristics of the epic genre along the Great Silk Road is its remarkable diversity. Our in-depth investigation revealed that each distinct culture and people situated along this vast network of trade routes had their own unique features and styles of epic poetry. For instance, the Kyrgyz epic "The Epic of Manas" takes the form of an extensive narrative poem, recounting the heroic exploits of individuals who fiercely fought for their homeland and freedom. In stark contrast, the Chinese epic "Journey to the West" adopts the structure of a pilgrimage tale, narrating the adventurous journey of a Buddhist priest en route to India in search of sacred texts.

Another notable feature of the epic genre along the Great Silk Road is its profound role as a conduit for conveying religious and philosophical ideologies. For instance, the Chinese epic "Journey to the West" encapsulates profound philosophical notions derived from Confucianism and Taoism [5]. These ideas, intricately woven into the narrative, serve to not only entertain but also educate the audience on these profound belief systems.

It is, however, essential to acknowledge that not all the epic works along the Great Silk Road have survived to the present day. Many of them have been regrettably lost to the ravages of time or have been retained solely through oral transmission. Furthermore, some epics underwent adaptations and modifications to suit specific local conditions and goals, which inevitably impacted their preservation and authenticity. These challenges underscore the importance of scholarly efforts to preserve and document these cultural treasures for future generations, recognizing their vital role in understanding the rich tapestry of human history and cultural interaction along the Great Silk Road.

#### **5. Conclusion**

In conclusion of our article exploring the epic genre along the Great Silk Road, it is imperative to underscore the profound significance of this genre in unraveling the cultural and historical tapestry of the diverse peoples who resided along this ancient trade route.

Our comprehensive research has brought to light the prevalence and diversity of the epic genre along the Great Silk Road. It served as a pivotal platform for the conveyance and safe-guarding of cultural traditions and ideas, acting as a unifying force that forged lasting bonds between various ethnic groups and civilizations.

Furthermore, our investigation has revealed that heroism, religion, and mythology were pivotal themes and motifs interwoven into the tapestry of epic poetry along the Great Silk Road. The heroes of these epic works were depicted not only as valiant and robust but also as astute individuals with a keen sensitivity to the world around them. The inclusion of religious and mythological elements within these epics was instrumental in reflecting local beliefs and traditions, further contributing to their diffusion and fortification.

Our research carries significant implications for the continued exploration of the epic genre and its evolution along the Great Silk Road. We envision that the findings we've presented can serve as a stepping stone for delving deeper into this genre and its intricate connections with the culture and history of the various peoples inhabiting this ancient thoroughfare.

The study of the epic genre along the Great Silk Road holds the power to not only broaden our cultural and historical horizons but also to play a pivotal role in the preservation and transmission of the rich cultural heritage of this region to forthcoming generations. As we delve deeper into this literary tradition, we stand to gain a deeper appreciation for the shared legacies of the peoples who once thrived along this historic trade route, and this knowledge can be a beacon guiding us towards preserving and celebrating our shared human history.

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