



Armenian Institute of Tourism

Russian International Tourism Academy branch

Results of the SWOT analysis of the Silk Road brand potential in Armenia,

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Silk Road not only passes through the territory of the modern Republic of Armenia and the Armenian highlands, but also much of the trade is carried out by Armenian merchants. They transported raw silk, silk and other oriental products from Tabriz overland to the Mediterranean and from there to the European ports.

They held special merchant records, which marked the last journey from day to day experience, the balance of goods bought and sold.

These trading books are stored, which are an invaluable source of providing information about Silk Road reaching to China and Nepal, their economic relations, currency and way of life of people in these countries.

A large part of the manuscripts on the Armenian merchants of the Silk Road are published in the original Armenian and simultaneously are translated into Russian and English with valuable comments.

The Armenian merchants of the Silk Road were also devout Christians who wandering from country to country everywhere went to the local church. If there was not a church, then they went to the sister church.

In order to find what religious event is scheduled for a day in the European country according to differences in the calendar, they needed in a brief church calendar, publicly available literature, in which the Julian and Gregorian calendars were agreed.

They also needed short information of the cities on the trade routes of the countries they visited, about the daily lives of people living there, about the size of the monetary unit used.

Aiming this, the Armenian merchants ordered the European publishing houses to publish books called commercial literature.

These very traders published books containing the necessary knowledge and contributed to the development of the Armenian printing.

In the 17th century the great sponsors of the Armenian printing were the Armenian merchants from New Julfa, Isfahan.

It is not accidental that in the Armenian printing as an engraving of this book was depicted the picture of Nahapet Gyulnazaryan as an outstanding Armenian merchant of New Julfa.

In the book, which was published in 1687, and is dedicated to the illustration of the Psalms, he was presented in the typical dress of the merchant of the time.

It is no coincidence that the book dedicated to illustrations of psalms was published not in old-Armenian but in the spoken language of the time. Writing and publishing of this book was commissioned by the same merchant that letting him and other people read in the language of the time.

The world's largest collection of the Armenian manuscripts related to the Silk Road are in the Institute of Ancient Manuscripts in Yerevan (Matenadaran. Matenadaran means a collection of manuscripts).

The Armenian part of the Silk Road is also reflected in the collection of medieval life and science in its entirety.

There are numerous manuscripts written under the order of the Armenian merchants, passing along the Silk Road. Their activities contributed to the development of cartography, as the maps were urgently needed to merchants. For the first time the Armenian big map was printed in 1699, in Amsterdam, with the support of the Armenian merchants.

The same applies to the geographic initiatives. Anania Shirakatsi who lived in the 7th century, is the author of the Armenian ancient gazetteer. In the Middle Ages, this work has been enriched by many new sources, as well as there were written a new works dedicated to the geography of Europe and Asia. They describe in detail the country and cities of the Silk Road. In the Middle Ages, on this occasion another work was created and we received the multiple copies of the manuscript. The work is called "The names of the cities of India and Persia." It mainly represents major cities of the Silk Road.

The Armenian manuscripts are remarkable not only for its miniatures and cover. The works were always covered with a cloth, which had a large amount of luxurious silk pieces, which indicates that the distribution of silk in the Armenian Highlands was highly spread.

The Silk Road is also a means of transmission of cultural and civilization deposits. This fact is best expressed in the Armenian segment of the Silk Road. The Armenian merchants of different times of the Silk Road, from the early Middle Ages to the 17-18 centuries, delivered the values of the Armenian and Eastern civilization to Europe and brought out with them the value of the European culture.

The above-mentioned is confirmed by the example of the cities located on the commercial crossroads it is evident especially in the example of the city of Ani.

Armenian merchants had a particularly dominant position on the Silk Road in the 17th century, and this fact is reflected in the Armenian culture.

Armenian merchants coming from Europe brought not only European gorgeous images, books, prints, but made them in the Armenian handicraft centers too.

They were created engravings, manuscripts, miniatures according to the European-style, and European style penetrated to the houses eminent merchants. Several samples of these are preserved from New Julfa, a suburb of Isfahan.

The caravan culture is associated with the Silk Road. For passing the main roads the caravans needed inns that were in Armenia. There are various stories associated with them. In the Armenian literature and folklore there are stories related caravans with the image of beautiful illustrations and fascinating history and as legends associated with these places will be great of interest for tourists.

There are rocks and boulders resembling petrified camel and animals, and according to the legends, they are petrified caravans.

There are also traditions associated with the settlement of the Armenian segment of the Silk Road, which will also be of interest to readers.

Scientific exchange potential and touristic destinations¹

Armenia has played an important role in the Silk Road, as it is situated on the historical crossroads between East and West and it always has served as a link between these regions. Anyway, Armenia may be considered as part of the Western Silk Road due to its tighter connections to the European and other Middle East countries.

Armenia had wide connections from far East to Europe: China, India, Central Asian countries, Persia (Iran), Middle East countries, Georgia, Russia, Greece, Rome, and Byzantium. Among others, exchange of the scientific mind (travels of the medieval scientists), scientific publications (books and other papers) and instruments was rather important.

Present scientific exchanges are similar but much better (modern) way of communication and may serve a basis for development of the scientific tourism between the above-mentioned countries. Astronomical and other ancient and medieval scientific heritage sites (such as Zorats Karer or Karahunge, Metzamor ancient observatory, rock art, ancient and medieval calendars, medieval Gladzor University), modern research institutions (Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory, Matenadaran, Yerevan Physics Institute, Ashtarak Institute for Physical Research, Aragatz Cosmic Ray Station, etc.), science related museums (Science and Technology Museum, Space Museum, Geological Museum, etc.), and other popular science and educational centres may be considered as Silk Road heritage and present interesting and competent tourism potential.

¹ Areg Mickaelian, *Head of the Chair of Scientific Tourism, Armenian Institute of Tourism (AIT), Director of IAU South-West and Central Asian ROAD, Vice-Chair, Euro-Asian Astronomical Society (EAAS), Leading Scientist and Deputy Director, Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO), Acting President, Armenian Astronomical Society (ArAS), Project Manager, Armenian Virtual Observatory (ArVO).*

We have established a Chair of Scientific Tourism at the Armenian Institute of Tourism (AIT) and develop projects of study and promotion of the scientific touristic destinations in Armenia and neighbouring countries. Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO) serves as a model example for development of visit programs and packages, as well as for training of students and scientific tourism guides. We have created a webpage for BAO as a Scientific Tourism Centre (<http://www.aras.am/SciTourism/eng/index.php>). Two of our Chair associates, Areg Mickaelian and Sona Farmanyan have participated and delivered talks at 2 conferences related to Astronomical Silk Road in China in December 2015: *International Conference on Science and Civilization on the Silk Roads* (ICSCSR, Beijing) and *Astronomical Silk Road: International Conference on Astronomy and Archaeoastronomy in China and Central Asia* (Urumqi). More recently, on 7-10 November 2016, the President of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences Prof. Radik Martirosyan and other delegates from Armenia participated in a Forum in Beijing, China on the “Silk Road Economic Zone”, where a number of scientific exchange topics were also discussed.

At present Armenia holds one of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) Regional Offices of Astronomy for Development (ROAD), the South West and Central Asian (SWCA) ROAD, serving as a regional astronomical centre with an official status. One of the main goals of this initiative is to use astronomy for the development, including for promotion of cultural exchanges and tourism. We also have tight collaboration with the neighbouring IAU ROADs: East Asian (with an office in Beijing, China) and Arabic (with an office in Amman, Jordan) and may use our potential for the support of the UNWTO Western Silk Road programme.

ARMENIA: WE LIVE ON THE SILK ROAD

Tourism on the Silk Road

The greatest route in the history of mankind - "Silk Road" was a bridge and an important tool for trade between the nations of East and West and has made a great contribution to the common development of mankind for nearly two millennia. Diverse historical and cultural heritage, natural attractions, stretching for thousands of kilometers along the ancient roads, make Silk Road unique route network, linked by a common history.

Ventured on a journey along the ancient Silk Road, tourists will be able to go in the footsteps of famous personalities of history, visit the ancient cities, caravanserais, to overcome the mountain passes, visit castles and watchtowers, religious objects and archaeological sites.

On the territory of Armenia, there is considerable material and immaterial potential for the development of tourism and economic growth of residential areas along the Silk Road, however, many of the cultural and natural sites are under threat. The local population has financial problems. The key role of stakeholders in tourism development lies in the fact that their investments contribute to the preservation of historical heritage and the welfare of the local population.

Trends affecting tourism:

- High quality tourism infrastructure on the Silk Road countries as a powerful brand.

- The value of tourism sector of the Silk Road, for states as a direct return on investment and sustainable jobs.
- Cooperation between the countries of the Silk Road as a guarantor of stability in the region.
- Partnership Profitability in the private sector: the duration of the tour of the process and the degree of profitability.
- Modern system of research and management of cultural heritage.
- Intangible heritage and traditional way of life of the local population, as the heritage of humanity.
- Cooperation to strengthen social cohesion and intercultural dialogue on the material and non-material heritage of regional significance.
- Environmental sustainability and the principles of security for all types of tourism activities

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STEPS AND PRIORITIES FOR ARMENIA

1. Marketing and promotion

Silk Road - the creation of a network of tourist destinations of the common cultural heritage, will provide opportunities for joint marketing and advertising.

For Armenia, this phase will be implemented as the development of tourism products.

The growing prosperity of the middle class and young travelers will provide huge growth opportunities for domestic tourism and will entail a demand for the development of cultural tourism.

2. Capacity-building and management of destinations:

- Constant development and creation of new tourism products
- Marketing of destinations
- Working with local communities in order to identify new possibilities of development of tourism industry
- Creating a roadmap to maximize the development of tourism in the whole Armenia and border areas and regions.
- Creating a legacy of the Silk Road corridor as part of the common path along the western section (region). The group of experts included representatives of the ministries of economy, agriculture, local government, as well as education experts, management, tourism, emergency, information technologies and urban planning.
- The inclusion of the UNESCO World Heritage sites in the corridor of the Silk Road tour.
- Together with UNESCO funds to develop a training course and tutorial guides on the coverage of the Silk Road and the preparation of specialized guides on the heritage of the

Silk Road, with subsequent certification of the World federation of tourist guides associations as official guides along the Silk Road.

- Handbook for preparing guides on the heritage of the Silk Road, should serve as a practical tool for deepening knowledge and improving professional standards of tourist guides.
- Application of new technologies for the interpretation and presentation of objects of the Silk Road and their management.
- Involving schools and students to participate in the implementation of initiatives to promote tourism on the Silk Road.

3. Travel facilitation

Generally:

- Visa policy and travel documents.
- Minimization of border formalities and customs.
- Modern controls to reduce the transition time at the border
- Removing the restrictions on the number of drugs for their own use.

In Armenia

Implemented:

2016. - A visa-free regime of Armenia-Iran

Resumption of Gyumri Airport

2016-2017 completion of the second border point of Georgia-Armenia (Bavra) - highway E691

2017-2018 Work on the third border post Georgia-Armenia (Tashir) - highway E117

Achieving the ultimate goals of sustainable development of tourism along the Silk Road.

Cooperation with the tourism industry and strengthening the Silk Road advertising in major international fairs. Expansion of international festivals and other events of tourism associated with the Silk Road .

Strong sides:

- Advances in technology, internet access to the growth and the increasing use of smartphones and related technologies, will continue to influence the development trend of domestic and Incoming tourism.
- Improving the system of training and professional development in the tourism industry with the help of the internet - courses, special manuals and workshops.

- Encourage and promote the participation of local communities in projects for sustainable tourism development.
- The growth of "experience economy" in which travelers are seeking in exchange for money is something completely new, preferring genuine impressions along with the purchase of traditional products.

Weak sides:

- Hypersensitivity to the consumer climate and sustainability;
- Improved network of transport communications in the area of the Silk Road;
- Raising awareness of tourism along the Silk Road as a profitable investment opportunity, through the collaboration with national investment agencies;
- Enhancing public-private partnership.

The list of tangible assets (architectural) of Armenia.

- The Republic of Armenia and the surrounding areas
- route Tabriz -Artashat-Ani, Erzurum, Trabzon
- Hudaperini: currently two bridges on the border with Iran on the Araks River, near the dam reservoir built on the river Araks. One bridge / dam just before / in a dilapidated condition, while the second stands and passable.
- Inn and bridge Julfa in Iran / 8 km Andreordi Church / city near Jugha, in the vicinity of the hotel complex, only the foundations of the bridge coxpaneny
- The monumental complex of Dvin
- Traces Taperakan bridges and roads in Ararat marz in the old part of the mouth of the marsh of the Arax River, now the village Pokr Lead
- Khor Virap and the adjoining towns / lands /
- The remaining portions of the Yerevan fortress / newbuild in a residential area / areas and limiting it Razdan River remains of the territory and in the cellars of the Yerevan Brandy Distillery / fragments of walls, an underpass, a theater room /
- Kanaker, a group of churches and cross stones / cross-stones /
- Nor-Nork, the old cemetery and the bridge on the river Getar
- Avan, a temple and a group of surrounding monuments
- Blue Mosque / Mashtots Avenue /
- Kond preserved buildings, the church of St. Hovhannes / remains of the mosque and the minaret /
- The remains of the bath and the underpass in the surrounding area / underground / Hotels Yerevan and Moscow cinema
- 18-19c, The remains of the nearby residential houses on the street Arami
- Mongolian monument on the street. Arami opposite the hotel Yerevan
- The remains of water reservoirs and channels in the Republic Square
- Ruins of red bridge in Yerevan Hrazdan River
- Sardar, facade stones summer loggia, opposite the Yerevan fortress
- Zvartnots temple and associated outbuildings
- Echmiadzin Cathedral and other buildings and monuments
- Ashtarak, the old city near the bridge and small town
- Oshakan, a group of monuments of the Old Bridge / RA Aragatsotn Marz /

- The village Aruch and nearby monuments / RA Aragatsotn Marz /
- Talin Monuments / Shirak Marz /
- Ereknuk Temple and the adjacent housing / Shirak Marz /
- Church of the village Haykadzor / Shirak Marz /
- The living quarters of the village Dzhrap / Shirak Marz /
- Kharkiv / village Nord / near the town of Ani, bridges and underground facilities / Shirak Marz

ARMENIAN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE of THE SILK ROAD

(Presentation of the sources)

- Armenian Folk Tales (collection of folk tales, including parts 1,2,4, 1959-1963 Yerevan.):
- Anania Shirakatsi Arithmetic tasks based on commercial calculations and descriptions.
- Commercial travel notes and letters that reflect the region and the period of economic, political image, commercial, customs, laws, currency exchange (G. Vanandetsi, Treasure measures, weight, quantity and money around the world in 1699 թ. Amsterdam, /Treasure of measure, Weight, number & the money of the whole world/
- The history of the word and sellers (Ilg Teacher Papazyants copies of the letters of merchants, 1826, Venice.)
- Proverbs and sayings (Mkhitar Gosh, Yerevan, 1951)
- Rules and laws, Smbat Constable 13th Century
- Cilicia (A. Teacher Gltchean M. Echmiadzin, 1918)
- Folk conspiracies and prayers (S.Harutyunyan 2006, Yerevan)
- The mystical properties of gemstones (G. Patkanyan, St. Petersburg 1913)
- Culture, Formation Art of Calligraphy and translation
- The art of frescoes, manuscripts, khachkars, figurative art image semantics,
- Music: medieval musical instruments and melodies (khazagrutyun) folk singers, musicians, folk dances, (Armenians, Moscow, National Academy of Sciences and Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Maclay, 2012).
- Laws: ministerial management, trade procedures, transparency of tax and customs legislation (records Aruch, Ani, inscriptions Selim, Ohanavan, Goshavank wall)
- Chronicles Art on the rocks on khachkars, tombstones murals / picture crafts, activities, nature, lifestyle and customs / Chronicle on stone inscriptions on khachkars, tombstones and inscriptions Milling cutters (K.Kostanyan, St. Petersburg 1913)
- Food, food culture, food supplies for winter and roads