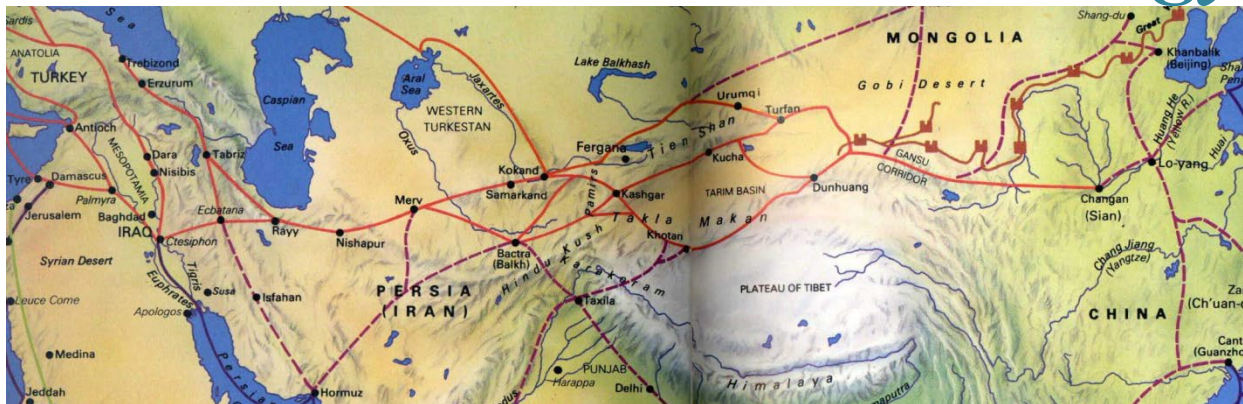




Silk Road Art and Archaeology



Near Eastern Studies 126, spring 2021
 Tu/Th 11-12:29
 Zoom Office Hours Tu/Th 1-2 pm

Instructor: Sanjyot Mehendale
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Course Description

The so-called Silk Roads are a number of overland and related sea trading routes stretching between Chang'an (today Xian), China in the East, and the Mediterranean in the West. The core of the trading patterns was the area of Central Asia (most importantly, modern Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and China's Xinjiang Province) in the hub of which the routes between east and west were interwoven with those coming from the north and from Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka in the south.

In modern scholarship, the term Silk Road was coined by the 19th century German Ferdinand von Richthofen. Although silk was one of the main commodities traded from China, Silk Road trade came to refer to a wide variety of materials and goods that were exchanged along several related commercial routes. Archaeological finds attest to early contacts (silk was discovered in an Egyptian tomb dating from the 10th century BCE), but the earliest evidence of institutionalized trade was during the Han dynasty (206 BCE - 220 CE) in China. Trade greatly

intensified with the Roman Empire under Augustus, and with the establishment of the Kushan dynasty in Central Asia and India.

Formal Western exploration of the ancient Silk Roads commenced in the late 19th and early 20th century with the expeditions of the European scholars Aurel Stein, Sven Hedin and Albert Grünwedel. The work of these scholars and their successors, as well as many expeditions by scholars from Asia, has resulted in a comprehensive record of the art and material culture of the Silk Roads, as well as a large collection of artifacts which now form parts of permanent collections in many museums in Europe and Asia.

The relatively unrestricted movement of peoples and merchandise along these Silk Roads trading routes created an environment which facilitated the spread of varied ideas, cultural forms and art styles, and of religions, among the most important of which were Buddhism and Islam. Use of the term Silk Roads as an adjective, rather than Central Asian, Chinese or Roman, for the art and archaeology of diverse geographical regions does not purport to suggest that a homogenous Silk Roads style existed. Rather, the art and archaeology of the Silk Roads was characterized by, and will be studied as an encounter of various traditions that moved along the trade routes. The social and political underpinnings of these intersections will also be discussed.

Course Structure

Lectures and Discussion

Originally designed as a lecture course, this semester the course will have a slightly tailored format due to the cancellation of in-person classes. One week of lectures (taped - starting week 3) will be followed by one week of classroom discussion over zoom (starting week 4) in which students working in groups will discuss with the instructor their ideas regarding specific issues relating to the material assigned that week and presented in the lectures the week before. The flow will be as follows (more detailed information is noted in the class schedule below):

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|---------|--|
| Week 1: | Zoom sessions with all students: Introduction on Tuesday and discussion of assigned readings on Thursday |
| Week 2: | Zoom sessions with all students regarding the lecture and readings. |

No written assignments due week 1 and 2

Starting week 3, there will be weekly assignments consisting of written responses to taped lectures and written notes of the discussion sessions, respectively. These are due each Monday following the week in question (except for spring break).

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|---------|---|
| Week 3: | Taped lecture with assigned readings. |
| Week 4: | Discussion sessions around a certain topic having to do with the material assigned that week and material covered in the taped lecture. |
| Week 5: | Taped lecture |

Week 6: Discussion sessions
Etc. until
Week 14: Taped lecture

Week 15: Last live zoom session with all students

No assignment due for the last zoom session.

Lectures are either zoom recordings or consist of narrated power-points which will be uploaded at the beginning of each week. If taped, the projected power-points will also be uploaded on BCourses for clarity.

Zoom discussion weeks will allow groups of four students (5 groups on Tuesday, 4 on Thursday) 15 minutes to have their say, spread out over two days. Note: you have until the third week to put together your own group or the instructor will randomly assign students. It is hoped that collaboration to gather your thoughts will precede the discussion but, if not, breaking up the class into smaller groups will allow the instructor to engage with students more effectively. The Tuesday discussion session will be prefaced by short introductory remarks by the instructor. Having four groups on Thursday, as opposed to five on Tuesday, will allow all students an opportunity to respond to each other's remarks at the end of Thursday's session.

Readings

Students are assigned material for each lecture and zoom session as listed below in this syllabus. Required readings will be posted on BCourses or be available via JSTOR and Proquest Ebook. Due to copyright rules, students are requested not to make additional copies of these articles.

Office Hours

Students are encouraged to attend office hours (Tu/Th 1-2 pm) early in the semester for an introductory discussion which may allow the instructor to get a sense of students' expectations and backgrounds, and may provide an opportunity for students to ask specific questions about the direction of the course. If students are planning to attend office hours, they are requested to set up an appointment beforehand via email. The instructor can also be reached by email to schedule an appointment outside regular office hours.

Email messages should not include requests to repeat lecture segments or to answer questions about course materials. Students are expected to attend regular office hours to discuss in person any problems they might be experiencing with the course materials.

Assignments and Grading

1. (30%) **Written responses.** At the end of each week of taped lectures (weeks 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14), students are required to complete a 1-2 page (single-spaced) written response to be handed in by the following Monday as an email attachment (save for the week 9 assignment which will be due the Monday after spring break). Each weekly entry should include a synopsis of the lecture and your thoughts on what was covered in class and assigned during that week. Students are free to single-out a particular topic/issue/article that sparked their interest.
2. (30%) **Class presence and responses to discussion.** Students are required to engage in classroom discussions. They are also required to attend each online discussion section (whether it's your group's turn or not) and to inform the instructor beforehand of their absence. Unexplained absences will result in a failing grade. To ensure they remain engaged in the work of their classmates, students are required to hand in 1-2 pages of notes on the discussion (weeks 4, 6, 8, 11, 13) to be handed in by the following Monday as an attachment. (Note: no response is due for the last zoom session of week 15)
3. (40%) **Final Essay.** 10-15 pages (double-spaced) due Monday, May 10, by 11:59 pm, as an email attachment. Students are required to complete a persuasive essay on any topic pertaining to the Silk Roads using logic and reason to argue a point of view based on facts, examples, and expert scholarly work (include citations).

4. NOTE: NO FINAL EXAM

Useful Resources

Maps

- The Historical Atlas of Central Asia (**Proquest Ebook**)
- Eurasia and the Silk Roads (**Proquest Ebook**)

General Websites:

- <http://depts.washington.edu/uwch/silkroad>
- <http://www.silk-road.com>
- <http://www.bl.uk>
- <http://www.artstor.org>

For Further Research

Tucker, Jonathan. *The Silk Road: Art and History*, Chicago: Art Media Resources Ltd, 2003.

Week 1 (TuJan19-ThJan21) *Silk Road*: In Search of a Concept - **Zoom Discussion**

Course parameters; 19th-20th century exploration of Central Asia and invention of the "Silk Road."

Required Readings

C. Waugh, Daniel. "The Silk Roads in History." *Expedition Magazine* 52.3 (2010): 9-22. **(BCourses)**

Chin, Tamara. "The Invention of the Silk Road, 1877." *Critical Inquiry* 40.1 (2013): 194-219. **(BCourses)**

Week 2 (TuJan26-ThJan28) Understanding Central Asia - **Zoom Discussion**

Physical and cultural geography; Central Asia as a crossroads; how to study cross-cultural exchanges.

Required Readings

Christian, David. "Silk Roads or Steppe Roads? The Silk Roads in World History." *Journal of World History* 11.1 (2000): 1-26. **(BCourses)**

Canepa, Matthew. "Theorizing Cross-Cultural Interaction among the Ancient and Early Medieval Mediterranean, Near East and Asia." *Ars Orientalis* 38 (2010): 7-29. **(BCourses)**

Week 3 (TuJan02-ThJan04) Heavenly Horses: The Archaeology of Steppe Networks - **Taped**

Pastoral nomadic networks; the site of Pazyryk; "Animal Style" symbolism; gender.

Required Readings

Preservation of the Frozen Tombs of the Altai Mountains. United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Publication (2010): 11-48. **(BCourses)**

Andreeva, Petya. "'Animal Style' at the Penn Museum: Conceptualizing Portable Steppe Art and its Visual Rhetoric." *Orientalis* 51.4 (July-August 2020): 48-57. **(BCourses)**

<https://source.wustl.edu/2017/03/nature-silk-road-evolved-as-grass-routes-movement/>

Written Assignment 1: Response on lectures and readings (due by Monday, February 8)

Week 4 (TuFeb09-ThFeb11) *Amazons* of Scythia – **Zoom Discussion**

Greek-nomadic encounters and the creation of a myth

Required Readings

Mayor, Adrienne. "Ancient Puzzles and Modern Myths." *The Amazons; Lives and Legends of Warrior Women across the Ancient World*. Princeton University Press, 2014. **(BCourses)**

Guliaev, Valeri I. "Amazons in the Scythia: New Finds at the Middle Don, Southern Russia." *World Archaeology* 31.1 (June 2003): 112-125. **(BCourses)**

<https://www.haaretz.com/archaeology/.premium.MAGAZINE-amazon-warrior-women-russia-archaeology-scythian-greece-1.8327358>

Optional for Further Research

Stewart, Andrew. "Imag(in)ing the Other: Amazons and Ethnicity in Fifth-Century Athens." *Poetics Today* 16:4 (Winter 1995): 571-597. **(BCourses)**

Video: Lecture by Christine Lee "Where are the Women Warriors? Evidence for Gender Equality on the Mongolian Steppe" (<https://ieas.berkeley.edu/news/where-are-women-warriors-evidence-gender-equality-mongolian-steppe>) (Note: depictions and descriptions of skeletal remains!)

Written Assignment 2: Notes on discussion (due by Monday, February 15)

Week 5 (TuFeb16-ThFeb18) The "Hellenized East": Greeks in Bactria –**Taped**

The 'Greek' city of Ai Khanum in Bactria; from Alexander the Great to Hellenized nomads.

Required Readings

Bernard, Paul. "The Greek Colony at Ai Khanum and Hellenism in Central Asia." *Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul*. Eds. Fredrik Hiebert and Pierre Cambon. Washington D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2008. 80-105 **(BCourses)**

Schiltz, Veronique. "Tillya Tepe, the Hill of Gold: A Nomad Necropolis." *Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul*. Eds. Fredrik Hiebert and Pierre Cambon. Washington: National Geographic Society, 2008. 219-231. **(BCourses)**

Henri-Paul Francfort, "Tillya Tepe and connections with the Eurasian steppes." *Afghanistan: Forging Civilizations along the Silk Road*, J. Aruz et E. Valtz Fino (Dir.), New Haven, Londres, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University Press, p. 88-101. (https://www.academia.edu/3480828/Tillya_Tepe_and_connections_with_the_Eurasian_steppes)

For Images See:

Bernard, Paul. "Ai Khanum Catalog." *Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul*. Eds. Fredrik Hiebert and Pierre Cambon. Washington: National Geographic Society, 2008: 106-129. **(BCourses)**

Schiltz, Veronique. "Tillya Tepe Catalog." *Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul*. Eds. Fredrik Hiebert and Pierre Cambon. Washington: National Geographic Society, 2008: 232-293. **(BCourses)**

Written Assignment 3: Response on lectures and readings (due by Monday, February 22)

Week 6 (Tu Feb23-ThFeb25) Unraveling *Hellenism* – Zoom Discussion

Required Readings

Heit, Helmut. "Western Identity, Barbarians and the Inheritance of Greek Universalism." *The European Legacy* 10.7 (2005): 725-739. **(BCourses)**

Hoo, Melinda. "Ai Khanum in the Face of Eurasian Globalisation: A Translocal Approach to a Contested Site in Hellenistic Bactria." *Ancient West & East* (2018): 161-186. **(BCourses)**

Mairs, Rachel. "Greek Identity and Settler Community in Hellenistic Bactria and Arachosia." *Migrations & Identities* 1.1 (2008): 19–43. **(BCourses)**

Written Assignment 4: Notes on discussion (due by Monday, March 1)

Week 7 (TuMar02-ThMar04) Begram and Early Silk Road Networks – Taped

The making of the Kushan "empire"; the site of Begram and early Common Era overland and maritime exchange networks; the Kushans and Buddhism

Required Readings

Tucker, Jonathan. "The Kushans." *The Silk Road: Art and History*. Chicago: Art Media Resources Ltd, 2003, pp. 33-63. **(BCourses)**

Mehendale, Sanjyot. "Begram: Along Ancient Central Asian and Indian Trade Routes." *Cahiers d'Asie Centrale* 1-2 (1996): 47-64. **(BCourses)**

Optional for Further Research

The Voyage Around the Erythraean Sea

(<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/periplus/periplus.html>)

Written Assignment 5: Response on lectures and readings (due by Monday, March 8)

Week 8 (TuMar09-ThMar11) Religion and Maritime Trade - Zoom Discussion

Spread of religion along the Silk Road; Buddhism goes west.

Required Readings

Seland, Elvind Heldaas. "Networks and Social Cohesion in Ancient Indian Ocean Trade: Geography, Ethnicity, Religion." *Journal of Global History* 8 (2013): 373–390 (BCourses)

Strauch, Ingo. "Buddhism in the West? Buddhist Indian Sailors on Socotra (Yemen) and the Role of Trade Contacts in the Spread of Buddhism." *Buddhism and the Dynamics of Transculturality*. Ed. Kellner, Birgit. De Gruyter, 2019, pp. 15-52. (BCourses)

Written Assignment 6: Notes on discussion (due by Monday, March 15)

Week 9 (TuMar16-ThMar18) Gandharan Cosmopolitanism - Taped

Early Patterns in the spread of Buddhism from South Asia into Central Asia; the Gandharan tradition; the meaning of "cosmopolitanism"

Required Readings

Luczanits, Christian. "Buddhism in a Cosmopolitan Environment: The Art of Gandhara." *Orientalia* 39:7 (2008): 46-52. (BCourses)

Branccaccio, Pia, and Xinru Liu. "Dionysis and Drama in the Buddhist Art of Gandhara." *Journal of Global History* 4.2 (2009): 219-244. (BCourses)

Written Assignment 7: Response on lectures and readings (due by Monday, March 29)

Week 10 (TuMar23-ThMar25) Spring Recess

Week 11 (TuMar30-ThApr01) Beyond Gandhara: Routes into China - Zoom Discussion

Routes through the Karakorum into China; Buddhism in China

Required Readings

Heirman, A. and Bumbacher, P. "Introduction: The Spread of Buddhism." *Handbook of Oriental Studies*, Section 8: Uralic and Central Asian Studies, Volume 16: The Spread of Buddhism. Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2007, pp. 1-14. (Proquest Ebook)

Van Aerde, Marike. "Routes beyond Gandhara: Buddhist Rock Carvings in the Context of the Early Silk Roads." In: Yang L., Bork, HR., Fang X., and Mischke S. (Eds). *Socio-Environmental Dynamics along the Historical Silk Road*. Springer, Cham, 2019, pp. 455-480. (BCourses)

Pekarik, Andrew, and Stokes, Stephanie. "The Cave Temples of Dunhuang." *Archaeology* 36.1 (January/February 1983): 20-27. **(BCourses)**

Yu, Xiangjun. "The Glorious Kizil Grottoes." *China Today* (October 2015): 66-69. **(BCourses)**

Written Assignment 8: Notes on discussion (due by Monday, April 5)

Week 12 (TuApr06-ThApr08) Sogdian Merchants along the Silk Roads - **Taped**

The art and archaeology of mercantile Sogdiana; Sogdian religion; Sogdians in China

Required Readings

The Sogdians *Influencers on the Silk Road*
(<https://sogdians.si.edu/the-sogdians-at-home/>)

Xinjiang, Rong. "Sogdian Merchants and Sogdian Culture on the Silk Road." *Empires and Exchanges in Eurasian Late Antiquity: Rome, China, Iran, and the Steppe, ca. 250–750*. Ed. Di Cosmo, Nicola. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 84-95. **(BCourses)**

Grenet, Frantz. "Religious Diversity among Sogdian Merchants in Sixth-Century China." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27.2 (2007): 463-478 **(BCourses)**.

Written Assignment 9: Response on lectures and readings (due by Monday, April 12).

Week 13 (TuApr13-ThApr15) Textiles of the Silk Road – **Zoom Discussion**

Textiles as evidence of cross-cultural exchanges

Required Readings

Gasparini, Mariachiara. "Sino-Iranian Textile Patterns in Trans-Himalayan Areas." *The Silk Road* 14 (2016): 84–96. **(BCourses)**

Bier, Carol, "Pattern Power: Textiles and the Transmission of Knowledge". *Textile Society of America Symposium Proceedings* (2004), pp. 144-153.
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tsaconf/444>

Sheng, Angela. "Textiles from the Silk Road." *Expedition Magazine* 52.3 (2010): n. pag. Penn Museum, 2010 Web. 15 Jan 2021
<http://www.penn.museum/sites/expedition/?p=12972>

Written Assignment 10: Notes on discussion (due by Monday, April 19)

Week 14 (TuApr20-ThApr22) *Islamic Networks along the Silk Road - Taped*

“Islamic Art”: problems of definition; spread of Islam into Central Asia and China; maritime networks

Required Readings

Paskaleva, Elena. “The Bibi Khanum Mosque in Samarqand: Its Mongol and Timurid Architecture.” *The Silk Road* 10 (2012): 81-98. **(BCourses)**

Shen, Hsueh-man. “The China–Abbasid Ceramics Trade during the Ninth and Tenth Centuries: Chinese Ceramics Circulating in the Middle East.” *A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture*. Finbarr Barry Flood and Gülru Necipoğlu eds. John Wiley & Sons, 2017, pp. 197-217. **(BCourses)**

Written Assignment 11: Response on lectures and readings (due by Monday, April 26)

Week 15 (TuApr27-ThApr29) Conclusion: Theorizing *Encounters* - **Zoom Discussion**

Readings TBA

No Assignment Due

Week 16 (TuMay04-ThMay06) R/R/R Week (No Class)

Monday, May 10, 11:59 pm: Deadline Research Paper (sent to instructor as an email attachment)