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## **Journeying Across the Silk Route Via Shah Jo Raag: Travel, Space, and Sufism**

The Silk Route in the history of cultural exchange has been a prominent bridge connecting the East and the West. Thereby, producing the term Eurasia. Along with the trading practice, what mediated between the two were ideologies, religion, material, art, and performance. It was the migration and settlement that gave rise to a new synthesis of cultural paradigms. One such outcome of this amalgamation is the performative tradition of poetry. Sufism as the mystic form of Islam, got spread through this route and travelled all the way from Arabia to Central Asia and made its influential impact in South Asia. The wandering Sufis not only charted the sacred landscape but brought a new element of Sama (musical performance and dance in devotion). Shah Jo Raag is one such form of devotional poetry, that is sung at the shrine of its composer and cult Sufi – Shah Abdul Latif, at Bhit Shah, Pakistan. Its context is based on

Shah Latif's collection of verses (Risalo), which has Qissa (folktales), Hamd (poetry praising God), Waqiya (anecdotes) and other forms of poetry. These verses carry spatial and spiritual metaphors that are a gateway to the memoryscape of the Silk Road. Thus, this paper will be an investigation and a transmedial journey from the oral performance of Shah Jo Raag by Raagi

faqirs at Sindh (South Asia) to the cities, culture, and traditions of Central Asia. The sonic form of lyric will be a departing point into the spiritual realm of Central Asia, the space from where the genealogy of Shah Latif can be traced, and into the spatio – geography of the cities mentioned in the verses in Risalo. Thereby, tracing and establishing the link between Central Asia and South Asia through mobility of various forms.