

CULTURAL HERITAGE ON THE SILK ROADS | 2020 REPORT



Institute for Intercultural Dialogue on the Silk Roads (IIDOS)

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Preface

When we first released the annual report of “Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads 2019”, the lines were full of excitement whether it was archeological discoveries, thematic exhibitions, academic achievements or cultural events on the Silk Roads. However, I did not expect that a sudden new coronavirus epidemic has slowed down the pace of work in countries and regions along the Silk Roads in 2020, and even stopped a number of important projects. Therefore, in the annual report of “Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads 2020” compiled by us this year, there is more silence in content.

The framework of our annual report has not changed. The existing design and framework continue to be developed around the cultural heritage on the Silk Roads. It is divided into four sections: The first is archaeological discoveries, which occurred in the time and space of the Silk Roads and reflect the cultural interaction along the Silk Roads. The second is thematic exhibitions, which refers to the special exhibitions on the cultural heritage of the Silk Roads and other related topics planned by museums, held in museums or similar cultural spaces, or even held on the cloud. The third is the academic researches in the form of monographs and important papers in the field of cultural heritage on the Silk Roads. The fourth is cultural events, including various international events led by governments or non-governmental organizations.

However, this year we changed the way and method of collecting data, mainly in cooperation with professional institutions and expert teams, and divided into four groups to carry out the collection:

In terms of archaeological discoveries, we have received strong support from the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. In particular, we have gathered a group of experts engaged in archaeology and collected a certain amount of archaeological data on the Silk Roads under very difficult circumstances. Although archaeology along the Silk Roads has been greatly affected in 2020, especially some international cooperation projects couldn’t be carried out. However, local archaeologists have implemented many important projects independently in a relatively isolated situation and the archaeology of the Silk Roads in China has also been fruitful.

In terms of thematic exhibition, we cooperated with the International Museum Observatory of Nanjing University of the Arts, especially supported by the International Committee for Museology of ICOM, and collected nearly a hundred pieces of information. We can see that the number of Silk Road exhibitions is still strong in general, especially the number of online, restored, and touring

exhibitions has greatly increased, reflecting the new trend of museum exhibitions today. Obviously, many museums along the Silk Roads have been closed due to the epidemic. Therefore, the number and scale of the overall offline exhibitions are limited.

Academic researches may be relatively small fluctuations. The publications of the Silk Road cultural heritage are still fruitful. About a hundred academic works have come into our attention. The Center for Research on Ancient Chinese History of Peking University and the Department of History of Zhejiang University have jointly selected these works and papers in English and Chinese. There are a large number of instrumental, informative and innovative works in French, German, Russian, Japanese and other languages.

In terms of cultural events, we cooperated with ICOMOS Xi’an Silk Road Center, and at the same time received support from UNESCO World Heritage Center and Silk Road Project, and initially collected a batch of data. The UNESCO headquarters has not been opened for a long time due to the epidemic, but there is still a lot of work carried out tenaciously through the Internet, and Silk Road activities around the world are still being carried out, especially the Silk Road Week in Hangzhou, China. More than 200 cultural heritage institutions from all over the country formally participated online or offline.

After the preliminary selection, we still invited a professional team of Chinese and foreign scholars to vote. The Chinese and foreign scholars were equally divided. This team is basically similar to the selection team in 2019, with more than 20 foreign scholars from about 10 countries, including Britain, France, Germany, the United States, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, and South Korea, recommended by these experts and scholars. Finally, we formed a very dedicated professional academic team to write a review in four sections. It was edited and translated by our International Silk Road Intercultural Research Center, and officially published by the Commercial Press.

The “Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads 2020” is the second annual report issued by the Silk Road Center and various partner organizations. Due to the epidemic, our work has also encountered special difficulties. However, we are grateful for the hard work of the Silk Road cultural heritage community, thank all the cooperative teams for their strong support, and hope to receive criticism and corrections from the vast number of colleagues, so that we can further improve the quality of our annual report when the epidemic situation is eased or in the future.

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Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads

2020

REPORT

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

DISCOVERIES



Annual Review of Archeological Discovery on the Silk Roads in 2020

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When the “Silk Road” was first proposed in the 19th century, it specifically referred to the 4,500 kilometers (2,800 miles) ancient commercial road connecting Chang’an in the East and Rome in the West, from the 2nd century BC to the 15th century. With the advancement of people’s cognition and the expansion of knowledge, the concept of the “Silk Road” has been refined and extended, far beyond the time and space dimension of the Richthofen era, and has become a huge and complex transportation network starting from East Asia through the Eurasian continent and the ocean to the Central Asia, West Asia, South Asia, Europe and even Africa. It becomes a symbolic title for overcoming natural barriers between the centers of civilizations to achieve interconnection and sharing of civilizations, from prehistoric to modern times. The Silk Road research aims to not only reconstruct systematically the history of Sino-Western exchanges based on ancient documents, but also to fill blank areas and add detailed branches to the transportation network through Eurasia based on latest archaeological discoveries. Due to the impact of the COVID-2019, archaeological excavations in most parts of the world have been affected therefore stagnated. In the limited period of the latter half of the year, with the successful control of the epidemic in China and some other countries, archaeological excavation projects have been restarted, and some important achievements in archaeology on the Silk Road have been made, especially those related projects in China. These discoveries are introduced and summarized here according to the routes and their regions.

I. Discoveries Related to the Overland (Oasis) Silk Road

1. The Central Plain of China

Following the discovery of a 5300-year-old tooth-carved silkworm model at the Shuanghuaishu site in Gongyi County, Henan Province in 2019, this year’s excavation at the Shicun site in Xia County, Shanxi conducted by the College of Archaeology of Jilin University found 4 stone-carved silkworm chrysalis from more than 6,000 years ago, which is the earliest stone-carved silkworm chrysalis image ever found so far. Its discovery not only provided a further example of the half-cut carbonized silkworm chrysalis excavated in Xiyin Village of Xia County in 1926 by the father of Chinese archaeology, Li Ji, but also advanced about 500 years in chronological analysis. There has always been a legend about Leizu teaching people about silkworm rearing and silk reeling in Yuncheng. The appearance of stone-carved silkworm chrysalis shows that people have mastered the silkworm rearing and silk reeling technology at that time.

In this year, the Luoyang Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology discovered a new tomb dating back to the Spring and Autumn Period at the Xuyang Cemetery in Yichuan county. Judging from the unearthed ceremonial instruments such as the chime

bells and stone chimes, and the sacrificial chariot pits surrounding the main tombs, it is preliminarily considered to be a tomb of the King of the Luhunrong tribe. The Luhunrong tribe is one of the very few tribes migrated from the marginal zones to the areas of the Yellow river and the Luo river, whose moving and fall was well documented in classic texts.. The burial custom of placing cows and sheep’s heads in the chariot pit was prevalent in the Xuyang cemetery, which is similar with that of the minority people in the Northwest, while quite different from the burial customs in the Central Plains. It is believed to be the only corresponding association with Luhunrong who was active in this area during the Spring and Autumn Period. It is n important materials for studying the migration and integration of ethnic minorities in the Central Plains.

The Xi’an Muncipal Institute of Cultural Relics Conservation and Archaeology has excavated a large high-level tomb of the Sixteen Kingdoms period (Tomb No.100 in Zhongzhao Village) in the Shaolingyuan area in the southern suburbs of Xi’an. Two large tombs of the same period have been excavated in the Shaolingyuan area before. Tomb No.100 consists of a sloped passage, a tunnel, a patio, an earthen-carved building on the roof of the cave, an alcove, a door, a corridor, an front chamber, a side chamber, and a rear chamber. There are 3 earthen-carved buildings arranged above the tomb passage. A total of more than 200 pieces of various cultural relics were unearthed from the tombs. The discovery of the tomb provides important information for studying the funeral customs, social and cultural lifes as well as the mutual exchanges and influences in cultures, ideas, and systems of various ethnic groups in the Sixteen Kingdoms period, It witnessed a critical historical period for the establishment and development of a multiethnic country.

In 2020, Anyang Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology discovered a large-scale tomb of Sui dynasty with rigorous layout in Long’an District, Anyang City. The shape of the tomb is a single-chamber brick tomb, which is composed of a long sloped tomb path, a tunnel, a gate, a chamber, and a sarcophagus bed. A white marble sarcophagus bed is placed in the tomb chamber. The screen around the coffin bed is engraved with images of the tomb owner’s daily life and religious allusions. The bed’s base is engraved with the patterns of beasts, gods, sacred fire altars, celestial dancers and musicians, and pearl roundel motifs, many of which are gilded and painted, exhibiting a strong Zoroastrian and Buddhist style. The epitaph shows that the tomb was a joint burial tomb for the Yuqing couple in the tenth year of the Kaihuang Reign (590AD). The Qu family represented by the owner of the tomb, Qu Qing, for a long time, lived in Longxi area (west of Gansu Province), which occupied the main routes of the Silk Road and was deeply influenced by the culture of Europe, West Asia, and Central Asia. The discovery of the sarcophagus bed in the tomb and dozens of richly colored relief patterns of Buddhism and Zoroastrianism, and a similar Sogdian sarcophagus bed from the Northern Qi Dynasty was discovered in Anyang in the early 20th century, both have witnessed a history of the exchange and integration of Eastern and Western civilizations on the Silk Road in the Middle Ages. A batch of exquisite Xiangzhou kiln white porcelain was also unearthed from the tomb of Quqing, showing the superb porcelain technology of the Anyang Xiangzhou kiln in the Sui Dynasty, and provided valuable physical materials for the study of the origin and development of Chinese white porcelain.

The Shaanxi Provincial Institute of Archaeology has excavated two mural tombs from Tang Dynasty in Konggang New City, Xixian New District. One of the tombs is a 5-5-patios and single-chambered brick tomb with mural paintings on the walls, and the east and west walls of the tomb are painted with images of the Hu people (the Northern barbarian tribes in ancient China) training horses or holding camels. According to the epitaph, the owner of the tomb, Shanda Kang, was an official of horse administration in the early Tang Dynasty, and was probably a Sogdian from Yuanzhou (now Guyuan county, Ningxia). The other tomb is an earthen pit tomb with 5-patios. The painting on the east wall depicting dancers (Hu Xuan Dance), which bears the typical style of the High Tang period . According to the epitaph, the owners of the tomb are the couple, Zhishi Yang and Dajia Pang.

The Institute of Longmen Grottoes in Luoyang has conducted the first large-scale excavation of the Tang Dynasty imperial temple Xiangshan Temple site at the southern foot of Longmen East Mountain since 2016, and uncovered the building foundations, roads from the Tang and Song Dynasties, and two Tang Dynasty tower foundation sites. The foundation sites of the tower include important relics such as underground vaults, paved bricks, aprons, platform foundations, and the unearthed relics include sarira, stone statues, large carved stone strips, carved stone fragments, bricks, tiles, iron nails, small gilt bronze Buddha statues. Based on the historical texts, it is preliminarily speculated that it is the tomb tower of Divyakara, the Indian monk who entered China in the Tang Dynasty, which witnesses the friendly cultural exchange between China and India in Tang dynasty.

2. Xinjiang Region

The archaeological excavations of beacon-towers and ancient cities in Xinjiang area this year are the most significant highlight

of archaeology on the Silk Roads. The systematic and planned excavations demonstrate the management and effective jurisdiction of the Central Plains regime in Xinjiang area during the Han and Tang Dynasties, and the continuing influence of the Central Plains culture on the Serindia (or the Western Regions) .

The Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology in Xinjiang, together with the College of Archaeology and Museumology, Peking University, spent three years conducting archaeological excavation on the site of the ancient city of Kuiyuke Xiehaier in Luntai County, Xinjiang. At present, the developing history of the ancient city from settlement to city has basically been revealed. The work in 2020 mainly focus on the excavation to the earthen platform in the middle of the ancient city, which yielded clear house sites and other relics. The city, which was constructed on the basis of the site of the Spring and Autumn Period, first built in 550-400 BC, is considered to be the earliest city excavated scientifically in the periphery of the Tarim Basin with a clear dating, and is of great value for exploring the development of prehistoric settlements to oasis cities in the southern piedmont zone of the Tianshan Mountains. The decorations of unearthed painted pottery and spouted vessels, deformed wolf-pattern bones, oracle bones and Wuzhu coins show the inclusive and multicultural characteristics of the core area of the Silk Road.

This year, the Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology in Xinjiang carried out excavations to the Taxkorgan Stone City. It is proved that the ancient city was composed of the outer city, the inner city, and the three sub-cities in the inner city, which separately lie in the north, east and west.. Open channels, culverts, reservoirs, and the water supply system have been revealed step by step. Archaeologists also uncovered and dissected the city walls, bastions, ramps, barbican entrances and houses, disclosing different construction methods and historical evolution. Excavations demonstrate that people lived there from the Stone Age more than 8,000 years ago, and it became an important town on the Silk Roads during the prosperous time of the Han and Tang Dynasties, and continued to be used as a military fort during the Qing dynasty and the Republic of China.

Through three years of archaeological excavations to the ancient city of Zorkut in Luntai County, the joint archaeological team composed of the College of Archaeology and Museumology of Peking University and the Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology in Xinjiang confirmed that the ancient city was a highest-level huge city on the Silk Roads during the Han, Wei and Jin Dynasties. The high platform in the northeast part of inner city is actually an earthen structure, which is a big city of paramount rank, known in the Tarim Basin during the Han Dynasty. A large number of sun-dried bricks were used in the ancient city construction. The earthen platform architecture was built in the east of the inner city wall, forming a structure of Triple-walled City (inside, outside and the platform), which was extremely distinctive and rarely seen in Xinjiang and Central Asian areas. Inside the high platform city, houses are of shed scaffolding, while wooden scaffolding houses of large scale were built on the outside around the city wall. A large number of pottery sherds, stone tools, and animal bones have been unearthed in the city, as well as boneware, bronzes, ironware, bead decorations, and bronze coins etc. Among them, the artifacts of the Han Dynasty bear typical characteristics of the Chang'an area, while obvious influences of the Qiuci area can be detected in the artifacts of the Wei and Jin Dynasties. The dating results show that the ancient city was first built in the late Warring States period and was abandoned in the Wei and Jin dynasties, and mainly in use during the Han Dynasty.

The Xinjiang Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology continued to excavate and sort out the site of Keyak Kuduke beacon-towers in Yuli County, acquiring new materials and knowledge. More than 430 pieces (groups) of various artifacts have been unearthed, including more than 150 pieces (groups) of paper documents and wooden slips. Content of these documents varies from military, politics, economy, to literature; many of these archaeological discoveries have been discovered for the first time in China. The excavation to this site demonstrates the effective jurisdiction and governance of the Western Regions by the Tang Dynasty, and fills the gaps in historical documents about the defense system of military towns under the jurisdiction of Yanqi Town, one of the four Anxi towns in the Tang Dynasty. It provided first-hand information for understanding the fortification in the Western Regions back to then and the military life of the frontier fortresses.

The National Museum of China and the Xinjiang Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology jointly excavated the site of the ancient city of Wushitir in Kuqa City. A large number of pottery, bronzes, animal bones, plant seeds, etc. around the Tang Dynasty were unearthed. Combined with the overall features of unearthed assemblage and the scale, layout and structure of the site etc., it is preliminarily inferred that the ancient city may be a management organization where the central government implemented the garrison as an important pass.

The Renmin University of China and Xinjiang Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology have started another

turn of excavation on the site of the Tanghaodun cite in Qitai County, Changji Autonomous Prefecture, Xinjiang. The excavations were mainly concentrated on the platform in the center of the ancient city. All the remains, including 14 pits, 1 house site, and 7 tombs were uncovered. The unearthed artifacts include pottery, porcelain, bronze ware, ironware, woodwork, bone ware, animal bones, etc. The excavation also illustrated that the site faces the east, and its overall plane was rectangular. Excavations in the north, east, and south parts revealed the black brick surface and column bases inside the outer wall, and also the remnants of continuous murals on both sides of the north inner wall. According to preliminary judgments, the platform site of Tanghaodun City in the Tang Dynasty may be a cloister-style Buddhist temple with a classical layout where the hall lies in the front and tower in the back from the Gaochang Uighur period (named after Gaochang the capital city) , reflecting the profound influence of Buddhism in northern Xinjiang area.

3. Central, Western and South Asian Regions

Professor Alexander Podushkin of the archaeological team of the Central National Museum of Kazakhstan discovered the Sogdian inscription bricks again in this year's archaeological excavations. Located in the center of Turkistan, Kazakhstan, the Kultobe site is one of the oldest cultural, religious and commercial centers on the Silk Road. It was built around the 2nd century BC and has been used since then. Its name varied during the time, from Shafga, to Iasi, and Turkistan. Since 2004, Professor Podushkin has discovered 15 broken Sogdian inscription bricks in Kultobe. They are called "Kultobe Inscription" and are the earliest known Sogdian script. It dates from the 2nd century BC to the 4th century AD, which is called the Kang Juguo period in the history books of our country. There are 7 rows of 218 letters on the inscription bricks discovered this time. Professor Sims Williams has made a preliminary interpretation. The content mainly deals with the establishment of the city, the main rulers, also mentioning many place names. It is the first inscription with complete contexts found in 30 years. Based on the historical texts of Central Asia, the French Central Asian archaeologist Frantz Grenet speculated that these Sogdian inscription bricks might have been built on the city gates, but they were used again as ordinary building materials after the city's decline. The bricks on which the inscription was found this time were also laid on the walls of a residential site. Its discovery is of important historical material value for studying the history of the early Sogdians and their language and writing during the Kangju period.

The Italian-Pakistan Archaeological Team discovered a Brahmin or Dewar temple ruins, a cistern and a military post during Gandhara era on the top of the hill in the ancient city of Bazra in Bari Kot, Swat, Pakistan. The cistern is an affiliated facility of the Shahi Temple revealed in 2019. It is 4 meters deep and partly dug on natural rocks. It is surrounded by tall walls built on the ruins of the acropolis during the Kushan Empire. In addition, two huge artificial platforms were found. The east platform is a Buddhist holy site, on which a 24-meter-long temple was built during the Indian Shahi period; the western platform is the remains of the city wall from the Indo-Greek period, and remains from the early historical period. A Ghaznavid outpost was also found on the top of the mountain. These discoveries from different time periods help to fill in the archaeological cultural sequence of this area.

So far, Iranian archaeologists and a team of German archaeologists have carried out seven rounds of excavations at the Rivi site in North Khorasan province. Architectural and residential remains were found in four locations this year, and a fortress site from the Persian Empire of the Achaemenids was excavated. The layout of the fortress ruins is clear and complete, and many exquisite relics have been unearthed. Excavators believe that the building was built and operated during the Parthian Empire. Previously, a large number of seals from the Achaemenid and Parthian periods were unearthed at the Levi site, which co-existed with pottery urns. They were originally used to seal pottery urns for special items. The decoration includes geometric patterns, plant patterns, and animals patterns and figures, etc., reflecting the extensive and complex economic relationships among different groups of people at that time, and providing significant information for the study of ancient economy, culture and art.

Archaeologists from the Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism of Iran have discovered a tomb near the construction site of the dam in Salvabad County, West Kurdistan Province. In the tomb there is a skeleton buried in supine and extended posture in two giant pottery urns facing one another. There is a spearhead found under his ribs, indicating that the occupant of the tomb may have died from exterior injury. The tomb was built in the Parthian period, when the tradition of using pottery urns as burial objects was prevalent among the Parthians.

The Department of Archaeology of SEGi University in Turkey has continued to excavate Cavustepe Castle in Gurpinar District, Eastern Van Province since 2017, and newly discovered a cemetery of the ruling Uraltu class. In 2020, one of the tombs of aristocratic

women was excavated. The occupantsof the tomb was between 20-25 years old. Among the grave goods there was a complete set of jewelry, including rings, dragon head pattern bracelets and rings, earrings, brooches and semi-precious stones necklace. Judging from the exquisiteness of the burial jewelry, the occupant of the tomb cannot be a commoner. With the progress of the excavation, the status of the woman in Urartu society has become more and more clear. Women buried around this area may be relatives of high-ranking nobles in the castle. The special discovery of the ring might be the earliest archaeological evidence of a marriage contract.

A research team of archaeologists from Mimar Southwest University in Turkey discovered the remains of a 2500-year-old temple on the Urla-Cesme Peninsula in western Turkey. Some female statues and a ceramic female portrait sculpture were found. Next to the temple there is a boundary monument with inscription, reading: “This is a holy place.” The research team speculated that the temple was used to commemorate Aphrodite-the goddess of love, beauty, happiness, passion and fertility in ancient Greek mythology. The belief in Aphrodite was quite common in this area at that time, equivalent to Venus inthe Roman mythology. Archaeologists have discovered 35 prehistoric human settlements, through investigations in the area in the past fourteen years, including 16 settlements from the late Neolithic period, which are of great value for the study of the socio-economic network at that time.

The ruins of the ancient city of Satara, located in Sadak Village, Kerki District, Ancient Muhan Khan Province, in northern Turkey, were one of the four armies of the Roman Empire in Anatolia and the military headquarters at that time. In 2020, archaeologists from Barten University in Turkey excavated the location of the military camp fortress of the 15th Apollo Army in the ancient city. An abandoned layer of the ruins of Shapur I of the Sassanid Kingdom was found in a trench, indicating that the Roman Legion was completely destroyed in the middle of the third century AD. At a shallower depth in the trench, there are architectural remains from the Eastern Roman Empire, which are also found in another trench. Unearthed relics include theater masks and oil lamps from the Roman Empire, iron armor from the late Roman Empire, and relief architectural components from the early first century. Academic circles had very limited knowledge of the Eastern Legion of the Roman Empire in the past. The excavation of the ancient city of Satara added important new materials to the study of the military history of the Roman Empire. It is expected that more abundant information about the legion can be obtained in the next few years.

The Qatar Museum excavated at the Al-Usaylah Cemetery, 12 kilometers east from Umbab, Doha. Swords, metal tools and gold earrings were unearthed. Skeletons of a natural squatting camel and its cubs were found in the attached stone room of one of the tombs, which may be used as sacrificial animals. This provides vital information for the analysis of the domestication and utilization of ancient camels and the funeral customs of the Arabian Peninsula in the pre-Islamic period. The cemetery dates from 300 BC to 300 AD.

II. Discoveries Related to the Grassland Silk Road

Throughout the history of Eurasian intercultural communication, it is not difficult to find that the ancient ways and the dominant area between the East and the West tended to gradually shift from the north to the south. The Prairie Road is the earliest route exploited between Europe and Asia. From the Paleolithic Age to the Bronze Age, it has been the main area for cultural exchanges between the East and the West. The Tongtian Cave Site is located in the Shicheng Scenic Area of Grassland in Jimunai County, Xinjiang. It is the first Paleolithic cave site discovered in Xinjiang. It is of great significance for understanding the evolution of homo-sapiens in Xinjiang for more than 40,000 years and establishing a chronological framework for regional cultural development. This year, the Xinjiang Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology continued to excavate the site. Outside the No. 2 cave there’s a piece of tin-bronze pipe, whose date is no later than 3000 BC. This is the earliest bronze object found in Xinjiang, also relatively early in China. Due to the special geographical location of the Tongtian cave site, this new discovery is of important value for exploring the early propagation process of metallurgy in Eurasian grassland. The fine stone tools dating from 8900-13000 were also unearthed at the site, showing the technical characteristics of stone blades in the late Paleolithic age.

The Xinjiang Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology discovered a settlement from the late Bronze Age in Nanshan, Xinyuan County, in the Gongnais Basin. There are obvious traces of using fire and coal, along with house ruins. A large number of pottery shards and animal bones were unearthed from the house ruins, dating back to 3,500 B.P. This kind of Bronze Age site is rarely found in the Yili area, and is of great value for studying the migration of the population on Eurasian Steppe and the formation of the Prairie Silk Road back in the Bronze Age.

In the western part of the Eurasian steppe, new archaeological discoveries about the Scythian tribe continue to emerge. On Hortica Island in the Zaporizhia Oblast, Ukraine, archaeologists in the Hortica National Reserve have discovered a Scythian warrior tomb dating more than 2,500 years ago. The tomb is a cave tomb with a shaft with a depth of 3 meters. There are large gravel and standing stones on the surface. The entrance to the cavern at the bottom of the shaft is sealed with large gravel in order to prevent theft. The owner of the tomb is tall, about 35-40 years old, and is buried with iron knives, quiver and copper arrowheads, as well as the bones of slain sheep, which shows obviously that he does not come from an agricultural group, but a Scythian warrior. Analysis of his pelvic bones showed that he had often rode horses, and the depth of the burial objects and the construction of the tomb showed that he was not an ordinary soldier, but a military general with a certain status. The date of the tomb is about the 4th century BC. Thanks to the particularity of the soil in the area, the body has been well preserved, which helps to reconstruct its appearance and conduct genetic analysis in the later period to better understand the origin of the Scythian tribe and the blood relationship between them. These findings indicate that Hortica Island is a settlement of Scythians. Similar discoveries in this area in the past show that this area is an important commercial center frequently visited by Greek merchants. It is a key node and strategic area on the Silk Road that connects the east and west banks of the Dnieper River and further leads to the east of the Eurasian steppes.

Archaeologists from the Southern Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Don State Technical University have discovered an unusual Scythian mound tomb between the Don and Jagarchik. The mound tomb remains 3 meters high and have 50 meters in diameter. Geophysical investigation revealed that there are a large number of tombs from different historical periods buried under the mound. A deposit of bronze and polished stone axes was found around the mound, dating from the Simmelian period (8-7th century BC). At the center of the mound is a Scythian noble warrior tomb (4th century BC). Unfortunately, it was stolen many times in history, and only one skull and five Anphala jars were found. The burial tomb is well-preserved and should be the tomb of the guardian of the tomb owner. A warrior was 2 meters tall and was killed at the funeral. His burial items included a gold necklace and a set of weapons, including slings, quiver and arrowheads, spearheads, short swords, and iron swords with gold leaf wrapped hilts, although short The sword is severely rusted, but it can still be seen that it belongs to the typical Southern Ural style. In addition, Greek oil bottles were found. Horses are buried in the upper part of the mound, and the head is decorated with a deer-shaped nose guard. It is a typical artifact popular in the Ural and Altai regions, and a flat nose guard is often popular among the Scythians in the Black Sea region. In addition, a piece of copper mongrel in the Southern Ural style was found. The artifacts unearthed in the remains show many eastern factors, in addition to Greek cultural factors. Excavators speculate that the owner of the tomb came from the eastern region.

In Khakassia, Siberia, an Askiz expedition team from the Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences discovered a tomb from the Scythian period, about 2500 years ago. In the tomb, a couple and their young children were burried together, as well as the bones of an elderly female, who might serve for the family. The tomb owner and his wife might be about 30 years old and may be Scythian warriors. In addition to human bones, some bronze burial objects were also found, mainly weapons, including battle axes, short swords, daggers, bronze mirrors, horn combs and pottery which might be used to contain meat. The young woman in the tomb is personally equipped with two melee weapons, bronze battle axes and two daggers. Unlike the other female burial bows and arrows in other Siberian tombs, she might be a samurai. The tomb should belong to the Tagal culture in the Scythian culture, which flourished in Southern Siberia between the 8th and 2nd centuries BC.

When a zooarchaeologist from Martin Luther University in Germany analyzed the unearthed remains of a castle site in Dankent, Kazakhstan, excavated by the Center for Classical and Oriental Archaeology of the Faculty of Humanities of the Russian Higher Economic Research University, they found a basically complete skeleton of a cat which might be a domestic pet animal and it has lived in a large village on the Syr Darya at the end of the 8th century and finally died there. This is the earliest domestic cat which was ever found in northern Eurasia. Through X-rays, 3D imaging and microscopic observations, it was found that it had severe fractures and had healed, which means that it had been taken care by humans and had no hunting ability. Stable isotope analysis shows that this male cat is most likely to feed on fish, and this finding is also in line with the local environment. In the 8th century AD, Dankent was not an agricultural city. It was still in a semi-nomadic state. It was the town where the rulers of the Turkic August nomads lived during the winter. The domestication and appearance of cats shows that cats were purely used as pet to increase the joy of life for the local people. This evidence of cats here should be the result of the spread of species along the Silk Road.

III. Discoveries Related to the Maritime Silk Road

This year, Wenzhou Institute of Cultural Relics Conservation and Archaeology conducted excavations at the Ma'anshan Kiln site in Yongjia county, uncovered a dragon Kiln site 3, 1 sludge storage tank, and 1 heap of discarded products, also obtained thousands of products and specimen of saddles. The products at the kiln site are mainly richly decorated household utensils. Several kinds of these products can be found on the shipwrecks in Southeast Asia, West Asia, Japan and other places along the coast, where a lot of utensils have been salvaged. Particularly, printed small-mouthed pots accounted for the largest proportion of the Ma'anshan kiln site. These small pots are found in many places in Southeast Asia, but are rarely unearthed in China. They are a typical type of export porcelain. This kiln site is the first Longquan kiln site excavated in the lower reaches of the Oujiang River, providing new material evidences for researches on the production and trade of Longquan celadon.

This year, Zhejiang Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology and others have excavated the Zhujialing site and Fenghuangshan site in the Shabu kiln site group, and unearthed a large number of porcelain and specimens of kiln, basically constructing the Chronological sequence of the Shabu celadon from the middle Northern Song Dynasty to the early Southern Song Dynasty. Among them, the kiln remains at Zhujialing kiln site are the best-preserved ones with the clearest structures that have been excavated in the two Song dynasties in Zhejiang. The Shabu porcelain industry during the middle and late Northern Song Dynasty was the most complicated, which is also of great academic importance. The Shabu kiln site group served as a transit and connecting zone between the two main tycoons of celadon in Zhejiang, Yue kiln and Longquan kiln. It is a vital area for exploring the southward diffusion of the Yue kiln technology and tracing the origin of Longquan kiln technology. At the same time, it is of significant academic value for studying the modes and approaches of technology exchanges among porcelain industries such as Yue kiln, Ding kiln, Yaozhou kiln, Longquan kiln and so on in the middle and late Northern Song Dynasty.

The British company Enigma Recoveries discovered 12 shipwrecks from the Hellenistic, Roman, Early Islamic and Ottoman Empire at a depth of 2 kilometers from the eastern Mediterranean. One of the shipwrecks was a giant merchant ship of the Ottoman Empire in the 17th century. It was called an “absolute giant”, so gigantic that two ordinary-sized ships could be mounted on its deck. Among its large quantities of goods there are 588 cultural relics from 14 cultures and civilizations, including Ming Dynasty Chinese porcelain, Arabic spices, Indian peppercorns, and various commodities from western North Africa, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Belgium. The ship sank while sailing from Egypt to Istanbul around 1630. Among them, Chinese porcelain is the earliest batch discovered so far on the shipwreck in the Mediterranean Sea, including 360 porcelain cups, porcelain plates and a porcelain vase, all of which were produced in Jingdezhen during the reign of Emperor Chongzhen in the late Ming Dynasty. These shipwrecks reveal a maritime Silk Spice Road from China to Persia, and the Red Sea to the eastern Mediterranean.

IV. Discoveries on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Silk Road

As an important remains on the Qinghai Road along the Silk Road, the excavation of Xuwei Tomb No.1 in Dulan Reshui, Qinghai Province in 2018 was completed this year, and the results were quite rich. Not only the surface remains of the tomb, the structure and scale of the tomb were determined, but various types of tombs were unearthed. There are more than 1,000 cultural relics, including gold and silverware, bronze ware, ironware, lacquered woodware, leather, jade ware, glassware and textiles. In particular, there is an ancient Tibetan inscription “King Tuyuhun” unearthed in the tomb, which is useful for discussing the identity, ethnicity, grade specifications, cultural attributes of the entire Dulan Reyue Cemetery and the history of political relations with Tang and Tubo. The unearthed relics not only have a strong local style, but also integrate the decorative styles and production techniques of the Tang Dynasty, Central Asia and West Asia, and the northern grassland regions. It shows that the Qinghai Silk Road reached its peak during the Tubo rule and greatly promoted Qinghai-Tibet. The plateau integrates and absorbs advanced cultural factors in the surrounding areas.

A joint archaeological team composed of the Qinghai Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology and the School of Cultural Heritage of Northwest University of China conducted a large-scale drilling investigation on the Futu City of Tuyuhun. in Shinaihai Township, Gonghe County, Qinghai Province, and made breakthrough new discoveries. The investigation determined the northern wall and gate of the outer city of the city site. Important relics such as trenches, rammed earth high platforms, small cities, house sites, and ash pits were found outside the outer city, and the internal structure and construction methods of the city site were basically cleared out. At the same time, a large number of tiles and pottery pieces were collected inside and outside the city. Some

tiles have characters, and the pottery is decorated with rope patterns and fold lines. Through archaeological drilling and dating of the relics, it was determined that the site of the city was the ruins of Futu City, the capital of Tuyuhun. Its age continued from the Northern Dynasty to the Sui and early Tang, and it was used and rebuilt in the Song Dynasty. This investigation has opened a new window for re-understanding Tuyuhun's national form, capital construction system, and archaeological cultural features, and provided important archaeological evidence for understanding the route of the Qinghai Silk Road and its historical role.

The archaeological work in the western part of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau has also made important gains. The Tibet Cultural Relics Conservation Research Institute conducted archaeological excavations at the Sangsdar Lungmgo Cemetery in Zanda County, Ngari Prefecture for four years, and cleared a number of vertical cavern tombs and stone tombs. The unearthed relics include pottery, bronze, wood, and buckles. Ware, stone tools, ironware, straw ware, textiles, gold ornaments, gold necklaces, beads, wooden figurines, etc., it can be seen that there was a tradition of burial of Ming Dynasty and practical objects at the same time, and the custom of burial with food and burial with destroyed objects was popular. A total of 7 pieces (6 pieces) of gold and silver face decorations were unearthed from 3 tombs. Their shape and characteristics are similar to those of the nearby Quta cemetery, Gurujiamu cemetery, and the Malali cemetery in Gawa region, India, and Mustang, Nepal. Similar items unearthed from the Sangzong cemetery in the area are similar to the funeral custom in this area. The tombs in this cemetery are densely distributed, and the overlapping and breaking relationships are complicated and lasted for a long time. It lasted from 300 BC to 600 AD for nearly a thousand years, showing the continuity of the archaeological culture of this area, and for establishing the archeology of this area. The school year sequence provides important information. The unearthed relics also show the status of trade and cultural exchanges with neighboring areas including Xinjiang, North Indian mountains and the Indus River Basin.

V. Conclusion

It is not difficult to find that among all the new discoveries of the Silk Road archaeology in 2020, most of them are made in China. Especially ample archaeological achievements of ancient cities in Xinjiang, which provide abundant archaeological evidence for the Central Plains regime's effective jurisdiction over Xinjiang during the Han and Tang Dynasties, which also makes up for the lack of archaeological work in the area that had focused more on prehistory and the Bronze Age. The discovery of early evidence of sericulture in the Central Plains and the new discoveries represented by tombs on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau are the highlights of this year's archaeological achievements, and their academic value should not be underestimated.

Due to the impact of COVID-2019, overseas archaeological researches along the Silk Road in Central Asia, South Asia, West Asia and Europe have been carried out less and on a smaller scale than last few years. Most of the active Sino-foreign cooperative excavation projects in 2019 were postponed or canceled. However, significant progress has been made in some areas, especially in Iran, Turkey, and the Eurasian steppe. The excavation of some ancient cities, military relics and warrior tombs reflects the violent military activities and conflicts of the farming and pastoral tribes along the Eurasian Silk Road were the Cold Weapon Age. These conflicts also make an important part of the cultural exchange. Commodities in circulation, the number of relics and relics related to the long-distance business exchange and cultural exchange on the Silk Road, since few tombs have been discovered due to the reduction of infrastructure projects, is relatively small. The excavation of the Ma'anshan kiln site and the discovery of the wrecks of the Ottoman Empire are of great value to the study of the types and export routes of China's export porcelain. It is an important achievement of archaeological research on the Maritime Silk Road in recent years.

1

1. 2018 Xuewei Tomb No.1

Time: 2020

Location: Qinghai, China

Introduction:

The Reshui Tomb Group, located in Reshui Township, Dulan County, Haixi Mongolian-Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, is an important tomb cluster dating from the 6th to the 8th century. It strongly proves that Qinghai Road was an important trunk line on the Silk Roads from the Northern Dynasties to the Sui and Tang Dynasties while Dulan was a transit station for trade between the East and the West.

After three years of excavation, the general scope of the remains has been determined, and the structure and scale of the tombs have been understood. The tombs consist of two parts, the ground and the underground. The ground is a cemetery building with a square plan, consisting of a tomb wall, a sacrificial building, as well as a cloister. The joint archaeological team found a long martyr pit in the tomb, and buried 6 stallions between 4 and 6 years old. Martyrs and sacrifice pits were found in the tomb fill, and animal bones such as cows, sheep, antelopes, rock sheep, and yaks were unearthed in the pits. The tomb chamber is a wood-stone structure, consisting of a main tomb and four side chambers. The main chamber has a red sandstone coffin bed facing east and west, and the coffins are placed. Two individual human bones are found in the main chamber. More than 1,000 pieces of various cultural relics such as gold and silverware, bronzeware, ironware, lacquered woodware, leather, jade ware, glassware and textiles were unearthed in the tomb. The discovered cemetery sacrificial buildings, sacrificial pits, five-shen hall tomb structures, murals, colored coffins, and exquisite relics unearthed, etc., were of great value to the studies the burial system and burial customs of the Rehui area during the Tang (Tubo) period and the relationship between the Tang Empire and the ethnic minority relations, the history of Silk Road transportation, and the history of material and cultural exchanges.

It is understood that the archaeological excavation of “2018 Xuewei Tomb No. 1” is a successful example of multi-unit and multi-disciplinary cooperation. It is confirmed as the important discovery with the most complete structure, clearest system, and most complex high-level tomb found in the Reshui Tombs.



2

Sarcophagus Bed Tomb in Anyang

Time: 2020

Location: Henan, China

Introduction:

In May 2020, a large-scale tomb with a well-laid white marble sarcophagus bed from the Sui Dynasty was discovered in Anyang, Henan Province. Experts said that the masonry and carving techniques of the tomb were superb, which provided new material materials for the study of the art and crafts of the Sui Dynasty, and was of great significance to the study of ethnic and religious integration.

The epitaph shows that the tomb was the joint tomb of the Quqing couple in the 10th year of Emperor Kaihuang in the Sui Dynasty (590 AD). The epitaph of Lianghe has neat handwriting and beautiful strokes, describing the birth and life of the tomb owners. The epitaph not only provides new evidence for the study of the character evolution and calligraphy art of the Sui Dynasty, but also has the value of supplementing history.

According to reports, each part of the sarcophagus bed is carved with patterns, and the surrounding screen patterns are carved with scenes of the tomb owner's daily life and religious allusions. The discovery of the sarcophagus bed and dozens of Buddhist and Zoroastrian relief patterns in the tomb is a historical testimony of the exchange and mutual learning between Eastern and Western civilizations on the Silk Road.

In addition, the tomb also unearthed a large number of exquisite Xiangzhou kiln white porcelain. This demonstrated the superb porcelain firing level of the Xiangzhou kiln in Anyang in the Sui Dynasty, filled the gaps in the study of Xiangzhou kiln porcelain, and provided valuable physical information for the origin and development of Chinese white porcelain.



3 Sangsdar Lungmgo Cemetery in Ngari

Time: 2020

Location: Tibet, China

Introduction:

On December 5, a recent archaeological study showed that a large number of relics were unearthed at the Sangsdar Lungmgo Cemetery in Ngari, Tibet, among which wooden figurines on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau were the first to be discovered. The archaeological discovery of this cemetery provided new materials for exploring the early social structure and life patterns of western Tibet, as well as the interaction between Tibet and the southern foot of the Himalayas, Xinjiang, and the Central Plains.

The Sangsdar Lungmgo Cemetery is located in Zanda County, Ngari Prefecture. Sangsdar Lungmgo means “Sandagoukou” in Tibetan. Tombs in this cemetery are densely distributed, and the unearthed relics include pottery, bronze, buckle, stoneware, textiles, beads, wooden coffins, etc. The unearthed wooden figurines are the first to be discovered on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, and their shape features are similar to those unearthed in Turpan, Xinjiang. The wooden figurines have the same shape.

From 2017 to 2020, a total of 7 parts(6 pieces) of gold and silver face decorations were unearthed from the three tombs in the Sangsdar Lungmgo Cemetery. The face decorations are shaped like the neighboring Quta Cemetery, Gu Rujia Cemetery. The gold and silver decorations unearthed from the Marilla Cemetery in Northwest India and the Sangzong Cemetery in northern Nepal are the same or similar in shape. In addition, the two unearthed bronzes have no footholds, which are similar in shape to the Sichuan and Hubei belts. The unearthed single-eared duck-bill-flowing-bottom pot is similar in shape to the pottery at the Qugong site in Lhasa in central Tibet. Since about 300 BC, large-scale gatherings of people have appeared in this place. During this period, they have experienced the germination of political entities and vigorous development of production and life. Cultures from Xinjiang, northern Nepal, northern India, Tibet, Lhasa, the hinterland of Shannan, and the Han region merged here. However after 600 AD, the Sangsdar Lungmgo Cemetery was no longer in use.



4 Beiting Ancient City

Time: 2020

Locations: Xinjiang, China

Introduction:

In 2020, the main archaeological achievement of Beiting Ancient City is the clearing of the large-scale building site No. 8, which is located 90 meters south of the north gate of the inner city. The site is an east-west rectangular structure and a rammed earth platform in the south. It is now 15.8 meters wide from north to south and 30 meters long from east to west. According to the materials such as superimposed breaking relationship and eaves tile, it can be roughly divided into three stages, indicating that this is an important building that has been continuously reconstructed from the Tang Dynasty to the Song Dynasty (including the Liao and Xiliao) and Yuan dynasties. In addition, artificial ponds half-encircling the Buddhist temple ruins were found in the ditch on the north and west sides of the high platform Buddhist Temple Ruins No. 6 in the city. An adobe wall (0.8 meters wide) was also found on the west side of the Buddhist temple, which may be the courtyard wall of the Buddhist temple. The unearthed cultural relics include yellow-green glazed dragon body building components, statue fragments, porcelain pieces and so on.

The final layout of the Beiting Ancient City can be summarized as “two sets of four layers and eight blocks”. Two sets refer to two cities inside and outside. The four layers are the core sub-city, the square wall that encloses the sub-city inside the inner city and the outer city. The ancient city has some relatively independent blocks, roughly divided into eight blocks.

Archaeology proves that the Beiting Ancient City was basically constructed by the central dynasty of the Tang Dynasty through the institutions represented by Tingzhou and Beiting Protectorate, which ruled the Western Regions for more than 150 years.



5 The Huge Wrecks of the Ottoman Empire

Time: 2020

Location: Mediterranean

Introduction:

In April,2020, a British-led team revealed a spectacular discovery – a fleet of Hellenistic, Roman, early Islamic and Ottoman wrecks that were lost some two kilometres below the waves of the Levantine Basin between the 3rd century BC and the 19th century.

One of the wrecks is a 17th-century Ottoman merchant ship, described as “an absolute colossus”, which was so big two normal-sized ships could have fitted on its deck. Its vast cargo has hundreds of artefacts from 14 cultures and civilisations, including the earliest Chinese porcelain retrieved from a Mediterranean wreck, painted jugs from Italy and peppercorns from India.

The ship, which is thought to have sunk around 1630, while sailing between Egypt and Istanbul, is a time-capsule that tells the story of the beginning of the globalised world.The goods and belongings of the 14 cultures and civilisations discovered, spanning on one side of the globe China, India, the Persian Gulf and Red Sea, and to the west North Africa, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Belgium, are remarkably cosmopolitan for pre-modern shipping of any era.The Chinese porcelain includes 360 decorated cups, dishes and a bottle made in the kilns of Jingdezhen during the reign of Chongzhen, the last Ming emperor that were designed for sipping tea, but the Ottomans adapted them for the craze then spreading across the East – coffee drinking. Hidden deep in the hold were the earliest Ottoman clay tobacco pipes found on land or sea.

The ship reveals a previously unknown maritime silk and spice route running from China to Persia, the Red Sea and into the eastern Mediterranean.



6 Kultobe Site

Time: 2020

Location: Turkestan, Kazakhstan

Introduction:

Professor Alexander Podushkin of the Central State Museum of Kazakhstan has rediscovered the Sogian inscriptions during excavations this year, Khartung said. This is the first complete Sogian inscription found at the Kultobe site.

Kultobe site is located in kazakhstan turkestan city center, north for a set of mountains, south of Syr Darya, which is the oldest culture, religion and business center along the Silk Road and was first built in about the 2nd century BC, and has been used ever since, and being called Shafga, Yasi, and Turkestan in different periods. The site was first discovered by Kazakh archaeologist Professor Podushkin in 1964 and was originally dated from the 4th to the 14th centuries. Since 2004, Professor Podushkin has successively discovered 15 pieces of broken Sogdian inscribed bricks in Kultobe, dating from the 2nd century BC to the 4th century AD, which is the period of Kangju Kingdom in Chinese historical books. Mr. Lin Meicun believes that this place should be the “the interior of Tibet”, the summer capital of King Kangju, as recorded in the Book of Han·Biography of the Western Regions. The bricks are called the Kultobe Inscriptions, and are the same scription as the Kultobe Inscriptions in 2006. Frantz Grenet, a French archaeologist of Central Asia, and Nicholas Sims-Williams, an Iranologist at the University of Cambridge in Britain, co-wrote the interpretation. According to the textual research of Sims Williams, the Kultobe inscription is the earliest known Sogian inscription, which is of great historical value for the study of the history of the early Sogdian people in the Kangju period, as well as their language and writing.

The 218-letter seven-line inscription, which has been preliminarily interpreted by Professor Sims Williams, addresses the founding of the city, its chief rulers and a number of place names, making it the first complete inscription to be found in 30 years. Based on Central Asian sources, Grenache speculates that the Sogdian inscriptions may have been built on the city gates, but after the city’s decline, they were reused as a common building material, and the inscriptions found here were also built on the walls of one of the settlements.



7 Usaylah Site in Qatar

Time: 2020

Location: Qatar, Doha

Introduction:

Qatar Museums has announced the discovery of long-hidden archaeological remains in the Al-Usaylah cemetery, one of the oldest historical sites in Qatar.

The discovery was found 12 kilometres east of Umm Bab, Doha, and included remains of important figures buried carefully in large tombs on a hilltop. Their possessions were also found in good conditions. The tombs date from between 300 BC and 300 AD, making the discovery highly significant in Qatar’s archaeological history.

The work at Usaylah site comes within the framework of a systematic plan that has been going on for years to uncover thousands of cemeteries in various parts of Qatar with the aim of forming a general perception of the nature of the lives of the inhabitants who settled in this area in ancient times,” said Faisal Al Naimi, Director of the Department of Archaeology. This goal, which is consistent with our grand goal, which is to preserve, discover and document Qatari heritage, and link it to our present in which we live.

Although the tombs were stolen in ancient times, the Antiquities Department team said that a sword, some metal tools and gold earrings were also found at the site. A skeleton belonging to a camel and its baby were also found, which were likely sacrificed in a “stone room connected to a human cemetery” long ago.



8 Siberian Tomb

Time: 2020

Location: Russia, Siberia

Introduction:

A 2,500-year-old grave containing the bodies of a warrior couple, their child and their elderly servant has been discovered in Siberia. Archaeologists believe the couple were in their 30s and that they were Scythian warriors. Along with the skeletons, former belongings of theirs, including weapons, were found as well.

The grave is located in Khakassia by was found by one of the teams of the Askiz archaeological expedition of the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography SB RAS and OOO Arkhgeoproekt. It’s thought this particular burial was part of the Tagar culture which flourished between the 8th and 2nd centuries BC in South Siberia. While the skeletons of the two women and man were almost perfectly intact, the skeleton of the baby is thought to have been scattered across the grave which is said to have been caused by rodents eating the skin of the deceased. The man and woman lying next to them were about 35 and 45 years old, and the woman at their feet was about 60 or older. Also in the burial were found the remains of a newborn baby no more than a month old, but fragments of its skeleton were scattered throughout the grave, possibly as a result of the activity of rodents.

It’s reportedly quite rare to find the graves in these states-typically peoples’ graves were robbed and ransacked by others knowing that they will have been buried with some of their most important belongings. Senior researcher Yuri Vitalievich Teterin said they repeatedly come across looted graves and that usually the skeletons are scattered around.



9 Brahmanical Temple in Swat

Time: 2020

Location: Swat, Pakistan

Introduction:

In October 2020, the ISMEO/Ca' Foscari University of Venice Italian Archaeological Mission and the Pakistani authorities have discovered remains of a Brahmanical or Deval temple, a water reservoir and a Ghaznavid military watchtower dating back to the Gandhara-era atop the Ghwandai hill in the ancient town of Bazira in Barikot-Swat.

Scientific excavations at the Turki Shahi/Hindu Shahi temple already started in 1998-2000, but were resumed in 2019-2020 when important parts of the cultic marble statuary were brought to light. From the radiocarbon dating of organic materials, the first living phase of the monument has been calibrated to the late 7th/early 8th century CE. Meanwhile, the archaeological mission has discovered on the hill summit above the terraces, a huge Shahi precinct protecting a large water tank.

The ancient Bazira/Barikot is a major landmark of the Swat Valley. But the site is also, and most importantly, a site of global significance. This is a fact recognized by the academic international scholarly community since 1926 when the site was identified with Beira/Bazira city sieged by Alexander the Great in 327 BCE. Later, according to an inscription of the 10th century CE, found on the acropolis of the site, and now held in the Lahore Museum, Bazira will be called Vajirasthāna, i.e. “the strong place” or the “fortified place” of Vajra/Vajira (i.e., “the lightning”). It is from this toponym derives the Dardic name of Bir-kot, “the kot (castle) of Bir”. The site of Bazira/Barikot possesses “the most important and well-documented sequence yet excavated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa”.



10 Ma'anshan Kiln Site

Time: 2020

Location: Zhejiang, China

Introduction:

Ma'anshan Kiln Site is a Longquan Kiln Site on the north bank of the Ou River from the Yuan Dynasty. It is located at the southeast foot of Ma'anshan, Nan'ao Village, Sanjiang Street, Yongjia County, 1.7 kilometers west of the Zhuyong Expressway Wenzhou North Toll Station. The project began to excavate in mid-April. After more than half a year of field archaeological excavation and preliminary arrangement, the task was successfully completed and the work was officially closed in late December. The exposing area is nearly 230 square meters, with 1 Long kiln, 1 mud storage tank and 1 waste accumulation were cleared, and thousands of samples of products and kiln furniture were obtained. The products at the kiln site are mainly household utensils. The utensils include plates, bowls, cups, cups, washes, small mouth pots, stemware, lid boxes, furnaces, etc. The bottom of the ring feet is usually not beveled. The decorative patterns are rich, and common patterns include lotus, chrysanthemum, sunflower, plum blossom, orchid, curly grass, pisces, turtle, miscellaneous treasure, gossip, string pattern, ridge pattern and so on.

Longquan porcelain began to be exported to the outside world in the Northern Song Dynasty. During the Southern Song Dynasty, with the continuous innovation of technology, especially the successful creation and firing of powder green and plum green glaze products, Longquan porcelain is loved by the world, and sales at home and abroad have greatly increased. Longquan ceramics has achieved unprecedented development, and it has rapidly expanded to the areas of Dongquan East District and Yongjia, Taishun, and Wencheng in Wenzhou. In the late 13th century, the establishment of the Yuan Dynasty, a great empire spanning Europe and Asia, greatly promoted economic and cultural exchanges between the East and the West. Longquan celadon became the most important trade commodity on the “Maritime Silk Road”. Because the porcelain body is heavy and fragile, suitable for water transport, Wenzhou's Ou River and Feiyun River became one of the busiest trade routes, Wenzhou port as an important coastal port has also attracted more and more attention around the world.

The Ma'anshan Kiln Site is the first Longquan kiln site excavated in the lower reaches of the Ou River. The product quality is quite good and has its own characteristics. It provides fresh physical materials for the study of Longquan celadon production and trade, and has important research value and practical significance.



Archeology Discovery List

No.	Title	Excavation Time	Place and Country
1	Tongtian Cave Site	2020	Xinjiang, China
2	Shuanghuaishu Site	2020	Henan, China
3	Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor, West Tomb	2020	Shaanxi, China
4	Reshui Tomb Group "2018 Xuewei Tomb No.1"	2020	Qinghai, China
5	Keyak Kudok Beacon Site	2020	Xinjiang, China
6	The Ancient City of Ushitur	2020	Xinjiang, China
7	The Ancient City of Kuyukheur	2020	Xinjiang, China
8	The Ancient City of Zhuorkut	2020	Xinjiang, China
9	The Ancient City of Tang Dynasty Pier	2020	Xinjiang, China
10	Beiting Ancient City	2020	Xinjiang, China
11	Ruins of the Stone City in Tashkurgan County	2020	Xinjiang, China
12	The Ancient City of Hannoyi in Kashgar	2020	Xinjiang, China
13	the Ancient City of Dalete, Bortala Mongolian Prefecture	2020	Xinjiang, China
14	The Ancient City of Lafchak in Hami District	2020	Xinjiang, China
15	The Lafkek Cemetery	2020	Xinjiang, China
16	Fusi City	2020	Qinghai, China
17	Tang Dynasty Tomb with records of time in Buli Village	2020	Shaanxi, China
18	Ma'anshan Kiln Site	2020	Zhejiang, China
19	Sui Dynasty White Marble Sarcophagus Bed Tomb in Anyang, Henan	2020	Henan, China
20	Shabu Celadon Kiln Site	2020	Zhejiang, China
21	Sangsdar Lungmgo Cemetery in Ngari	2020	Tibet, China
22	the Cemetery of the Luhun Tribe in Xuyang village, Luoyang	2020	Henan, China
23	Shicun Site in Xiaxian County	2020	Shanxi, China
24	Ruins of Xiangshan Temple	2020	Henan, China

25	Bronze Age Settlement Sites in Xinyuan County	2020	Xinjiang, China
26	High-grade Tomb from the Sixteen Kingdoms Period	2020	Shaanxi, China
27	Kultobe Site	2020	Kazakhstan, Turkestan
28	Ruins of the Temple of Aphrodite	2020	Turkey, Urla-Cesme Peninsula
29	Greek Inscription Tombstone	2020	Israel Negev, Nitzana National Park
30	Usaylah Site in Qatar	2020	Qatar
31	The Greek Inscription of Byzantine Empire Discovered in Northern Israel	2020	Israel
32	Scythian Warrior Cemetery	2020	Ukraine, Khortytsia Island
33	Burial Mound of Scythian Warlord	2020	Russia, Urals
34	New Discoveries at Temple of Zeus Megistos In Qanawat, Sweida	2020	Sweida
35	Remains of Ancient Fortress from the Achaemenid dynasty Unearthed in Northeast Iran	2020	Iran
36	A Burial of the Parthian-Era Unearthed in Western Iran	2020	Iran
37	Tomb of Warrior Couple	2020	Siberia
38	Grave of Urartian Woman Buried with Jewellery Unearthed in Eastern Turkey	2020	Turkey
39	New Discoveries at Ancient City of Satala in Northern Turkey	2020	Turkey
40	The Huge Wrecks of the Ottoman Empire	2020	Mediterranean
41	New Discoveries of Brahmanical Temple	2020	Pakistan, Swat
42	The Earliest Cat on the Northern Silk Roads	2020	Kazakhstan



Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads

2020
REPORT

THEMATIC EXHIBITIONS



Annual Review of Thematic Exhibitions on the Silk Roads in 2020

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European Representative of Art Museum Magazine

During the process of compiling the report “Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads 2020”, the editorial team identified in total 82 various exhibitions related to the silk roads (including 4 travelling exhibitions of other shows). Among these displays there are 5 permanent displays, 68 temporary exhibitions and 9 online shows.

In terms of geographical distribution, 54 events were held in China while 28 shows were international. Among the latter events, 7 were organised in France, 4 in Japan, 3 in the USA, 3 in Pakistan, 2 in Iran while the UK, Greece, Morocco, Qatar, Kazakhstan, Russia, Australia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan hosted one exhibition each. According to these numbers, China remains the major country to hold silk road-related exhibitions since those organised in the country represent 65.9% of the identified shows (they represented 63% of the studied shows in 2019).

These exhibitions could be roughly classified into five categories according to their subject: geographical, thematic, case-based, creative and comprehensive. There are 25 geographical exhibitions, 20 thematic exhibitions, 13 case-based exhibitions, 13 creative exhibitions and 11 comprehensive exhibitions. It is however important to note the following development: historical, heritage-related and cultural exhibitions dominated in the 2019 report; in contrast, creative exhibitions held this year are numerous and represent 15.9% of the studied shows. This demonstrates that contemporary art creation is beginning to play an important role within Silk Road-related exhibitions.

1. Geographical Exhibitions

Geographical exhibitions refer to those that highlight a certain geographical zone’s history, culture and links with the Silk Roads. The geographical zone could be a continent, a country, a region, a set of transportation paths, a province or a city. It’s essential to notice that creative shows might sometimes be dedicated to a specific zone as well. However, these installations are still regarded as creative ones if they highlight contemporary artworks. The following examples illustrate this category better.

"Sailing along the Silk Roads: the Fujian Section of the Maritime Silk Roads", Fujian Museum

The great ancient Maritime Silk Roads, which stretch for more than 10 thousand Chinese miles and functioned for a long time, made a huge impact on the progress of the global civilisation. Rich in maritime cultural heritage, Fujian Province has made undeniable contributions to the formation and development of these routes. From the conquering of islands of remote eras to Quanzhou, once the biggest port in the East; from canoes to enormous ships of the Zheng He fleet: Fujian’s spirit of inclusion

and tolerance is well preserved until present days. The exhibition showcases various aspects of the province’s past such as ports’ development, exploration of maritime routes, shipbuilding technologies, merchandise trade and cultural exchanges and features more than 200 artefacts including porcelain and silk pieces so as to illustrate the glory of the Fujian section of maritime silk roads.

"A step on the Silk Road from Damascus to China"

China and Syria maintain between them commercial exchanges, positive relations and a profound friendship that date back to remote times. A key connecting point of the Silk Roads, Syria began to link itself to China through these routes more than two thousand years ago. This exhibition was an important component of the World Industrial Design Conference 2020. It features more than 50 landscape and portrait oil paintings by Syrian painter Walid Ali and showcases Syria’s ancient civilisation and customs through figures working in the fields and colours of four seasons in order to convey people’s aspiration for a peaceful and happy life.

"Glistening Treasures in the Dust: Ancient Artefacts of Afghanistan", Hong Kong Museum of History

Featuring 231 items/sets of rare artefacts from the collections of the National Museum of Afghanistan, the exhibition attests to the important role played by ancient Afghanistan, as the cultural intersection of the Silk Road, in promoting the exchange and integration of eastern and western civilisations. These rare artefacts, including goldware, glassware, bronze sculptures and ivory carvings, were unearthed from four archaeological sites in Afghanistan, namely Tepe Fullol, Ai Khanum, Tillya Tepe (Hill of Gold) and Begram. The exhibition also demonstrates the profound influence of foreign ancient cultures such as Greek, Indian and Roman on Afghanistan and its surrounding regions from the Bronze Age to the first century AD, as well as a cultural diversity embracing the features of different steppe cultures.

"Special Spring Fine Arts Exhibition: Pay Tribute to Xi’an at the Chinese New Year: 'Silk Road Civilisations and the Cultural Heritage of Xi’an' ", Shaanxi Province Art Museum

One of the events of the series “Pay Tribute to Xi’an at the Chinese New Year” and dedicated to artworks addressing major subjects, the ‘Special Spring Fine Arts Exhibition: “Silk Road Civilisations and the Cultural Heritage of Xi’an” showcases Xi’an’s rich cultural tradition and novel image while celebrating the inclusivity, complexity and attractiveness of Chinese culture so as to offer to the public a visual feast combining tradition and modernity and binding art and reality. The major subject fine art creation project “Silk Road Civilisations and the Cultural Heritage of Xi’an” fully drew on the city’s strong points including rich heritage, legacies of an ancient capital, glorious traditions, diversity inherited from the silk roads, communist revolution monuments and stunning natural landscapes to create more than 100 masterpieces ranging from Chinese traditional paintings and oil paintings to prints and sculptures. The exhibits not only represent major subjects but also celebrate mastership and grandeur.

"Special Exhibition: Jiangnan and Maritime Silk Roads", Wujiang Museum

The display highlights more than 110 artefacts from the collections of museums in Wujiang, Changshu, Jiangyin, Zhangjiagang and Taicang and combines objects and texts in order to tell stories associating Jiangnan with the Maritime Silk Roads. Unearthed at the end of 2008 in Zhangjiagang, the site of Huangsipu is believed with certainty to be a prosperous port in the Tang and Song dynasties and the place where the Tang dynasty monk Jianzhen started his sixth attempt to sail to Japan. One section of the exhibition demonstrates how Jianzhen travelled to Japan to preach Buddhist teachings by means of objects excavated at Huangsipu. In addition, the exhibition shows objects unearthed at the river patrol camp and market authority sites in Hupu (Changshu County), artefacts discovered at the site of Fancunjing (Taicang County) and related to the Zheng He fleet as well as Neolithic objects excavated at the site of Yuanjiadai (Meiyan, Wujiang County) and related to silkworm breeding.

"Tang-Tibet Ancient Road: Joint Exhibition of Cultural Relics from Seven Provinces", Sichuan Museum

In order to increase the visibility of the Tang-Tibet Ancient Road, the exhibition scrupulously selects 189 items/sets of exquisite artefacts from Qinghai, Gansu, Shaanxi, Ningxia, Xinjiang, Tibet and Sichuan that witness exceptional values of the ancient road for the cultural exchanges between Hans and Tibetans as well as its significance for the relevant regions. The new installation integrates into the initial version of the travelling exhibition Tibetan archaeological sites in Sichuan such as Tibetan stone carvings in Shiqu

County and the Tibetan graves of Galazong in Luhuo County. The Shiqu County stone carvings testify to another transportation route between the Tang dynasty and Tibet mentioned in historical accounts and which is to the south of the traditional path. The discovery is significant for the researches on the routes of the road, the relationship between the Tang and Tibet, paths of Buddhism’s spread, the history of Tibetan Buddhism and the history of Tibetan Buddhist art.

2. Thematic Exhibitions

Thematic exhibitions refer to those dedicated to a specific theme without other defined parameters like geographical scopes. The theme could be a sort of objects, a culture or an artistic genre. The following cases illustrate the category better.

"Spices of the Silk Roads: Evolution of China’s Spice Culture", Yunnan Provincial Museum

The spice culture almost spans the whole history of Chinese civilisation. During the multi-millennial cultural evolution, spices bear various cultural topoi. Thanks to the prosperity of the Silk Roads, the global spice trade network gradually came into being. Spices played a key role on the Silk Roads for a long time. The universality of human olfaction makes spices bonds connecting ancient civilisations. An investigation of the past of the Silk Roads and an analysis of the evolution of spice culture allow to rebuild another aspect of the material cultural history of ancient China through the dimension of smell. Furthermore, the attempt is consistent with the spirit of openness and partnership of the “Belt and Road Initiative” as well as the trends of political multi-polarisation, economical globalisation, cultural diversification and social digitisation. By means of spices, spice utensils and spice recipes, the event reveals emotional processes and artistic attractiveness embedded in the spice culture so as to preserve the silk road value of mutual learning and inspiration for future generations. The exhibition consists of four sections, “spice practices and the silk roads”, “origins and evolution of exquisite utensils”, “cultural practices and spaces” and “between tradition and future”, and includes more than 100 exhibits (item/set) ranging from various specimens of spice, utensils involved in the spice culture, artefacts linked to the culture to the modern variations of the latter.

"Silk Roads' Warp and Weft: Masterpieces of Tianjin Tapestries' ", Qingpu Museum

In the late 19th century, the development of maritime silk road trade allowed Westerners to appreciate the beauty of Chinese tapestries. By inspiring Europeans and Americans, the mysterious Eastern culture gave birth to a great number of tapestry patterns that were exotic yet compatible with Western aesthetics. While foreign traders provided sketches, coloured wool yarns and sent orders to Tianjin while paying in advance, designers and craftsmen in the city made products. This model made Chinese tapestry manufactories thrive. Tianjin quickly became foreign traders’ most important base for the purchase, production and export of tapestries and started its golden age of decorative tapestry manufacturing. Result of clash and mixture of eastern and western cultures, the Tianjin decorative tapestries are considered iconic symbols of Western aristocracy’s pursuit of fashion although they used colourful chemical dyes and mechanical and commercialised making processes.

"Glory of the Silk Road – Joint Exhibition of Dunhuang, Yungang and Longmen Grottoes", Luoyang Museum

Associating three grottoes, this exhibition innovates in terms of forms of artefact display and cultural exchanges by combining application of external inspirations and outreach to new audiences. The event allows the grottoes, built in the Northern Wei, Eastern and Western Weis, Northern Qi, Northern Zhou, Sui, Tang, Five Dynasties, Song, Western Xia and Yuan dynasties, to break space and temporal limits, testifies to ancient China’s political, economical, religious, cultural, customs-related, calligraphic and painterly histories and preserves philosophical thinking, humanistic spirits, values and ideas and ethical norms embedded in these histories. “Digitisation has made the combined exhibition possible”, stated Li Zhirong, professor at the Cultural Heritage Institute of Zhejiang University. Apsaras from Dunhuang “fled” from their walls to Luoyang, the Guyang Cave of Longmen Grotto “fled” from stone walls to the museum while the Great Buddha of Yungang Grotto’s Cave 20 was made visible through the VR technology. The exhibition represents the culmination of Chinese Buddhist grottoes, reveals the cultural similarities and differences between eastern and western cultures reflected by the silk roads and constitutes a modern expression of the Yellow River Culture’s inclusivity and consistency.

"Special Exhibition: Treasures of the Silk Roads: 'Belt and Road' Medieval Copperware", Lishui Museum

Because of the passion of royal and imperial courts, rituals and dissemination efforts of scholars and religious practices of commoners, copperware has been regarded as objects bringing fortune and cherished. Medieval copperware especially encourages people to worship and explore historical cultures thanks to cultural legacies that it bears and formed during the centuries from the Five Dynasties to the Ming dynasty. The display selects more than 190 rare copper objects from the collections of Mr Wu Jian that are grouped into 170 sets. The exhibits, which range from ancestral temple objects, scholars’ collections and ritual objects of local education authorities to domestic decorative pieces, are significant in terms of historical, artistic and scientific values.

"Buddhist Art in China and Korea", Dunhuang Academy China

The exhibition showcases more than 40 lithographical apsara prints that have been put together for a long time by Great Master Diamond, abbot of Mihwangsa in South Korea. Various in scales and subjects, these artworks span the eras of Later Silla, Goryeo and Joseon and feature through the prints’ characteristic white and black colours a beauty shaped by draperies, gestures, delicateness, simplicity, balance between dynamism and stillness and blankness. The objects fully represent Korean apsaras’ distinct features.

"Silk Road Ceramics Witnessing 500 Years of Globalisation-Return-Silk Road Ceramics", China Ceramic Museum, Jingdezhen

Jingdezhen export porcelain is the most important component of China’s export porcelain. It is a significant contribution of China to the world, an important symbol of Chinese spirit and one of the embodiments of silk road spirit. The exhibition, dedicated to export porcelain, charts for the public the global impact of Chinese culture by revealing that wherever Chinese porcelain is present, Chinese culture thrives. For centuries, China export porcelain crossed oceans and embodies unarguably silk road values underlined by President Xi Jinping: peaceful partnership, openness and inclusivity, mutual learning and inspiration and mutual benefit.

"The Essence of Gold and Silver Coins along the Silk Road", Zhejiang Provincial Museum

The exhibition showcases 628 gold and silver coins produced from the 7th century BC through the 19th century AD and including rare pieces cast by Lydia, ancient Greece, ancient Rome, Byzantium, ancient Persia, Kushan Empire, ancient India and Islamic dynasties. Gold and silver coins from numerous peoples and countries located along the silk roads not only witness trade between ancient China and the rest of the world but are also important artefacts embodying cultural mixtures.

3. Case-based Exhibitions

Case-based exhibitions refer to those allowing visitors to know more about the silk roads through one or several cases. The case could be a set of objects, an archaeological discovery or an historical figure. The following examples illustrate this category.

"Starting Point of the Silk Roads and Commercial Spirit of a Golden Age", Tang West Market Museum

In the history of global trade, the Tang dynasty West Market in Chang’an (present-day Xi’an) played an extremely important and interesting role as the eastern starting point of the silk roads. The inclusivity and openness of the Tang dynasty made this ancient international market possible. There were countless residences and shops at the West Market that attracted numerous traders and merchants; a variety of crafts thrived and provided their finest products; rich people from different countries benefited from the feast of fortune. The prosperity of the market’s commerce, craftsmanship and popular culture lasted 320 years from its establishment at the first years of the Sui dynasty. The West Market was not only a consumption paradise for common people but also the place where countless merchants’ dream of fortune came true. Meanwhile the market naturally facilitated cultural exchanges between East and West as well and embodied Chang’an’s image as a diverse international metropolis. It is also the only Tang dynasty trade site that is preserved today.

"The Baoli Era: Treasures from the Tang Shipwreck Collection", Shanghai Museum

The installation showcases in total 248 items/sets of artefacts including 168 Belitung shipwreck objects selected from the Khoo Teck Puat Gallery of Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore and 80 items ranging from ceramics, gold and silver pieces to copper mirrors that are either from the Shanghai Museum’s collection or loans from 9 other Chinese institutions. It is the first major

exhibition in China dedicated to artefacts of the Tang shipwreck. The organisers wish that viewers could admire the elegant lifestyle of the Tang dynasty’s golden age while understanding its spirit of inclusivity and witnessing the history of Tang dynasty maritime silk roads.

"Great Maritime Routes: the 'Nanhai I' Shipwreck and the Maritime Trade of Southern Song Dynasty", Inner Mongolia Museum

The exhibition shows 296 items/sets of exhibits including objects from the “Nanhai I” Shipwreck to represent for the public the adventurous navigation of the ship as well as the prosperity of Chinese maritime silk roads in the Southern Song dynasty. The show consists of five parts, “the renaissance of Southern China”, “countless treasures”, “thousands of miles of navigation”, “sinking into the South China Sea” and “a search of thirty years”, and depicts the era when the ship sank, the goods it carried, the life of sailors, the discovery of the shipwreck and the process of archaeological excavations. The “Nanhai I” is by far the oldest, biggest and the best preserved deep-sea cargo ship in the world. It carried not only thousands of orderly arranged goods including porcelain pieces, metal objects and spices but also nearly one thousand sailors.

"Colours of Dunhuang: Art Exhibition of Dunhuang Grottoes", Hainan Museum

Through its eight parts, more than 100 exhibits and the reproduction of Dunhuang Grotto’s Cave 320, this art exhibition comprehensively explains the millennial development of the grotto, the artistic fruits of the silk roads’ cultural fusion and the grandeur of Dunhuang’s culture. The highlights include the reproduction of Dunhuang’s Cave 320. Covered by a square frustum-like roof, the cave includes in its frontal niche statues of Buddha, disciples and Bodhisattvas, at the central part of its roof various patterns and on the southern wall of its main room four golden age Tang apsaras. These works all embody the style of the Tang dynasty at its culmination and offer to the public an immersive experience.

"Longquan Celadon on the Maritime Silk Road", The China (Hainan) Museum of the South China Sea

Within the exhibition, 253 pieces/sets of Longquan Blue Porcelain from the collections of 11 Chinese museums including the Capital Museum, the Zhejiang Museum and Beijing Folk Arts Museum are shown together for the first time in Hainan to celebrate the beauty of Longquan ware. The show consists of three parts, “celadon made in Longquan”, “celadon’s long journey” and “a ware connecting the past and the present”, and represents the long maritime path that Longquan celadon took in the Age of Discovery.

"Be Marco Polo for One Day: Discovering the Wisdom of the Silk Roads", China Science and Technology Museum

The display, which includes 70 items/sets of exhibits and consists of six thematic sections, “Distant Countries in Your Imagination”, “What Goods to Take to China”, “Stage Stations and Routes”, “Wandering in ancient China”, “Adventures at Sea” and “The World is Changing”, transforms viewers into ancient travellers and merchants on the silk roads so that they could discover the routes by following the Italian traveller Marco Polo. “Distant Countries in Your Imagination” reconstructs Marco Polo’s long journey through interactive 3D digital maps; “What Goods to Take to China” represents various goods that Western merchants took to China through the silk roads such as gems, fruits, spices, medication and glassware; “Stage Stations and Routes” shows objects accompanying merchants day and night including camel gear, horse gear, food and musical instruments while introducing engineering technologies of stage stations, routes, bridges and roads. “Wandering in ancient China” not only brings to life silk shops, ceramic manufactories and traditional paper shops that both produced and sold goods, but also includes live performances of traditional craftsmanship techniques such as weaving, paper making and woodblock printing. In the section “Adventures at Sea”, viewers could transform themselves into sailors to discover ancient sailing technologies; “The World is Changing” features scientific, technological and cultural exchanges that people continue to carry out on the silk roads of the 21st century.

4. Creative Exhibitions

Creative exhibitions refer to those featuring contemporary artworks dedicated to the silk roads. These works are often specifically created for the exhibitions before their opening or made by artists over a longer period of time. The following examples illustrate this sort of exhibitions.

"The Works from the 'Belt and Road' International Fine Arts Engineering Project", Xi'an Art Museum

The “Belt and Road” International Fine Arts Engineering Project, organised by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the PRC in collaboration with the China National Academy of Painting, attracted and gathered a great number of talented artists, Chinese and international alike, who committed themselves to sketches, creations and studies. The exhibition showcases all 197 shortlisted works that address various subjects and diverse contents and are strongly thematic, consistent with the contemporary era, highly artistic and innovative, and profoundly explores and interprets the cultural connotations and distinct attractiveness of the “Belt and Road”.

"Silk Road Prints by Gesha", Tianjin Natural History Museum

The Sino-Russian painter Gesha’s practice spans various media such as print, oil painting, Chinese traditional painting and illustration. From the perspective of the silk roads depicted by the artist, the exhibition features the natural landscape, history, culture, humanistic connotations and spiritual meaning of the routes using prints and carving blocks. It reveals to the public a silk road cultural landscape comprising a set of drawings to let viewers understand and experience the charm of “Belt and Road”.

"Silk Roads Drawings: Sketches of 'Belt and Road' Landscapes beyond the Borders of China", Guangdong Mount Guanyin Gallery

Sketches of belt and road landscape using Chinese traditional water and ink techniques not only constitute a project but also embody a national cultural pride and practice. A development and enrichment of Chinese traditional painting’s expressive power through an understanding of natural landscapes and cultural histories of different regions is considered by participating artists both a responsibility and a mission, although this requires a longer period of efforts. This exhibition of sketches is not only a phase of the artists’ training but rather the start of the understanding of another expressive form and a tribute to an ancient civilisation. Like a mirror, these sketches produced beyond China’s borders make people better understand the profound and inclusive Chinese culture through reflections and autocriticism.

"Watercolours along the Silk Roads: 2020 Nanning International Watercolor Exhibition", Guangxi Art Museum

This exhibition makes possible a dialogue and clash between Chinese and Western watercolours to celebrate the balance between the universalism and the nationalism of the medium. The show features 65 fine works which are diverse in forms, comprehensive in subjects to reveal the richness, national characteristics and influences of different times of watercolour languages. Furthermore, they embody the artists’ investigation and pursuit of techniques, connotations and spiritual expressions.

"Silk Roads Rock Colour Expedition", Rock Color Art Museum

This exhibition was organised as a result of the cultural expedition “Silk Road Rock Colour Renaissance Project, Autumn 2019”. More than 20 participating artists present on the occasion their rock colour works created during the expedition. The Buddhist culture, represented by the Kucha and Dunhuang grottoes, is an important part of this cultural route. Rock colour paintings are derived from monumental Buddhist murals of these grottoes. The expedition was an important component of the national project “A Study on China’s current major questions of art creation”. In the framework of the national project, the Renaissance Institute of Renmin University of China carried out in-depth investigations and researches in terms of silk road ancient murals’ “conservation and restoration” to provide a case of practical model for the development of the discipline of “Art Technology” while its phase-1 fruit is an example allowing to improve arts education device systems in China; the Rock Colour Studio of Shanghai Academy of Fine Arts aims for art creation practices “based on local contemporary expansion” by studying the rock colour language structures brought about by the silk roads so as to create a novel discipline of rock colour within the system of Chinese arts education.

"Crossed Gazes on the Silk Roads, Alain Voloch/Regards croisés sur la route de la soie Alain Voloch", Espace culturel Eole, Craponne, France

Through an exhibition of his most beautiful photos, Alain Voloch shares with us his passion for Asia and its peoples. All the photographed people have confidence in the photographer, which is a sine qua non and revealed by their gaze indicating consent and an exchanged smile. Thanks to his encounters along the Silk Roads, the photographer offers us a string of portraits of great authenticity. Farmers and city inhabitants from Turkey, Iran, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Vietnam, China, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar

all tell us a story, one of an exceptional encounter between a photographer and his model that is both natural and sincere. Alain Voloch began his career as photojournalist and became cancerologist before returning today to photography with kind-heartedness and humanity fostered by this atypical journey.

5. Comprehensive Exhibitions

Comprehensive exhibitions refer to those introducing the silk roads without defining geographical, thematic or other limits. The following examples illustrate better the category.

"Asian Crossroads Orientation Gallery", Ashmolean Museum

The Orientation Gallery for the museum’s first floor explores the transmission of ideas, knowledge, culture and religion through the overland Silk Road and sea trade routes between the Mediterranean and Asia in early modern times. Maps provide information about the routes taken by the early traders while an interactive touch screen explores the themes of trade, innovation and ideas, religion and craftsmanship, and design. These themes are reinforced with wall displays around the gallery.

Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum, Japan

The museum’s Silk Road Art Collection includes some 9,000 pieces of paintings, sculpture and craft with ages ranging from ancient to modern, created in some 37 countries across Europe, West Asia, Central Asia and East Asia regions, from Rome in the West and to Japan in the East. Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum not only stores and showcases its own collections in its themed exhibitions, but widely promotes the arts and culture of the Silk Road through promotional activities such as lectures and concerts, as well as support for education and research.

"The Silk Roads: Before and After Richthofen", China National Silk Museum

The “pre-Richthofen” silk roads started from the Western Han dynasty ambassador Zhang Qian’s the first expedition in 138 BC before thriving thanks to efforts made by ambassadors, monks, pilgrims and merchants of different periods. The “modern” silk roads came into being as a result of efforts made by archaeologists, historians and cultural heritage conservators. The routes underwent a long journey from the proposition of the term of “silk roads” in 1877 by the German geographer Richthofen until its listing as Unesco World Heritage site in 2014. In order to celebrate the 6th anniversary of the World Heritage listing of “Silk Roads: the Routes Network of Chang’an-Tianshan Corridor”, the China National Silk Museum held an exhibition regarding the scholarly history of the silk roads by featuring hundreds of historical materials and archaeological objects allowing to explain the historical context of the routes. The display consists of three sections to describe the historical routes of exchanges between Chinese and Western civilisations, explain the concept of “silk roads” coined in the era of Richthofen and how the routes became a World Heritage site.

"Mutual Learning on the Silk Roads: Stories of the Silk Road Treasures", China National Silk Museum

The China National Silk Museum invited twenty museums and scholarly institutions along the silk roads, including the Datong Museum, Hepu Museum (Guangxi), Inner Mongolia University and Shanghai Museum, to select 20 items/sets of representative artefacts related to the roads in order to organise the exhibition “Mutual Learning on the Silk Roads: Stories of the Silk Road Treasures”. The exhibition tells stories of silk roads through artefacts to outline their main paths and significant impact on mutual inspirations between East and West.

Video Exhibition, The China Cultural Center and China Tourism Office in Sydney

Five videos featured Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai, Ningxia and Xinjiang, five places along the Silk Road. As a platform that once bridged many different civilizations, the Silk Road saw a long history of commercial and cultural exchanges between the Western and Eastern worlds. The five provinces and autonomous regions have preserved the traces of these exchanges in their architecture, art, music and dances. And the religions and customs of the ethnic minorities living in the five places are the heritage of the cultural exchanges on the Silk Roads. A music video was also shown in the exhibition to promote Xi’an, the capital city of Shaanxi province.

"Interweaving Cultures along the Silk Road(s)", Spencer Museum of Art

This virtual exhibition highlights objects from the Spencer Museum of Art that reflect how artwork, design, trade goods, medicine, religion, and people travelled both over land and by sea and stimulated new cultural forms and ideas in Asia, Africa, and beyond that continue today. These exchanges took place across wide swaths of time and space that were both real and imagined. Selected works correspond to one or more of these four broadly conceived themes: Textiles, Buddhism, Orientalism, and Amalgamations.

1 Tang-Tibet Ancient Road: Joint Exhibition of Cultural Relics from Seven Provinces

Dates: September 27, 2020 – October 27, 2020

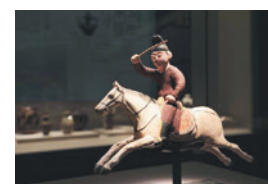
Venue: Sichuan Museum, Sichuan, China

Overview:

In order to increase the visibility of the Tang-Tibet Ancient Road, the exhibition scrupulously selects 189 items/sets of exquisite artefacts from Qinghai, Gansu, Shaanxi, Ningxia, Xinjiang, Tibet and Sichuan that witness exceptional values of the ancient road for the cultural exchanges between Hans and Tibetans as well as its significance for the relevant regions.

The new installation integrates into the initial version of the travelling exhibition Tibetan archaeological sites in Sichuan such as Tibetan stone carvings in Shiqu County and the Tibetan graves of Galazong in Luhuo County. The Shiqu County stone carvings testify to another transportation route between the Tang dynasty and Tibet mentioned in historical accounts and which is to the south of the traditional path. The discovery is significant for the researches on the routes of the road, the relationship between the Tang and Tibet, paths of Buddhism's spread, the history of Tibetan Buddhism and the one of Tibetan Buddhist art.

Also known as the Tang-Tibet Postal Road, the Tang-Tibet Ancient Road was the set of imperial routes allowing ambassadors to travel from the 7th to the 9th century between Chang'an, the capital city of Tang dynasty and present-day Xi'an, and Rasa in Tibet, today known as Lhasa. Since the Tang dynasty, people who travel to Qinghai, Tibet, Nepal and India from China's heartland cannot get round the path which serves as a link facilitating exchanges between peoples, cultural interactions, commercial relationship and maintaining interethnic friendships and regional connections. Associated with the epic legend of Princess Wencheng, the Tang-Tibet Ancient Road witnesses the friendly exchanges between Hans and Tibetans that span more than 1300 years while continuing to play an important role today.



2 Silk Roads’ Warp and Weft: Masterpieces of Tianjin Tapestries

Dates: August 1, 2020 - August 30, 2020

Venue: Qingpu District Museum, Shanghai, China

Overview:

In the late 19th century, colonisers’ loots allowed Westerners to discover the beauty of Chinese tapestries. A passion for these artworks was aroused in Europe and America when Beijing tapestries were awarded Golden Prize of the St. Louis World’s Fair in 1903. By inspiring Europeans and Americans, the mysterious Eastern culture gave birth to a great number of tapestry patterns that were exotic yet compatible with Western aesthetics. While foreign traders provided sketches, coloured wool yarns and sent orders to Tianjin while paying in advance, local designers and craftsmen participated in the production. This model made Chinese tapestry manufactories thrive. Tianjin quickly became foreign traders’ most important base for the purchase, production and export of tapestries and started a golden age of Art Deco tapestry manufacturing which lasted until the beginning of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression.

The exhibition showcases export tapestries of this period. The few exhibited works are nevertheless fine and exquisite. They are decorated by traditional Chinese patterns usually embroidered on big pieces of red, purple or deep blue unicolour silk. The products show Western influences while conveying Chinese styles in each detail. The show explains them through a film projection as well to highlight the period’s characteristics embodied by the tapestries and to reveal their profound meanings. The exchanges between China and the rest of the world have been unprecedentedly prosperous since the country has championed the “Belt and Road Initiative” over the past years. The exhibition celebrates Tianjin tapestries’ centennial glory and thus invites visitors from the new Silk Roads to discover these revived important pieces of evidence of maritime Silk Roads.



3 Glory of the Silk Road: Joint Exhibition of Dunhuang, Yungang and Longmen Grottoes

Dates: October 18, 2020- January 18, 2021

Venue: Luoyang Museum, Luoyang, China

Overview:

Exceptional historical and cultural heritage on the Silk Roads, grottoes highlight and reflect cultural exchanges, inter-ethnic fusion and mutual inspiration among the Chinese and other civilisations. Jointly organised by the Longmen Grottoes Institute, Dunhuang Institute and Yungang Grottoes Institute, the event is the first important art exhibition co-organised by China’s three major grottoes since the foundation of People’s Republic of China.

Through three sections – “Dunhuang Grottoes, the Monument at the Foot of Mount Mingsha”, “Yungang Grottoes, A Gem in a Boundary Area” and “Longmen Grottoes, A Pearl in China’s heartland” – and a thematic gallery, the exhibition comprehensively showcases the three grottoes’ splendour, rich cultural heritage and exquisite artworks as well as the process and achievements of their preservation over the past decades. It not only includes a great number of fine artefacts and exhibits but also invites Chinese and international visitors to appreciate the unique attractiveness of these common treasures of humanity.

The Dunhuang Institute provided for the exhibition nearly 200 items/sets of exhibits including 8 original objects, 3 grotto reproductions, 5 reproductions of coloured sculpture and fine copies of murals. The grottoes, built in the Northern Wei, Eastern and Western Weis, Northern Qi, Northern Zhou, Sui, Tang, Five Dynasties, Song, Western Xia and Yuan dynasties, perfectly illustrate ancient China’s political, economical, religious, cultural, customs-related, calligraphic and painterly histories. The exhibition offers an in-depth glimpse into and a detailed depiction of the monuments and makes a positive impact in fostering a local identity, building cultural confidence and enhancing international cultural publicity.



4 Reproduction of Shosoin Treasures: Encountering Tenpyo Craftsmanship through the Recreation of 8th Century Works

Dates: July 4, 2020 – September 6, 2020
Venue: Nara National Museum, Nara, Japan

Overview:

Located in the north-east of Todai-ji monastery in Nara, Shoso-in is a treasure store of which the history spans more than one thousand years. Its collections mainly consist of items used by Emperor Shomu and Empress Komyo during their lifetime that reflect the mastery of Tenpyo era's craftsmanship. The exhibition, which marks "the ending point of the silk roads", also showcases artefacts from China, Silla (present-day Korean peninsula) and Persia (present-day Iran) made in the Nara era.

Shoso-in houses a total of more than 9,000 cultural relics, including mostly items used by Emperor Shomu during his lifetime. Most of them are Japanese artefacts of Nara period while treasures from Tang Dynasty China and Central Asian regions are also involved. These treasures reflect the prosperous Tenpyo culture and the communications between the East and the West. By selecting 86 works from hundreds of Shosoin collections' reproductions, the exhibition hopes to convey the meanings of preserving Japanese traditional techniques while highlighting Tenpyo period's beauty and mastery in order to celebrate the coronation of the Emperor.

Reproduction of Shosoin treasures began with the Nara Exhibition held in Todai-ji in Meiji era and the conservation of cultural relics was being undertaken simultaneously. This exhibition comprehensively showcases the categories, techniques and achievements of Shosoin objects' conservation to make viewers aware of the monument's historic importance and its significant contributions to relics' restoration. The event deepens the understanding of Japan's external exchanges in this period as well.



5 Lost at Sea: Art Recovered from Shipwrecks

Dates: November 6, 2020 - November 30, 2020
Venue: Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, the United States

Overview:

When the trading vessel Hoi An sank in the South China Sea in the 15th century, it left behind 250,000 ceramics. A few of those artefacts, along with others from a similarly submerged 19th-century vessel are on view in this exhibition. Preserved like time capsules under the seas, these shipwrecks contained artworks that were excavated in the 1990s by marine archaeologists. These artworks were sold at auction and purchased by collectors who then donated them to the museum.

By tracing the pathways of these objects, from Vietnam to the ocean floor to San Francisco, the exhibition raises the question of how artworks enter museum collections. The show's centrepiece alludes to the fate of artefacts left in the sea. A grey stone protruding with ceramics and other artefacts was once covered in barnacles. Now, the mound, known as a concretion, is slowly disintegrating, revealing the objects hidden within-among others, a Chinese coin, a pair of deer antlers and the remains of sea creatures-as it crumbles.



6 The Sogdians: Influencers on the Silk Roads

Dates: Permanent Online Exhibition

Venue: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

Overview:

The Sogdians are the people on the ancient Silk Roads whose significant impact on worldwide arts, culture and trade has only begun to be fully known over the past five decades. This novel digital exhibition allowing to explore Sogdian arts through preserved material culture is divided into five sections – “The Sogdians at Home”, “Believers, Proselytizers and Translators”, “The Sogdians Abroad”, “From Nara to Nancy” and “The (Re)discovery of the Sogdians”. This online exhibition is made possible through the generosity of the Leon Levy Foundation, with additional support from the Thaw Charitable Trust and the Smithsonian Provost Scholarly Studies Award programme.

The exhibition focuses on the golden age of the Sogdians, from the fourth to the eighth centuries CE, when Sogdiana flourished through trade and agriculture. Sogdian emigrant communities spread across China, South and Southeast Asia, and into the Central Asian steppe and Mongolia. During these centuries, a highly sophisticated and distinct Sogdian urban culture developed, epitomized by richly coloured wall paintings and exceptional textiles, metalwork, and sculptures.

Compared to other nomad peoples, the Sogdians, which comprised the majority of Western nomad peoples, played a more complex and diverse role in medieval China. They were well-known for being smart traders and talented dancers; they were eager to spread religious beliefs while being skilful warriors; they were at times wise enough to make a country thrive and at times too ambitious that common people even didn't have enough resources to survive. The spread in ancient China of several religions, such as Buddhism and Manichaeism, was deeply indebted to Sogdians' active promotion.



7 The Baoli Era: Treasures from the Tang Shipwreck Collection

Dates: September 15, 2020 – January 10, 2021

Venue: Shanghai Museum, Shanghai, China

Overview:

For celebrating the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Singapore, the exhibition “The Baoli Era: Treasures from the Tang Shipwreck Collection”, jointly organised by the Shanghai Museum and Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore, opened on 14 September 2020 at the Shanghai Museum.

The installation showcases in total 248 items/sets of artefacts including 168 Belitung shipwreck objects selected from the Khoo Teck Puat Gallery of Asian Civilisations Museum and 80 items ranging from ceramics, gold and silver pieces to copper mirrors that are either from the Shanghai Museum's collection or loans from 9 other Chinese institutions. Most of the objects excavated from the shipwreck are ceramics made in China, which convincingly demonstrates that they became mainstream goods of China's external trade in that period. There are among the recovered artefacts inkstones which could be carried by Chinese merchants or sailors, Java-style bronze mirrors carried by Javanese sailors and Islamic glass vases carried by Arabian sailors. The composition of sailors itself embodies a cultural diversity.

In a word, the Belitung shipwreck witnesses the commercial and cultural links between China, Southeast Asia and Middle East in the first half of the 9th century. The exhibition celebrates the glorious history of Asians' ancestors who navigated across seas to create maritime cultures while representing the prosperous scene of maritime Silk Roads of that era.



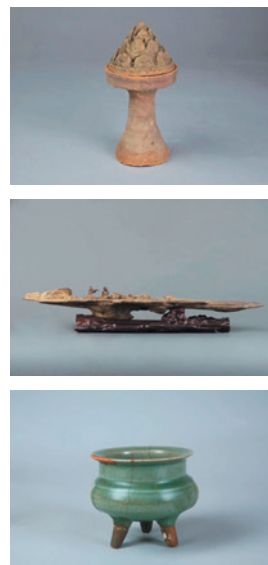
8 Spices of the Silk Roads: Evolution of China's Spice Culture

Dates: September 30, 2020 – January 3, 2021
Venue: Yunnan Provincial Museum, Yunnan, China

Overview:

The spice culture almost spans the whole history of Chinese civilisation. During the multi-millennial cultural evolution, spices bear various cultural topoi. Thanks to the prosperity of the Silk Roads, the global spice trade network gradually came into being. Spices have always been major goods of international trade in terms of financial values. Spices played a key role on the Silk Roads for a long time. The universality of human olfaction makes spices bonds connecting ancient civilisations.

The exhibition consists of four sections - “spice practices and the silk roads”, “origins and evolution of exquisite utensils”, “cultural practices and spaces” and “between tradition and future”- and includes more than 100 exhibits (item/set) ranging from various specimens of spice, utensils involved in the spice culture, artefacts linked to the culture to its modern variations. An investigation of the past of the Silk Roads and a scrutiny of the evolution of spice culture that focus on spices, utensils and formulae attempt to reconstruct another aspect of ancient China's material culture through the dimension of smell. The event featuring emotional processes and artistic attractiveness embedded in the spice culture is consistent with the spirit of openness and partnership of the “Belt and Road Initiative” so as to preserve the Silk Road value of mutual learning and inspiration for future generations and to follow the trends of political multi-polarisation, economical globalisation, cultural diversification and social digitisation.

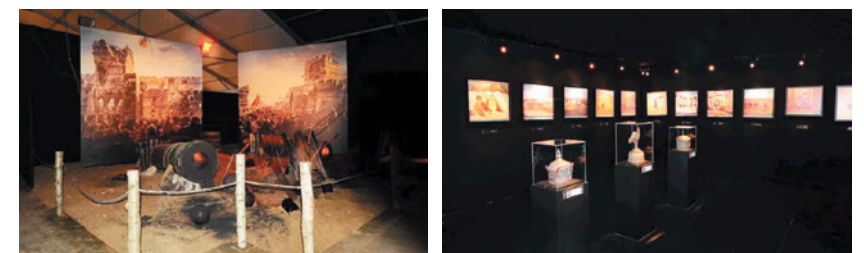


9 Crossed Gazes on the Silk Roads

Dates: June 16, 2020 – July 3, 2021
Venue: Espace culturel Eole, Craponne, France

Overview:

Through an exhibition of his most beautiful photos, the photographer Alain Voloch shares with us his passion for Asia and its peoples. All the photographed people have confidence in the photographer, which is a sine qua non and revealed by their gaze indicating consent and an exchanged smile. Thanks to his encounters along the Silk Roads, the photographer offers us a string of portraits of great authenticity. Farmers and city inhabitants from Turkey, Iran, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Vietnam, China, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar all tell us a story, one of an exceptional encounter between a photographer and his model that is both natural and sincere.



10

The Light of Silk Roads

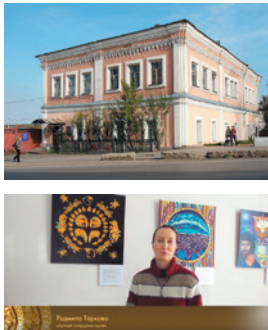
Dates: November 24, 2020 – January 18, 2021
Venue: Astrakhan Museum

Overview:

Radmila Tarkova, member of the Russian Geographical Society, curated the exhibition for celebrating the 175th anniversary of the organisation’s foundation.

The exhibition includes 25 paintings and decorative works and is structured around the themes of “cities and people”, “symbols and signs” and “legends and imageries”. Through the lens of the silk roads, it represents their role in lives and cultures of people on the Eurasian continent. Focusing on the surrounding areas of Astrakhan, a key location on the Silk Roads, the exhibition represents the region’s scene through exact, vivid and meaningful images and details.

Not limited to a tribute paid to the geographical society by the curator, the exhibition more importantly embodies the connections between Astrakhan and Chinese Silk Road culture while combining the histories of the two countries and inheriting millennial civilisations in the context of Silk Roads’ profound impact on Europe and Asia.



Thematic Exhibition List

No.	Exhibition Title	Starting Date	Ending Date	Venue	Organiser(s)
1	Photography Exhibition: The Maritime Silk Roads and Civilisations across the World	2020/5/29	2020/6/28	Zunyi, China	Zunyi Municipality Art Museum
2	Incense on the Silk Road: Origin of Chinese Incense Culture	2020/9/30	2021/1/3	Yunnan, China	Yunnan Provincial Museum
3	Construction of the Digital Museum of Characteristic Architectural Art on the Southern Silk Road	2020/10/1	Online	Yunnan, China	Digital Museum of Southern Silk Road Architecture and Art
4	A Step on the Silk Road from Damascus to China	2020/11/25	2020/12/25	Yantai, China	Yantai International Design Town Prototype Workshop Exhibition Hall
5	Glistening Treasures in the Dust: Ancient Artefacts of Afghanistan	2019/11/6	2020/2/10	Hong Kong, China	Hong Kong Museum of History
6	The Works from the "Belt and Road" International Fine Arts Engineering Project	2020/10/22	2020/10/31	Xi'an, China	Xi'an Art Museum
7	Special Spring Fine Arts Exhibition: Pay Tribute to Xi'an at the Chinese New Year: "Silk Road Civilisations and the Cultural Heritage of Xi'an"	2020/1/12	2020/1/19	Xi'an, China	Shanxi Provincial Art Museum
8	A Thriving Trade Center at the Starting Point of the Silk Road	2010/4/7	Permanent Display	Xi'an, China	Tang West Market Museum
9	Silk Road Prints by Gesha	2020/10/1	2020/12/1	Tianjin, China	Tianjin Natrual History Museum
10	Special Exhibition: Jiangnan and the Maritime Silk Roads	2020/1/27	2020/3/22	Suzhou, China	Wujiang Museum
11	Ode to the Plateau Road-A Joint Exhibition of Rare Cultural Relics from Seven Provinces and Regions along the Ancient Tang-Bo Road	2020/9/27	2020/10/27	Sichuan, China	Sichuan Museum
12	From Mediterranean to China: Hirayama ikuo Silk Road Art Museum Collection Exhibition	2019/12/26	2020/3/29	Shenzhen, China	Shenzhen Museum
13	West out of Yangguan: Xinjiang Cultrual Relics Exhibition	2020/9/5	2020/11/29	Shenzhen, China	Nanshan Museum
14	The Throat of the Silk Roads: Masterpieces of Dunhuang’s Cultural Relics	2020/8/30	2020/10/8	Shangrao, China	Shangrao Museum
15	Port for City Use, City Prosperity by Port: Fusion of Modern Shanghai and Ocean	2020/6/8	2020/10/12	Shanghai, China	China Maritime Museum
16	Silk Roads’ Warp and Weft: Masterpieces of Tianjin Tapestries	2020/8/1	2020/8/30	Shanghai, China	Shanghai Qingpu Museum
17	The Baoli Era: Treasures from the Tang Shipwreck Collection	2020/9/15	2021/1/10	Shanghai, China	Shanghai Museum
18	Ode to the Silk Road: Xinjiang Cultrual Relics Exhibition	2020/1/18	2020/8/17	Shandong, China	Shandong Museum
19	The Throat of the Silk Roads: Masterpieces of Dunhuang’s Cultural Relics	2020/5/18	2020/8/16	Quanzhou, China	Quanzhou Maritime Museum Fujian
20	The Silk Road Corridor: Silk Road Cultural Relics of Gansu Provincial Museum	2020/9/29	2021/1/5	Ningbo, China	Ningbo Museum
21	Silk Road Port City: Images of Ningbo "Maritime Silk Road"	2020/5/18	2020/6/28	Ningbo, China	China Port Museum
22	Silk Roads Elevated by Porcelain: Contemporary Ceramic Art	2020/5/18	2020/6/30	Ningbo, China	East Zhejiang Maritime Folk Museum
23	Great Maritime Routes: The "Nanhai I" Shipwreck and the Maritime Trade of Southern Song Dynasty	2020/8/8	2020/10/8	Inner Mongolia, China	Inner Mongolia Museum

24	Glory of the Silk Road-Joint Exhibition of Dunhuang, Yungang and Longmen Grottoes	2020/10/25	2021/1/18	Luoyang, China	Luoyang Museum
25	Special Exhibition Treasures of the Silk Roads: "Belt and Road" Medieval Copperware	2020/6/13	2020/9/12	Zhejiang, China	Lishui Museum
26	Underwater Cultural Relics from the South China Sea	2020/8/15	2020/10/15	Jiuquan, China	Dunhuang Academy
27	Buddhist Art in China and Korea	2020/7/10	2020/8/15	Jiuquan, China	Dunhuang Academy
28	Silk Road Ceramics Witnessing 500 Years of Globalisation·Return·Silk Road Ceramics	2020/6/1	2020/12/31	Jingdezhen, China	Jingdezhen China Ceramics Musuem
29	The Spirit of Mogao: Dunhuang Caves' Culture and Art	2020/1/14	2020/5/2	Jinchang, China	Jinchang Museum
30	Treasures along the Silk Road: Selections from Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum Collections	2020/6/13	2020/10/8	Hunan, China	Changsha Museum
31	Gilded Copper Silkworm·Batu Hitam: Silk Roads Cultural Relics of the Han and Tang Dynasties	2020/9/28	2020/12/28	Hunan, China	Changsha Tongguan Kiln Museum
32	Be Together in the East: Special Exhibition on the Civilization of Ancient Asia	2020/12/4	2021/2/28	Hebei, China	Hebei Museum
33	The Silk Roads: Before and After Richthofen	2020/6/19	2020/8/23	Hangzhou, China	China National Silk Museum
34	Mutual Learning on the Silk Roads: Stories of the Silk Road Treasures	2020/6/19	2020/8/23	Hangzhou, China	China National Silk Museum
35	The Essence of Gold and Silver Coins along the Silk Road	2020/9/15	2020/11/29	Hangzhou, China	Zhejiang Provincial Museum
36	The Wind Comes from Canton:Art Exhibition of the Qing Dynasty	2020/6/14	2020/7/19	Hainan, China	Nanhai Museum
37	Colors of Dunhuang: Art Exhibition of Dunhuang Grottoes	2020/12/10	2021/2/28	Hainan, China	Hainan Museum
38	Longquan Celadon on the Maritime Silk Road	2020/9/29	2020/12/29	Hainan, China	The China (Hainan) Museum of the South China Sea
39	Sailing along the Silk Roads: Guangxi's Maritime Silk Roads Cultural Relics of Han Dynasty	2020/5/15	2020/9/15	Guangzhou, China	Two Tombs Museum of South Han Dynasty (Erling Museum of Southern Han Dynasty)
40	Silk Roads Drawings: Sketches of "Belt and Road" Landscapes beyond the Borders of China	2019/12/8	2020/1/3	Guangdong, China	Guanyinshan Art Museum
41	Tang-Tibet Ancient Road: Joint Exhibition of Cultural Relics from Seven Provinces	2020/11/6	2021/3/1	Guangzhou, China	Guangdong Museum
42	Watercolours along the Silk Roads: 2020 Nanning International Watercolor Exhibition	2020/9/22	2020/10/11	Guangxi, China	Gunagxi Art Museum
43	Silver Age: The Origin and Trade of Chinese Export Silverware	2020/11/24	2021/1/24	Guangdong, China	Guangdong Maritime Silk Road Museum
44	Sailing along the Silk Roads: the Fujian Section of the Maritime Silk Roads	2020/1/28	Permanent Display	Fujian, China	Fujian Museum
45	Maritime Silk Roads: Foreign Silver Coins in Zhangzhou	2020/5/1	2020/10/31	Fujian, China	New Zhangzhou Museum
46	Cultural Exchanges Embodied by Buddhist Statues	2020/1/1	2020/8/1	Chengdu, China	Chengdu Museum
47	Silk Roads Rock Colour Expedition	2020/4/26	2020/6/26	Beijing, China	Rock Color Art Museum
48	Be Marco Polo for One Day: Discovering the Wisdom of the Silk Roads	2019/12/31	2020/5/5	Beijing, China	China Science and Technology Museum
49	Boats Floating Afar: Maritime Trade of Chinese Ancient Ceramics	2020/9/4	2020/12/4	Beijing, China	National Museum of China
50	Mirrors of Eternity: The Cultural of Chinese Ancient Bronze Mirrors	2020/11/24		Beijing, China	National Museum of China

51	The Culture and History of the South China Sea	2020/7/1	2020/8/7	Bengbu, China	Bengbu Museum
52	The Long Journey: The Forbidden City and Maritime Silk Road	2020/1/11	2020/4/13	Macao, China	Macao Museum of Art
53	Asian Crossroads Orientation Gallery	2009/11/1	Permanent Display	Oxford, UK	Ashmolean Museum
54	"Silk Road" Calligraphy Exhibition	2020/9/29	2021/1/28	Mashad Northeastern Iran	Ferdowsi's mausoleum
55	Uzbekistan at the Crossroads of Silk Road	2020/2/17	2020/2/20	Iran	ECO Diplomatic Art Gallery of Tehran
56	Loupe 2nd Anniversary "Experience The Silk Road" Exhibition	2020/11/1	2021/12/31	Hong Kong, China	Loup
57	Video Exhibition in Sydney Shows Silk Road Legends	2020/7/22	2020/8/12	Sydney, Australia	chinaculture.org
58	Porcelain Journey along Silk Road-On Site Performance of the Traditional Porcelain Shaping Technique	2019/12/20	2019/12/25	Greece	The Zappeion Palace in Athens
59	The countries of the Great Silk Road	2020/5/1		Uzbekistan	Khiva State Museum
60	Art of the Silk Road: Tradition and Modernity in Tajikistan	2020/3/23	2020/4/5	Tajikistan	ZARI Gallery
61	The Silk Road Collection	2004/7/1	Permanent Exhibition	Yamanashi-Ken, Japan	Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum
62	Reproduction of Shosoin Treasures: Encountering Tenpyo Craftsmanship Through the Recreation of 8th Century Works-Travelling Exhibition Nara	2020/7/4	2020/9/6	Nara, Japan	Nara National Museum
63	Annual Exhibition of Shosoin Treasures	2020/10/24	2020/11/9	Nara, Japan	Nara National Museum
64	Reproduction of Shosoin Treasures: Encountering Tenpyo Craftsmanship Through the Recreation of 8th Century Works-Travelling Exhibition Nagoya	2020/10/3	2020/11/23	Nagoya, Japan	Matsuzakaya Art Museum
65	Things to Convey Dao: Digital Exhibition of Intangible Cultural Heritage in China	2020/11/2	2020/12/2	Rabat, Morocco	the Chinese Cultural Centre
66	Lost at Sea: Art Recovered from Shipwrecks	2019/11/26	2020/3/22	San Francisco, USA	Asian Art Museum
67	The Sogdians: Influencers on the Silk Roads	2020/9/28	Online Exhibition	Washington, USA	the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery
68	Interweaving Cultures along the Silk Roads	2020/9/4	2020/12/13	Online Exhibition	Spencer Museum of Art
69	Silk Road Exhibition 2020	2019/11/3	2019/11/5	Doha, Qatar	Doha Exhibition And Convention Center-DECC
70	Extraordinary Decorations: Chinese Porcelain	2020/10/1	2020/11/1	Kazakhstan	Central State Museum of Kazakhstan
71	Regards Croisés Sur la Route de la Soie	2020/6/16	2020/7/3	Lyon, France	Espace culturel Eole
72	Sur la Route de la Soie	2019/9/20	2019/9/29	Caen, France	Caen Evènements
73	La Route de la Soie: Exposition-Photographie	2020/10/2	2020/11/7	Frouard, France	Espace 89
74	Routes de la Soie : D'ispahan à Ferney Voltaire	2020/8/25	2020/9/7	Ferney Voltaire	Espace Candide
75	Nuage·voyager en Chine Les Charmes de Kucha sur la Route de la Soie-Exposition Photographie des Beautés de Kucha du Xinjiang de la Chine	2020/7/6	2020/9/30	Paris, France	Centre Culturel de Chine
76	Notre Route de la Soie-Exposition Photographies	2020/8/6	2020/12/31	Paris, France	Centre Culturel de Chine

77	The Light of Silk Roads	2020/11/24	2021/1/18	Russia	Astrakhan Museum of Local Lore
78	Our Silk Road: Photographic Exhibition	Online Exhibition		Pakistan	China Cultural Center in Pakistan
79	The Ancient Silk Road Kingdom of Kucha-A Photographic Exhibition Documenting the Charm of Xinjiang, China	Online Exhibition		Pakistan	China Cultural Center in Pakistan
80	The Ancient Silk Road Kingdom of Kucha	2020/11/6	2020/11/13	Pakistan	Comsats Art Gallery



Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads

2020

REPORT

ACADEMIC RESEARCHES



Annual Review of Research Achievements on Silk Roads in 2020

Luo Shuai
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In 2020, more than 180 books (monographs, proceedings, reports, catalogues, etc.) as well as more than 500 papers on the Silk Road studies were published. The following is a review and introduction of the important works in three aspects, i.e. original materials, period studies, and monographic studies.

I. Original Materials

1. Literatures & Unearthed Documents

Jia Jingyan collated and annotated thirteen kinds of travel accounts on the borderlands written in the Five Dynasties, as well as Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasties. He also studied on the geographies, goods and customs recorded in the accounts ^[1]. A. Yakup presentd an edition of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka* literature in Old Uyghur mainly focusing on the fragments of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka* sūtra in eighty volumes and the *Buddhāvataṃsaka* sūtra in fourty volumes kept in the Berlin Turfan collection in close consultation of the fragments of both texts kept in Dunhuang, Kyoto, St. Petersburg and Taipei ^[2]. A set of 35 volumes edited by Wang Zhenfen, Meng Xianshi and Rong Xinjiang, printed in full color with the original large photocopy, are the first comprehensive release of the unearthed Chinese documents from Xinjiang which are collected in Lushun Museum. The collection includes more than 26,000 pieces of Chinese literature, most of which are Buddhist classics, as well as a certain number of writing inscriptions, scriptures, Taoist scriptures, four Chinese classics, legal codes, public and private documents and medical literature, etc., which cover many aspects of ancient Turpan, ranging from the Western Jin Dynasty to the Northern Song Dynasty ^[3].

2. Inscriptions

A three-volume set edited by Zhao Li and Rong Xinjiang, compiles all the Tocharian materials within the ancient Kucha state, especially the cave inscriptions which attracted less attention before, with detailed interpretation and research. It is an internationally academic level research monographs, contains the relics plates, the unearthed informations, the copy of the characters, the transcriptions, translations and annotations, the comprehensive studies, the vocabularys indexes and the number indexes and so on.

The works will not only present the latest achievements in the Tocharian literature research in China, but also fully reflect that Xinjiang has been a place where multi-ethnic groups live together and multi-cultural exchanges on the Silk Road since ancient times ^[4]. B. M. Babadjanov published a Russian translation and commentary of public inscriptions in Persian, Turkish and Arabic from the 11th to the early 20th century in the historical Central Asian landscape of Khorazm, which dealt for the first time with the entire corpus of the known preserved epigraphic material of Khiva ^[5].

Bi Bo and Nicholas Sims-Williams provided a reading of a bilingual Chinese-Sogdian epitaph of a Sogdian lady who died in 736 CE. It attested the conversion of a Sogdian lady to the “heretical” Buddhist Sanjie or “Three levels” movement, which remained popular despite being officially suppressed under the Tang ^[6]. Y. Yoshida supplied a new edition as well as detailed annotations of two famous inscriptions written in middle Iranian in the 9th century. One is the Sino-Pahlavi epitaph unearthed in Xi’an, and the other is the Karabalgasun inscription from Mongolia. Meanwhile, the author also discussed the Sogdian traders, the Muslim merchants and the mediaeval Silk Road ^[7].

3. Archaeological Reports

There were several reports on the sites along the oasis Silk Road published last year. The survey report on Subashi Temple introduced the investigation materials obtained by the China Northwest University archaeology team. Subashi Temple, which is the largest, well-preserved and oldest ancient Buddhist temple site in Xinjiang, includes the West Temple and the East Temple. There are fourteen grottoes in the West Temple, which combines the characteristics of the Indian Tower Hall Caves and the Boudoir Caves or the boudoirs with the result that creating a new cave shape which is unique to Qiuci. Although only three grottoes remain in the East Temple, they have various themes and rich connotations ^[8]. The Archaeological report on Kara Tepe (or Kara Tepa), was published by the Art Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Kara Tepe, located on the outskirts of Termez in the Surkhan Darya Region, was a Buddhist complex site, which was thought to date to the time of the Kushan Empire during the reign of Vima Takto in the mid-1st century, or of Kanishka I, around the 2nd century. The joint archaeological team of Rissho University with the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan conducted four excavations on this site in September each year from 2014 through 2017 ^[9].

Archaeological reports on the sites along the Maritime Silk Road were also attractive. The report of the 2019 season excavation of the Nan wai zong zheng si site in Qauanzhou, summarized the origin of Nan wai zong zheng si in Quanzhou in the Southern Song Dynasty as well as the excavation course of the site, which showed the relic phenomenon such as the pool, stylobate, building components, and ceramics with characters ^[10]. A joint team which was set up by the Palace Museum, the Department of Antiquities and Museum of Ras al-Khaimah, the Archaeology Department of Durham University of UK and the School of Archaeology of Jilin University, published a report on the archaeological field survey at al-Mataf Ruins of Julfar in Ras al-Khaimah in 2019. The archaeological findings included as many as 10,000 objects in more than 50 monuments spreading in the north and south of the al-Mataf site. The team identified the Ming imperial ceramic remains as the result of the test of the selected sherd samples unearthed in the ruins by XRF, which indicated that Julfar used to play as a vital commercial port along the trade route around the Indian Ocean ^[11].

What’s more, the report on the Northern Cemetery of Roman London also supplied information on the cultural exchanges along the Silk Road. M. McKenzie et al., *In the Northern Cemetery of Roman London: Excavations at Spitalfields Market, London EI, 1991-2007* (Museum of London Archaeology), London’s Spitalfields Market, where contained a large cemetery, was the location of one of the city’s largest archaeological excavations, carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology between 1991 and 2007. The cemetery attracted some particularly wealthy 4th-century AD burials, including at least two in stone sarcophagi, one of which contained an inner, decorated, lead coffin enclosing a young woman. She had been anointed with imported resins and buried in silk clothing, with unusual glassware and jet items ^[12].

4. Catalogues of Cultural Relics

The important catalogues included the exhibition catalogue on the palace site of Nanyue state of the Western Han Dynasty and Nanhan state of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms Period in Guangzhou city, which demonstrates that the palace site of Nanyue and Nanhan states is an important historical witness not only of Guangzhou being the center of politics, economy and culture and the location of the administrative agency for maritime trade in Lingnan region for more than 2000 years, but also of the rise,

development and prosperity of the Maritime Silk Road^[13]. The Baoli Era was the catalogue of the exhibition under the same name, which displayed the treasures from the Tang shipwreck near Belitung, Indonesia, was held by the Shanghai Museum together with the Asian Civilisations Museum of Singapore. The Tang shipwreck was from a merchant dhow that used to sail between China and the Arabian world along the maritime Silk Road routes during the 9th century. It sank off the coast of Indonesia’s Belitung Island, with a full shipload of Tang cargo composed of export ceramics, gold and silver metalworks, and bronze mirrors. The exhibition was designed to offer a panoramic insight into Tang lifestyles and maritime trade in the 9th century^[14]. V. Laviola published a catalogue on the Islamic metalwork collections documented by the IsMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan (1957-1978). It contained approximately 439 artefacts and fragments, datable to the chronological range between the 9th and 13th century, which attested to a rich and varied production that deserves to be part of the scholarly discussion on Islamic medieval metalwork. The catalogue organised in 14 functional classes as well as a morphological, decorative and epigraphic analysis of the artefacts. Moreover, the analysis of the finds emerged from the excavations in Ghazni and those allegedly coming from the same site confirmed the role played by the city as an important production center^[15]. The Confucius Museum held the “Exhibition of Asian Civilizations” in 2020 and compiled a catalogue under the same name. It showed 150 precious cultural relics from Cambodia, Pakistan, Syria, Lebanon, and the United Arab Emirates, which demonstrated the outcomes of dialogue, exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations, and mirrored the Asian culture featuring geographical proximity, cultural similarities, harmony in diversity and peaceful coexistence^[16].

II. Period Studies

1. Early Period (Before the 2nd Century)

1) Studies focus on how the Silk Road born. Wang Sansan noted that the Parthians’ Eastern Expedition by Mithridati II not only resolved the border problems but also established the unified order of the empire which objectively guaranteed the formation of an effective trade pattern in the middle section of the Silk Road. This laid the foundation for the final connection of the Silk Road in the Zhang Qian period^[17]. Meng Xianshi argued that Zhang Qian’s mission to the Western Regions is one of the major events in human history. As the main platform of human activities, from then, Eurasia began to move towards the initial “integration”, and political ties between civilizations and countries were initiated. Zhang Qian’s mission to the Western Regions and the opening of the Silk Road was the beginning of the first phase of globalization^[18]. Wang Jianxin and Wang Qian clarified that the Qilian Mountain today is not the Qilian Mountain in Han Dynasty. The Qilian Mountain in the Han Dynasty should be the Eastern Tianshan. Yuezhi’s hometown is unlikely to be in the west of the Hexi Corridor and should be in the area centered on the Eastern Tianshan today^[19].

2) Studies on the western part of the Silk Road, concentrating on the overland and maritime trade among Arabia, Egypt and India. Mikhail Bukharin focused on two inscriptions that shed more light on the history of contacts between Hellenistic Egypt, the Roman Empire and the South Arabian kingdoms between the second century BCE and the mid to second century CE. One inscription mentions foreign gifts for King Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II Tryphon; the other, a Greek inscription from Zafār, seems to be the gift for either the king of Ḥimyar or the Roman colony in Zafār^[20]. Wang Xiaofu pointed out that Oman’s special products such as frankincense and other extra-territorial items re-exported from Oman were also transmitted through this route to China. As the consequence of these early communications in the first century, Gan Ying’s commission to the Roman empire caused Oman to send China envoy to establish the state relations. Oman was the transportation hub of the ancient Silk Road’s sea and land network. Like Roma’s gold coins, Omani frankincense and Chinese silk both served as the equivalent of ancient world economic and trade exchanges, supporting the operation of the ancient Silk Road economic belt^[21]. Federico De Romanis presented a fresh and innovative study of the two texts of the Muziris papyrus, one of the most important documents in the legal and economic history of the Roman Empire, which offered an analysis that incorporates the longue durée history of the South Indian pepper trade, from antiquity to early modernity, drawn on not only the Mediterranean-based data but also the South Indian sources and perspectives in an in-depth and balanced comparative examination, clarified the logistical challenges and economic/fiscal concerns of the early Roman Empire’s trade with South India, including the technicalities related to the assessment and collection of Roman customs duties on Indian commodities^[22].

3) Studies on the middle part of the Silk Road, centering on Alexander’s eastward expedition, the Hellenization of Central Asia, and the relationship between Kushan and dayuezhi. Ladislav Stančo and Adam Pažout aimed to study interactions between

ancient societies in semi-arid mountainous landscape of southern Central Asia using GIS based mobility analysis. The study region covers the south-eastern part of Uzbekistan along with narrow strips of neighbouring countries with a core area around present-day Darband village in the Baysun District^[23]. Rachel Mairs edited a volume which provided a thorough conspectus of the field of Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek studies, mixing theoretical and historical surveys with critical and thought-provoking case studies in archaeology, history, literature and art. The chapters showcased innovative methodologies, such as archaeological GIS, as well as providing accessible explanations of specialist techniques such as die studies of coins, and important theoretical perspectives, including postcolonial approaches to the Greeks India^[24]. Qi Xiaoyan claimed that in the middle of the 2nd century BCE, the invasion of *dayuezhi* put an end to Greek ruled in Sogdiana. Because the *dayuezhi* were nomadic people whose cultural structure was not meant to sustain a stationary society, after having occupied and settled in Sogdiana, *dayuezhi* accepted and imitated many elements of Greek civilization as they built their empire. This Hellenistic socio-cultural foundation continued to thrive in Sogdiana in the later period of the Kushan Empire as well^[25]. Yang Fuxue and Mi Xiaoqiang examined the historical inheritance of the Dayuezhi-Kushanian shoe buckles, which provided new evidence verifying that the founder of the Kushan Empire originated from Dayuezhi instead of Bactrian^[26].

4) Studies on the eastern part of the Silk Road, mainly discussing the northwest borderland of Han Empire, the relationships and cultural exchanges between the West Regions and the Han Dynasty, Xiongnu and Kushans. Wicky W. K. Tse investigated fully the forging of military regional identity in the northwest borderlands and the consequences of this for the early Chinese empires, recommended that in the Later Han period the region covering the modern provinces of Gansu, southern Ningxia, eastern Qinghai, northern Sichuan, and western Shaanxi, was a porous frontier zone between the Chinese regimes and their Central Asian neighbours, not fully incorporated into the Chinese realm until the first century BCE^[27]. Li Nan made a detailed exploration to the establishment and operation of border politics in the Western Regions in the Han Dynasty, the historical evolution of the protectorate system, the internal structure of the local government in the Western Regions, the application of cultural soft power in the governance of the Western Regions, and the construction of the border defense and frontier defense in the Western Regions in the Han Dynasty^[28]. Zhang Junmin pointed out that the Han dynasty slips from Majuanwan are very hard to interpret due to the poor conditions under which they have been conserved and the cursive style of writing. Careful comparison with similar characters from related documents has aided greatly in interpretation, the results of which have yielded important information about the exchanges between the Han dynasty and the Western Regions^[29]. Li Jingjie discussed the cultural nature of the indigo print unearthed at Niya site taking the cornucopia pattern as a clue to its origin. The analysis of the similar design in ancient Greece, Roma, Byzantium and Kushan came to the conclusion that it be sourced from Kushan^[30].

5) Comprehensive researches on the early Silk Road. Yang Jianhua et al. systematically explored cultural interactions between the Northern Zone of China and the Eurasian Steppe, with a focus on the formation process of the Xiongnu Confederation and the Silk Road^[31]. Randolph B. Ford, addressed a largely untouched historical problem that the fourth to fifth centuries AD witnessed remarkably similar patterns of foreign invasion, conquest, and political fragmentation in Rome and China. Yet while the Western Roman Empire was never reestablished, China was reunified at the end of the sixth century. Following a comparative discussion of earlier historiographical and ethnographic traditions in the classical Greco-Roman and Chinese worlds, the author turned to the late antique/early medieval period^[32].

2. Middle Period (3rd-12th centuries)

1) Studies on the Sasanians and the Roman-Byzantine Empire, and their relationship with the Silk Road. Iain Gardner explored the Middle Persian text *The Explanation of Chess and the Invention of Backgammon* which is dated to the reign of Xusrō I, describes a contest between the Persian and Indian kings represented by their leading wise men. The author also presented a new textual source from the fourth century CE or earlier, where many of the same themes were evident: the courtly context, the competition between rival sages from Persia and India, the interpretation in terms of cosmology and fate^[33]. Matteo Compareti emphasised that the Iranian decorative motifs such as the wild boar head, the winged horse and birds holding a necklace in their beak within pearl roundel frames, presented in monumental arts or objects of luxury arts (textiles, metalwork, glass, etc.), could be a valid instrument to propose better chronologies for excavated artifacts on a very wide area, which includes Persia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Tibetan Plateau as well^[34]. Mischa Meier tried to explain the events of late Roman history in the 5th and 6th centuries CE more strongly embedded in a Eurasian interrelationship^[35]. Ge Chengyong examined the glazed hu vessel found in the Shui Dynasty tomb at Xi’an in 2007,

pointed out that it is a Mediterranean *askos*, a type of ancient Greek pottery. Further, the author traced the origin of *askos*, and its related pottery that developed in the Mediterranean and during the Byzantine Empire, investigated the use and function of askos and its spread in Eurasia ^[36].

2) Studies on the role of the Southern Dynasties played in the Silk Road world network. Andrew Chittick offered a sweeping re-assessment of the Jiankang Empire (3rd-6th centuries CE), known as the Chinese “Southern Dynasties”. Although one of the medieval world’s largest empires, Jiankang has been rendered politically invisible by the standard narrative of Chinese nationalist history. The author paid particular attention to the problem of ethnic identification, rejecting the idea of “ethnic Chinese”, and delineating several other, more useful ethnographic categories, using case studies in agriculture/foodways and vernacular languages ^[37]. Wang Su discussed the *Zhigongtu* (i.e., Illustration of Envoys Presenting Tribute) painted by Emperor Yuan of the Liang Dynasty, which was valuable with its realistic depiction of the surrounding region, particularly the focus on the North-western barbarians. From the world historical perspective, *Zhigongtu* presented the relationship between the core area (Liang Dynasty) and the surrounding attached states ^[38].

3) Studies on the relationship between the Sui-Tang Empire and the Silk Road. Rong Xinjiang surveyed the newly discovered Zhang Bi’s Epitaph which shows that from the first year (627 CE) to the sixth year (632 CE) of the reign of Emperor Zhenguan in the Tang Dynasty, Zhang Bi was sent by Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty to thirty countries in the Western Regions. He should have visited the oasis kingdoms in the Tarim Basin, and visited Sogdiana and Tocharistan controlled by Western Turks ^[39]. Zhao Chao examined previous interpretations of the “Mural of Guests and Envoys” from the tomb of Crown Prince Zhanghuai of the Tang Dynasty and conducted an in-depth study of the original painting and historical documents, pointed out that the “Mural of Guests and Envoys” is a ritualized image that represents the identity of Crown Prince Zhanghuai as royal supervisor rather than depicting a funerary scene. The mural represents a ceremonial scene of tribute acceptance from foreign envoys and thus should be named the “Mural of Foreign Envoys in Court” ^[40]. Wu Yugui utilized the traditional literatures and the new unearthed documents, to explore the important figures and their deeds of the Turkic, Uyghur, Turgesh, Sogdian groups, analyze detailly the group activities in Turfan and Hami areas ^[41]. Shi Yuntao explained how the rise and fall of the Silk Road reflected in the Tang poetry, and revealed how the development of the Silk Road and the exchanges between China and other countries promoted the prosperity of the Tang poetry ^[42].

4) Studies on the Sogdian immigrants and their cultures in China. Moritz Huber provided a translation of the transmitted Chinese records on Sogdians in Sogdiana and China and combines them with archaeological evidence to present a differentiated picture of their presence in China from the 3rd to 10th century CE ^[43]. Ge Chengyong published a five-volume set concentrating in the interaction of *Hu* and Han cultures in the Han to Tang periods. It examined the life condition of the *Hu* people in China, discussed the influences of foreign civilizations on the architecture, calligraphy, painting, sculpture and living custom of Central Plain, as well as the spread of Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism and Nestorianism in Central Plain ^[44]. Bi Bo stated that as an important oasis in the northern route of the Western Region, Yanqi is an important station for Sogdian activities in history. However, there are very few records about the Sogdian activities in ancient documents. Fortunately, archeological discoveries have provided many important materials. The silver bowls and ossuaries of the Sogdian script found at Qigexing indicates that some Sogdian people were Zoroastrians during the 5th to 8th centuries, but, some adapted to Buddhism in the same period based on the Buddhist script written with Sogdian language ^[45].

5) Studies on the late mediaeval Central Asia and the cultural exchanges. Zhu Lishuang proposed that during the 10th century, there was an extensive material exchange network between Khotan and its neighbors and the Central Plains. There are two possible forms of material exchange between Khotan and oasis kingdoms in the Western Regions: exchange gift or direct trade ^[46]. Zhong Han suggested that the term “China” as the concept of spatial geography is often expressed as “Chin-Khitai” in the non-Chinese historical documents in the Western Regions and Central Asia. “Chin-Khitai” not only refers to the Chinese Mainland, but also often covers Turpan and Tianshan-Beilu in the Western Regions. Before the Yuan Dynasty, the northwestern frontier and the Chinese Mainland were in the same geographical concept of China for a long time. The further unification of the Western Regions during the Yuan and the Qing Dynasties had consolidated China into a fully integrated and eventually developed into an indivisible and unified multi-ethnic country ^[47]. Bai Yudong examined the U5328 Uighur manuscript unearthed in ancient ruins of Gaochang in Turfan, which reflects that Sogdian-Uighur merchants were still trading with steppe nomads in the 12th and the 13th century ^[48]. E. Tsareva surveyed one of the largest and the richest collections of ikat which belongs to the MAE RAS. Ikat is western Central Asian textiles

of the category which represents a specific branch of the craft ^[49]. Valentina Laviola examined the numerous isolated tiles in brick and stucco excavated from the Ghaznavid royal palace in Ghazni (11th–12th century), offered a typological classification of tiles presenting the variety of sizes and morphologies as well as of the decorative patterns. The combination of baked brick and stucco is largely attested since the late 10th century in the architectural decoration throughout the Iranian area ^[50].

3. Late Period (after the 13th century)

1) Studies on the Mongolian-Yuan Empire, the four khanates, and the cultural exchanges along the Silk Road. Michal Biran and her colleagues revealed the individual stories of three key groups of people along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia, that were military commanders, merchants, and intellectuals. The author analysed their annotated biographies, which brought to the fore a compelling picture of the Mongol Empire from a wide range of historical sources in multiple languages, providing important insights into a period unique for its rapid and far-reaching transformations ^[51]. Eiren L. Shea investigated how the Mongolian tribes from the steppe conquered the most sophisticated societies in existence in less than a century, creating a courtly idiom that permanently changed the aesthetics of China and whose echoes were felt across Central Asia, the Middle East, and even Europe ^[52]. Takashi Furumatsu explored the Great Mongol Empire, pointed out that the driving force behind Eurasian eastern history came from the “agricultural-nomadic border zone” where nomads and farmers encounter different livelihoods and cultures ^[53]. Ma Xiaolin and E. M. Pigarev examined three coins unearthed from two capital cities of the Golden Horde, the Old Sarai named Krasnoyarskogo ruin, and New Sarai called Selitrennoye ruin, both in Lower Volga River area. One of the coins is Chinese “Blue Colt” *Da-Ma-Ge* horse chess coin was found in Old Sarai. Other two Northern Song coins were found in New Sarai. Qiu Zhirong discussed the Southern Frankincense emerged in some Yuan Dynasty traditional Chinese medical books. The Southern Frankincense was only provided for the Mongol court and the aristocracy ^[55]. Victoria Almonte gave historic-linguistic analysis on two toponyms, Bosiguao and Kunlun Cengqiguo, which were used in Ling wai dai da (i.e., *Notes from the Land Beyond the Passes*) written by Zhou Qufei in 1178 ^[56]. Timothy May supplied new methodologies and avenues of research for the Mongol state Ilkhanate in the Middle East. Although the majority of the Ilkhanate was situated in Iran, the authors considered other regions within the state and moves away from focusing on the center and the Ilkhanid court ^[57].

2) Studies on Marco Polo and his travels. Stephen G. Haw introduced a Chinese geographical work of the Yuan period, the *Da Yuan hunyi fangyu shenglan* (i.e., Overview of the Unified Territories of the Great Yuan), argued that although not all the content dates from exactly the same period, much of it is from the 1280s. This makes it exactly contemporary with Marco Polo’s time in the Empire of Qubilai Qa’an, so that it is an important source for the study of his account of China ^[58]. Another paper published by Stephen G. Haw discussed some of Marco Polo’s problematic toponyms in southern China, i.e., “Cuigui” or “Cuigiu”, “Sinugul” (with many variants), and “Uguen”, pointed out that Marco was in southern China within a few years of the completion of the Mongol conquest of the southern Song Empire and that many of his south Chinese toponyms reflected Song usage ^[59]. Hu Yusheng and Liu Yu discussed the credibility of the information of the cloth of gold in Yuan dynasty recorded in *The Travels of Marco Polo* from the perspective of clothing. The authors stated that the records about the cloth of gold highly coincides with historical facts, proving it has high credibility and verifying gold culture in the costumes in the Yuan dynasty ^[60].

3) Studies on the Central Asian history and geography in the Timurid period. K. M. Baypakov discussed the problems of tracing one of the corridors along the Great Silk Route that passed through Northeast Zhetysu (Semirechie) and South Kazakhstan. The localization of these historic towns along this corridor and their identification with the actual archaeological remains of these towns of the 10th to 14th centuries are of great importance. Almost all the cities of the Ili Valley are localized and identified with ancient settlements. This corridor existed during the epoch of Karakhanidians, the Great Mongol Empire and the Chagataid State ^[61]. Charles Melville analysed the ways that Timurid contemporaries viewed their traditions and their environment, considered the political, religious and cultural history of this rich and highly productive interval that was the springboard for the formation of new imperial Ottoman, Safavid, Mughal and Uzbek orders of succeeding centuries ^[62]. Mana Kia sketched the contours of a larger Persianate world, historicizing place, origin, and selfhood through its tradition of proper form, i.e., adab. In this shared culture, proximities and similarities constituted a logic that distinguished between people while simultaneously accommodating plurality. Adab was the basis of cohesion for self and community over the turbulent eighteenth century, as populations dispersed and centers of power shifted, disrupting the circulations that linked Persianate regions ^[63].

4) Studies on Zayton (Quanzhou) and the Maritime Silk Road. Wang Qiang explored the Asian premodern maritime history from global perspectives, focusing on Quanzhou, the legendary Port of the Maritime Silk Routes, revealing cultural exchange among South Fujian in coastal China, the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean and beyond connected with Maritime Silk Trade Routes^[64]. Jiang Nan clarified that the state regime in the Ming and Qing Dynasties not only failed to stifle Quanzhou’s maritime tradition, but also failed to control Quanzhou’s grass-roots society. Since the Ming Dynasty, the local affairs of Quanzhou were generally settled within the township clan and seldom depended on the local government. This tradition of rural autonomy has a profound impact on the emigrants from Quanzhou, providing social and cultural resources for overseas expansion. All generations of Quanzhou people living overseas have always kept close contact with relatives and friends in their hometown, and jointly constructed a living space across national boundaries. Since the late Qing Dynasty, the overseas Chinese took charge of Quanzhou’s modernization construction, resisted the erosion of modern state power, and maintained the historical and cultural tradition facing the sea^[65].

5) Studies on the cultural exchanges between Ming Dynasty and the foreign countries. Elke Papelitzky published a monography devoting to seven authors in the last decades of the Ming who wrote monographs that can be considered a form of early Chinese “world history.” They described the geography, the history, and the political systems of foreign countries and regions ranging from China’s close neighbors Japan and Mongolia to more distant lands such as Mogadishu and Europe. This is the first comprehensive introduction to these texts contributing to an understanding of late Ming historiography as well as the perception of foreign countries by late Ming scholars^[66]. Besides, in a paper, Elke Papelitzky detailly discussed such authors in the late Ming who were members of two families from Gui’an County, Zhejiang, in Jiangnan. Two of them, Mao Ruizheng and Shen Maoshang, composed historical geographical works describing the whole world from a Chinese perspective^[67]. David M. Robinson clarified that far from being isolated, the Ming court was the greatest center of political patronage in East Eurasia, likely the world. Although the Ming throne might trumpet its superiority, it understood its need for allegiance from ruling elites in neighbouring regions^[68]. Roderich Ptak examined diverse references to the two places, Nantingshan and Nantingmen, where were key sites for Chinese navigation, and were often referred to in maps, nautical accounts and geographical works of the Ming period^[69].

6) Other researches. Hitoshi Muraoka analysed the *hun yi jiang li li dai guo du zhi tu* in the Ryukoku University Library, which is one of the oldest existing world maps created by the Li dynasty in Korea. It has high research value as a world map made in Asia before the Age of Discovery, for it includes many place names of the Mongol Empire era^[70]. Qiu Jiangning edited the proceedings of the conference “Compilation and study of the Silk Road travel accounts in the 13-14th centuries”, interpreting the Silk Road travel accounts in the 13-14th centuries, embody the earnest attention of current research. In the 13-14th centuries, under the background of the wide extension of the Silk Road and Maritime Silk Road, the Chinese and foreign exchanges reached an unprecedented prosperity^[71]. E. S. Beaucamp & P. Cordez explored Venice’s diverse commodities, merchants, and routes from multiple perspectives, to explain what is the art of commodities, and how does it contribute to shaping a city^[72]. N. Golvers discussed a Jesuit polymath, Johann Terrentius (1576-1630), who was founder of Jesuit libraries in China and Jesuit scholarship, making a thorough analysis on the scholarly network and background of him in Europe (1600-1618) and his work as a China missionary (1619-1630), in alchemy, medicine, mathematics, botany, etc. Johann Terrentius^[73].

4. Trans-period Studies

1) Comprehensive monographs on the related Silk Road subject. Takao Moriyasu elucidated the caravan trade of Sogdians and Uighurs and the trends of Manichaeism, which was the biggest rival of Christianity, based on the original research results obtained from the reading comprehension of ancient documents and stone monuments remaining in various parts of Eurasia, pointed out that in the pre-modern world, the movements of the Central Eurasian peoples were driving history^[74]. Paul David Buell expounded a history of foods, and foodways in terms of exchanges taking place in Central Asia and in surrounding areas such as China, Korea or Iran during the last 5000 years, stressing the manner in which East and West, West and East grew together through food^[75]. Li Jun discussed the art and cultural exchanges between China, Persia, and Italy on both ends of the Eurasian continent, as well as the media competition between different art categories and the phenomenon of cross-media generation by a plenty of cases and detailed image analysis, which represents a new approach and new method for cross-cultural art history research^[76]. Zhang Xuesong depicted the relationship between the immigrants and foreign religious civilization, illustrated the immigrants’ adaption and identity to the Chinese society and culture by the perspective of the religious theory and practice, which is beneficial to the multi-dimensional research of

Chinese social cultural history, pioneering significance^[77]. Ran Wanli took the Silk Road as the clue, gave a comprehensive study on the literature combined with the new archaeological discovery, discussed the cultural exchanges between ancient China and Greece, Rome, Central Asia, West Asia and ancient India^[78].

2) Collected works on the trans-period area studies of the Silk Road. Richard E. Payne and Rhyne King published a volume which explores how successive imperial regimes established enduring forms of domination spanning the highlands of the Hindu Kush, essentially ungovernable territories in the absence of the technologies of the modern state, explains the success of imperial projects within a highland political ecology from a variety of disciplinary perspectives with their respective evidentiary corpora, notably history, anthropology, archaeology, numismatics, and philology.^[79] L. R. Greaves and A. Hardy edited the proceedings of the Twenty-third Conference of the European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art, which encompasses ground-breaking research on the archaeology, epigraphy and iconography of the Indian subcontinent and of the neighboring countries of Central Asia, spanning a time-frame of approximately six-thousand years, bringing readers up to the fifth century CE^[80]. V. P. Nikonorov compiled collected papers on the ancient and medieval cultures of Central Asia, exploring the archeology and ancient history of Central Asia, as well as Central Asia and the neighbouring regions of Eurasia from the Prehistoric era to the Middle Ages^[81]. Masatake Matsubara claimed that Central Asia had been a particularly important stage in human history. Nomads in this area have continued to act as internal combustion engines to encourage dynasty change as they move west and east, starting with Scythians and Xiongnu, and then to Turks, Mongolians, and the Manchus^[82]. Tatsuhiko Seo analysed the cities and societies in Africa and Eurasia, discussed the historical interrelationship between cities and societies on a Eurasian scale in the light of the world situation in the early 21st century^[83].

III. Monographic Studies

1. Diffusion of Flora and Fauna

1) Studies on horse. Huo Wei discussed the Heaven Horse and the Winged Beast along the Silk Road, analysed the worship of the God of the Two Horses in Central Asia and its spread to the East, the popularity of the Winged Beasts in Han Dynasty, the idea of Emperor Wudi’s seeking immortality and the promotion of the belief in the Heaven Horse by Kunlun mythology^[84]. Shang Yongqi noted that the Han and Tang dynasties were important for the formation of the core identity and cohesion of the Chinese image, and were the two dynasties with the strongest influence and force in the ancient world of East Asia. Han and Tang splendor was based on the strong projection of ancient China’s mature and abundant civilization, but another important, indeed indispensable, reason lay in the managerial capacity possessed by the dynasty and founded on the evolution of the state’s equine resources, resources that gave the Tang their high mobility^[85].

2) Studies on felid. A. F. Haruda presented the earliest evidence for domestic cat from Kazakhstan, found as a well-preserved skeleton with extensive osteological pathologies dating to 775-940 cal. CE from the early medieval city of Dzhanakent, Kazakhstan. This urban settlement was located on the intersection of the northern Silk Road route which linked the cities of Khorezm in the south to the trading settlements in the Volga region to the north and was known in the tenth century CE as the capital of the nomad Oghuz^[86]. Zhao Jin suggested that the Ming Court Painter Zhou Quan’s ‘Lions’ represents the highest level of Chinese realistic lion art in ancient times. It is as an auspicious picture describing Samarkand contributing lions to the Ming court during the Chenghua reign to witness the Ming Empire trading and exchanging friendly with the countries along the Silk Road^[87]. Zhao Jing’s another paper devoted in lion pointed out that in ancient Chinese , whenever tribute lions came, realistic lion artworks also appeared, similar to the images of the real lions, but these images were mostly confined to court art^[88].

3) Studies on the Silk Road plants. Wang Zijin examined the records about Phoenix dactylifera in the Chinese literature, which reflected the perception and knowledge of the people in the Central Plain in ancient China about other countries, and the relevant explorations are helpful in the description of the early development and exploration of other remote countries and regions during the communication on the ancient Silk Road^[89]. Wang Siming and Liu Qizhen systematically discussed the historical process of crop exchange between China and foreign countries before modern times. The crop exchanges between China and foreign countries have had a profound impact on the cultivation structure, food culture, economic development and social customs around the world^[90]. Raymond Cooper and Jeffrey John Deakin explored the natural products of Silk Road plants, exhibited a treasury of plants, many indigenous to countries along the trading routes of the Silk Road, that yielded medicines, cereals, spices, beverages, dyes, and

euphoric and exotic compounds previously unknown to the rest of the world ^[91].

2. Spread of Religions

1) Buddhism. Wannaporn Rienjang and Peter Stewart published the proceedings of the Third International Workshop of the Gandhara Connections Project. Gandhāran art is often regarded as the epitome of cultural exchange in antiquity. The Buddhist art produced in and around Gandhāra in the first few centuries AD shows extraordinary connections with other traditions across Asia and as far as the Mediterranean ^[92]. Carmen Meinert and Henrik Sørensen focused on the Buddhism in Central Asia, explored the multi-layered relationships between the trans-regional Buddhist traditions (Chinese, Indian, Tibetan) and those based on local Buddhist cultures (Khotanese, Uyghur, Tangut, Khitan) ^[93]. Hiroshi Arami and his colleagues discussed the eastward and westward transmission of Buddhism, taking up various rituals, scriptures, literature, and iconography, considered the actual conditions of the spread and succession of beliefs and religions, conflicts and fusions in a wide range of social layers of each era from both the eastern and western sides, and build a new cultural history ^[94]. He Zhiguo made a detailed investigation on the Cash-Tree Buddha found in southwest China, the Buddha carved in cliff tomb, the Buddha carved in pottery base, and the Cash-Tree Buddha collected in public and private collections in China and abroad ^[95]. Zhu Hu conducted a comprehensive research of the dissemination of Buddhism into China in the Han Dynasty from the aspects of art, religion and archaeology ^[96]. Fan Ruolan elaborated monks’ preaching and learning experience in the South China Sea area, especially in Guangzhou, Jiaozhou, Funan and Srivijaya, and pointed out that this region played a significant role as a transit center of Chinese and foreign monks for the dissemination of Buddhism ^[97]. Bi Bo and Nicholas Sims-Williams gave a reading on the newly discovered Chinese-Sogdian bilingual epitaph, the master of which was a Sogdian lady who died in 736 CE, and ever converted to the “heretical” Buddhist *Sanjie* or “Three levels” movement, which remained popular despite being officially suppressed under the Tang ^[98]. Yang Baoyu re-transcribed and revised S. 5981 and six legal documents preserved in S. 529, and discussed the dates and activities of the monks traveling to India to retrieve Buddhist scriptures as they stopped in Dunhuang ^[99].

2) Zoroastrianism, Manicheanism and Christian. Zhang Xiaogui and Liu Zhen noted that according to the historical records of Dunhuang, the Zoroastrian temples in Dunhuang shown typical characteristics of ancient Iranian religious architecture, the primary characteristic of which is a four-pillared square hall surrounded by colonnades on four sides. The iconography and fire worship reported to have appeared in the temples was clearly inherited from the traditions of both ancient Persian and Sogdian Zoroastrianism ^[100]. Yang Fuxue concentrated on the Xiapu Manichaeism, discussed the history, culture and literature of Manichaeism from Xiapu, Fujian Province ^[101]. S. N. C. Lieu and G. Thompson explored the Church of the East in Central Asia and China, Brepols, revealed the history of Christianity along the Silk Road and in pre-modern China, pushing back the frontier of knowledge in a fast developing new area of research ^[102]. Wei Jian and Zheng Yu divided the Crosses in the Nestorianism stone carvings found in Ongud in Yinshan Mountains into three, namely Malta, Nestria and Pearl Grain by archaeological typology, discussed the process of Nestorianism localization under the influence of the Buddhist culture, the Han culture and the Persian culture from the meaning of lotus pattern, curled-grass pattern and *Ruyi* pattern incised in the stone as well as their original relations ^[103].

3) Islam. Masoud Bayat and Ali Salarishadi focused on the role of Islam in flourishing and advancement of the Silk Road, using the source works of Islamic authors which contain data on geography, history of the region and route network of Islamic states, described cities and distances between them, offering a comprehensive overview of the global routes ^[104].

4) Comprehensive studies. Jaś Elsner revealed the rewards of exploring the relationship between art and religion in the first millennium, and the particular problems of comparing the visual cultures of different emergent and established religions of the period in Eurasia - Buddhism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity and the pagan religions of the Roman world. Most of these became established and remained in play as what are called “the world religions” ^[105].

3. Decorative Patterns

1) Decorative patterns on textiles. Gong Yilin and Shen Aifeng stated that the textile patterns from Sampula tomb were greatly influenced by the early civilization of western Asia, the Kushan culture in Central Asia and the grassland culture circle, as well as the Chu Han culture from the Central Plains, and some of the patterns were combined with Khotan’s local mythology and weaving technology ^[106]. Zhao Gang examined the animal patterns in the form of Tuantang in silk textiles of the Tang dynasty, pointed out

that the evolution of animal patterns in the form of Tuantang in the Tang dynasty is inseparable from aesthetic preference in the Tang dynasty, and cultural phenomenon in the Tang dynasty can be reflected from the pattern evolution ^[107]. Zheng Binlin and Zhu Jianjun focused on two pieces of brocades. One is in the private collection by Pritzker Family in Chicago, and the other is in the collection at the Textile Research Center of the Abegg Foundation in Switzerland, both of which not only maintain the Sassanian Persian style of linking the bead pattern, and the flying ribbon on the deer neck, but also absorb the curly grass pattern and treasure flowers pattern commonly seen in the Dunhuang murals during the Tang Dynasty ^[108]. Sun Ge and Zhang Yi analysed the origin of bird patterns, noted that the eastern bird pattern experienced the evolution from decorative patterns to specific clan symbols, while the western bird pattern developed in the opposite direction ^[109]. Another paper of the same two authors analysed the lotus pattern which has been one of the most widely used decorative patterns in China since ancient times. From the changes in lotus pattern modeling, it can be found that lotus pattern has a very close connection with the development of Silk Road ^[110].

2) Decorative patterns on artifacts and murals. Zuo Jun concentrated on the gold headwear ornaments with bighorn sheep motif from the Eurasian prairie cultures, which are mainly unearthed in the noble tombs of the Warring States and the Qin-Han dynasty, analysed on their places where they were discovered, as well as the shape and design, the assembly sets, the images and pottery sculpture of the same age, the evolution and the grades of uses ^[111]. Chang Ying explored the Makara pattern originated in ancient India, pointed out that the earliest makara decoration in China appeared on an imported Bactrian silver cup of the Northern Wei dynasty ^[112]. Zhang Chunjia conducted a study on the Rounded Flower Pattern of Tang Dynasty in Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes, selected more than 1600 local cases of the Rounded Flower pattern in 88 caves of Tang Dynasty to analyse their formal features. Although the Rounded Flower pattern is only a part of the Buddhist art in the Mogao Grottoes in Tang Dynasty, it occupies a large proportion in the overall visual image of the grottoes as an important part of the decoration ^[113].

4. Shipwrecks and Export Porcelain

1) Porcelains from Changsha Kiln and the Belitung Shipwreck. Shanghai Museum compiled a collection on the Belitung Shipwreck in conjunction with the Shanghai Museum’s exhibition “The Baoli Era: Treasures from the Belitung Shipwreck”, which gave a comprehensive introduction to the Belitung Shipwreck and its era from the perspectives of navigation, trade and art ^[114]. Chen Yuexuan analysed the porcelain bowl with the inscription of the Chinese character *yin* and the porcelain plate with the inscription of two Chinese characters *jin feng* from the Belitung Shipwreck of the 9th century, which belong to the Tang royal porcelains ^[115]. Li Meitian proposed that the Changsha Kiln came out in the middle Tang dynasty (mid-8th century) as a maker of the over-glazed Hu-styled ceramic wares for people-to-people trade overseas. It was the social changes along the middle Yangtze River that started from the six dynasties more than the Hu people trading activities that gave birth to such a unique Kiln-culture ^[116].

2) Jingdezhen Kiln porcelain. Zhong Yandi analysed the overseas Jingdezhen Kiln porcelains of the mid Ming Dynasty, which indicated the export and trade Characteristics of the Maritime trade in this period ^[117]. Anne Gerritsen argued that the imperial kilns of Jingdezhen produced ceramics for the court, while nearby private kilns manufactured for the global market. Through the manufacture and consumption of Jingdezhen’s porcelains, China participated in the early modern world. She also explored how objects tell the story of the past, connecting texts with objects, objects with natural resources, and skilled hands with the shapes and designs they produced ^[118].

3) Celadon porcelain from Yuezhou Kiln, ancient porcelain manufacture in the China adjacent areas, and the porcelain skill exchanges between these areas and China. He Yun’ao and Gan Youcheng elaborated the interaction between Ningbo’s celadon porcelain production and the development of the East Asian Maritime Ceramic Road from the perspective of archeology ^[119]. Qin Dashu discussed the first time of inlay technique being applied to the production of the Goryeo inlaid celadon by contrasting the similar techniques for the 10th-11th century’s inlaid ornaments unearthed in northern China, stated that the sort of technique be created and widely used in northern China much earlier than it came out in Goryeo. Therefore, the northern Chinese inlay technique had an important impact on the generation and improvement of the proceeding of the Goryeo inlaid celadon ^[120]. Huang Huiyi claimed that since the 9th century, the Khmers started to produce high-fired glazed stoneware. The various shapes and motifs of green-glazed-covered boxes of Phnom Kulen Kilns dated from the 11th-12th centuries were inspired by the decorative crafts of the Yue porcelain wares of the Tang through Northern-Song times, and got reformed and innovated in practice ^[121]. Bui Minh Tri proceeded on the history of Vietnamese polychrome ceramics concerning periodization, place of production and techniques based on

the findings at the archaeological sites like the Hoàng Thành Thăng Long site and Hoi An Shipwreck together with the national and private collections and historical documents^[122].

5. Archaeometry

1) Ancient glass. Many works focus on the glass unearthed from Southeast Asian. Laure Dussubieux measured 61 glass compositions from the two neighboring late prehistoric/protohistoric sites of Aw Gyi and Maliwan, located in the southernmost part of Myanmar in the Isthmus of Kra, which revealed two different patterns. The difference in glass composition and typology between these close-by sites draws perhaps a more complex economic and political situation than expected with different networks at early periods on the east and west side of the Isthmus of Kra^[123]. Ambra Calo pointed out that excavations at the stone sarcophagus burial site of Pangkung Paruk on Bali had yielded the largest collection of Roman gold-glass beads in early Southeast Asia found to date, together with elaborate gold ornaments and two Han Chinese bronze mirrors. Analyses of these new finds and comparison with others from across the region provide insights into the early to mid-first millennium AD trans-Asiatic networks that linked Southeast Asia to South Asia, the Roman world and China^[124].

Another group of works concentrate to the glass excavated from South China. The Guangzhou Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology published a monograph on the beads and pendants of Han Dynasties unearthed from Guangzhou, systematically checked and sorted these particular artifacts, divides them into two categories: made of artificial materials or of natural materials, observed and analysed their characteristics of raw materials, color, shape, decoration, perforation et al^[125]. Gu Zhou analysed five tiny opaque red beads found in Mui Cemetery, Yunnan Province, southwestern China, and dated to the Han dynasty, to determine their production technology and to explore their possible provenance. Chemical analysis demonstrated that these beads are potash glass with higher CaO and Al₂O₃, which may have been imported from Southeast Asia, and that copper was the major coloring agent^[126].

2) Textile, dyeing and pigment. Xu Zheng and Jin Lin were devoted to the Chinese silk history, noted that Sericulture, or the cultivation of mulberry trees and silkworms, and the techniques of reeling, spinning, dyeing and weaving silk yarn, have been practiced in China for thousands of years. Silk has long played a major role in Chinese civilisation and was a key factor in the creation of the Silk Road, which linked the civilisations of East and West. Chinese silk is almost as old as Chinese civilisation itself, and has evolved hand in hand with Chinese people^[127]. Zhao Feng launched a selected edition of Chinese silk design, claimed that silk is one of the most important inventions in ancient China. Due to the rich relics, silk preserves excellent design materials, and become the source of our inheritance and innovation. The author strengthened the organic combination of high and new technology and traditional Chinese crafts such as weaving, dyeing and printing, embroidery, promoted the optimization and upgrading of traditional cultural industries, and bringing forth the new from the old on the basis of inheriting the characteristics of traditional national crafts, so as to give new vitality to the ancient silk^[128]. Song Yin gave a microscopic observation and dye analysis of textile artifact 95MN I M1:43, found that the textile was woven with mulberry silk that had been processed by silk reeling and degumming, and the textile was dyed with Rubia tinctorum L., Phellodendron Amur, and Polish cochineal insects (Porphyrophora polonica), which shown that this silk processing method was influenced by that of the Central Plains, and that the dyes came to Niya from different places throughout China and Xinjiang because of the city’s central geographic location^[129]. Gao Yumin examined the samples of wall paintings fragments that cannot be restored which were excavated from Dharma Valley Buddhist Temple ruins in Xinjiang, to identified their the pigments and workmanship. The results show that the blue pigment is lazurite, the green pigment is atacamite, the white pigment is gypsum, the red pigment is cinnabar, the brown pigment is iron red and the ochre yellow pigment is ferrite yellow^[130].

6. Unearthed Documents along the Silk Road

Shi Jinbo argued that the languages of many ethnic minorities that were active along the ancient Silk Road have been preserved in historical documents, the contents of which provide an abundance of first-hand historical research material. These records reflect the historical formation and development of the ancient Silk Road, as well as the contributions made by each ethnic group to the development of the Silk Road^[131]. Zheng Xianwen published a collection of papers which referred to three aspects: the newly discovered legal historical materials along the Silk Road and the study of the legal system in the Han and Jin dynasties; the study of the documents from Dunhuang and the Western Regions and the legal history of Tang Dynasty; and the newly discovered legal

historical materials and the study of ancient legal system^[132]. Huang Lou focused on the mediaeval governmental account documents unearthed from the Turpan region of Xinjiang, explored the economic and political system of the local government and the unified dynasty in China governing the Turpan region from Gaochang County of the Sixteen States period, through the Kan and Qu Gaochang Kingdoms, to the Xizhou period of Tang Dynasty, which demonstrates that the political, economic and cultural processes of Turfan were integrated with the Central Plains 2000 years ago^[133]. Wang Qitao examined the manuscripts concerning the surname *Zhu* in the Turpan documents unearthed over the past hundred years, found that the people with the surname *Zhu* were not only engaged in painting, building, brewing, farming and other frass-roots work, but also engaged in the reception for foreign envoys, serving as low-level officials, or acting as petty officials^[134].

7. Culture Heritage along the Silk Road

Gary Sigley explored the creation, development and proliferation of the route heritage discourse of the Ancient Tea Horse Road in China. Examining the formation of the tea-horse road as a concept, its development as a platform for cultural branding, and its most recent interactions with the policy of the Belt and Road Initiative and the revival of the discourse on the Silk Roads, the author demonstrated that the Tea-Horse Road is an important part of the discourse on Chinese modernity^[135]. Zou Yiqing framed the Tea-Horse Road as a “cultural route” as specified by ICOMOS’s *Cultural Route Charter*, argued that the Tea-Horse Road was in essence a land transportation network in Asia shaped by the demand for material and cultural exchange among different ethnic groups and regions in western China. The development of the Tea-Horse Road has linked China with Southeast Asia and South Asia, a process in which tea played an active and decisive role^[136]. D. K. Mirzaakhmedov and S. D. Mirzaakhmedov introduced the cultural heritage of Bukhara and the Bukhara oasis, supplied scientific data conducted on the territory of Bukhara and the Bukhara oasis based on published materials, which covered the layout and topography of settlements, architecture of monuments and ethnographic research^[137].

8. Silk Road Theories and Academic History

1) Materials about the Russian expeditions in Central Asia in the late 19th century to the early 20th century, as well as reviews of the related academic history. Hao Chunwen reviewed the development of Dunhuang studies in China in four stages. The first stage is divided into two periods bounded by 1930. The first period is from 1909 to 1930 and the second is from 1931 to 1949. The second stage (1949-1978) is divided into two periods by the year 1966. The third stage is from 1978 to 2000, when the Dunhuang Studies in China developed rapidly. Chinese scholars gradually changed the situation of “Dunhuang in China and Dunhuang Studies in Japan”, and finally mastered the dominant position and discourse right of the international Dunhuang Studies. The fourth stage (from 2001 to 2019) is the beginning of the transformation of Dunhuang Studies in China^[138]. Mikhail Bukharin published a series of materials about the history of the Russian Central Asia Exploration leading by Academician S. F. Ol’denburg in 1909-1910 and 1914-1915, which contained a plenty of documentation (including a great many historic photos) on the Mogao Grottoes near Dunhuang^[139].

2) The raise and development of the concept of the Silk Road. Liu Jinbao clarified that the concept of “Silk Road” did not come from Ferdinand von Richthofen, and the mention of the concept of “Silk Road” in his famous works was an accident for him. The widely quoted sentences mentioned above was summarized by Albert Herrmann^[140]. Xu Lang pointed out that Ferdinand Freiherr von Richthofen proposed the name “Silk Road”, which referred to a Eurasian transcontinental land route connecting the eastern Mediterranean and the Yellow River basin. This term “Silk Road” clearly reveals the important role that the silk played in the ancient trade between east and west. Richthofen is indeed the first one who used the term “Silk Road” but he thought the term “Silk Road” was obvious limited within certain years and seemed not to focus on this term in his research. It was the scholars after him, for example, Albert Herrmann and Sven Hedin, who inherited this term directly in their writings with enriched and extended contexts^[141].

3) Silk Road theories and discipline system. Liu Zaicong noted that the concept of the Silk Road has attracted great attention from scholars in China and abroad since it was introduced to the public. He examined the connotation of the Silk Road, and the communication process of the concept of the Silk Road for building the discipline system of the Silk Road studies^[142]. Zhao Congcang suggested that the study of the Silk Road should have been regarded as a mature subject and deserved more attention, claimed that the study of the Silk Road is a comprehensive subject that ranges from interpreting its definition, researching objects, subject systems, methodologies, research history, and future potential. All types of content that is related to the Silk Road is the research object of such a study. The author also investigated the mechanism, impact, values, as well as the achievement of the cultural exchange between the East and West^[143].

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1 *The Metal Road of the Eastern Eurasian Steppe: The Formation of the Xiongnu Confederation and the Silk Road*

Author: Jianhua Yang, Huiqiu Shao, Ling Pan
Press: Springer
Time: January 2020
Language: English

Overview:

This book is one of the first to systematically explore cultural interactions between the Northern Zone of China and the Eurasian Steppe, with a focus on the formation process of the Xiongnu Confederation and the Silk Road. Combining partition and staging analyses, the authors adopt a broad perspective, viewing the Northern Zone as part of the Eurasian Steppe and combining history with culture by investigating the spread of bronze artifacts. In addition, with more than three hundred figures and color photographs, it offers readers a uniquely grand panorama of two thousand years of cultural interactions between the Northern Zone of China and the Eurasian Steppe.



2 *The Indo-Roman Pepper Trade and the Muziris Papyrus*

Author: Federico de Romanis
Press: Oxford University Press
Time: May 2020
Language: English

Overview:

The volume brings together leading scholars in multiple disciplines related to Silk Roads studies. It highlights the multiplicity of networks that constituted the Silk Roads, including land and maritime routes, and approaches the Silk Roads from Antiquity to China's One Belt One Road Initiative from Afro-Eurasia to the Americas. This holistic approach to understanding ancient globalization, exchanges, transformations, and movements - and their continued relevance to the present - is in line with contemporary academic trends toward interdisciplinarity. Indeed, the Silk Roads is such an expansive topic that many approaches to its study must be included to represent accurately its many facets. The volume emphasizes exchange and transformation along the Silk Roads - moments of acculturation or hybridization that contributed to novel syncretic forms.



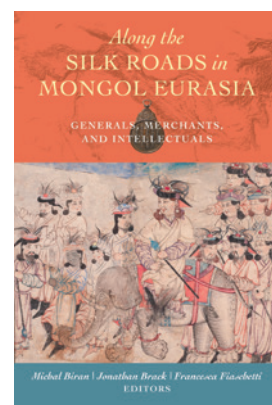
3 *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia: Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*

Author: Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, Francesca Fiaschetti
Press: University of California Press
Time: July 2020
Language: English

Overview:

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Chinggis Khan and his heirs established the largest contiguous empire in the history of the world, extending from Korea to Hungary and from Iraq, Tibet, and Burma to Siberia. Ruling over roughly two-thirds of the Old World and profoundly impacting also regions beyond its reach, the Mongol Empire created remarkable mobility across Eurasia, with people, ideas, and artifacts traversing vast geographical distances and cultural boundaries. Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia reveals the individual stories of three key groups of people—military commanders, merchants, and intellectuals—from across Eurasia. These annotated biographies bring to the fore a compelling picture of the Mongol Empire from a wide range of historical sources in multiple languages, providing important insights into a period unique for its rapid and far-reaching transformations.

Read together or separately, they offer the perfect starting point for any discussion of the Mongol Empire’s impact on China, the Muslim world, and the West and illustrate the scale, diversity, and creativity of the cross-cultural exchange along the continental and maritime Silk Roads.

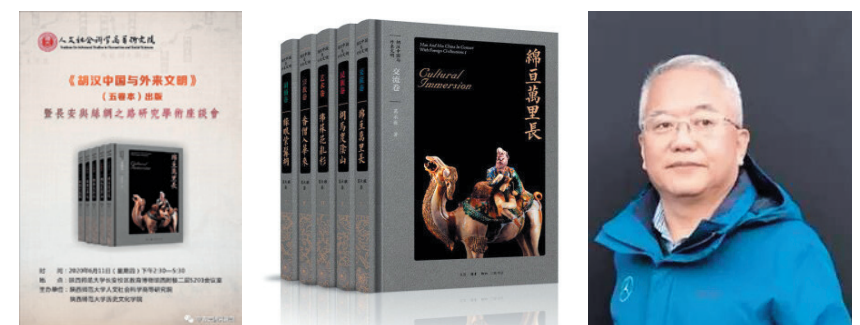


4 *Han and Hu: China in Contact with Foreign Civilizations*

Author: Chengyong Ge
Press: SDJ Joint Publishing Company
Time: July 2020
Language: Chinese

Overview:

The five volume set concentrates in the interaction of Hu and Han cultures in the Han to Tang periods. It examines the life condition of the Hu people in China, discusses the influences of foreign civilizations on the architecture, calligraphy, painting, sculpture and living custom of Central Plain, as well as the spread of Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism and Nestorianism in Central Plain. The articles in the volumes are matched with important pictures with important. They will promote the Chinese historical and archaeological studies. At the same time, the regional space referred in the works is mostly related to the ethnic groups and regimes along the Silk Road since the Han and Tang Dynasties. Thus, the basic researches in the works on the history, culture, religion and art of these regions could play a positive role in promoting the Silk Road studies.



5 Frankicense and Silk Roads: Oman’s Early Communication with China

Author: Xiaofu Wang
Press: Journal of Tsinghua University
Time: Issue 4, 2020
Language: Chinese

Overview:

The Periplus Maris Erythraei written in the first century AD records that the Oman-Daybul/Debal (now Karachi) route was the main route for the transfer of Chinese silk products to the West. Meanwhile, Oman’s special products such as frankincense and other extra-territorial items re-exported from Oman were also transmitted through this route to China. As the consequence of these early communications, in the first century, Gan Ying’s commission to Daqin (the Roman empire) caused Oman (Magan and Dhofar) to send China envoy to establish the state relations. Oman was the transportation hub of the ancient Silk Road’s sea and land network. Like Roma’s gold coins, Omani frankincense and Chinese silk both served as the equivalent of ancient world economic and trade exchanges, supporting the operation of the ancient Silk Road economic belt.



6 World History of the Silk Road

Author: Takao Moriyasu
Press: Kodansha
Time: September 2020
Language: Japanese

Overview:

Once upon a time, it was the people in power who needed “history.” Powerful people had history written to justify their rule. Historians were often those who served those in power. But the mission of modern history is to monitor and criticize power. An incandescent world history course that relativizes Western civilization that holds the hegemony of the modern world and appeals for a break from Western-centered historical views and Sinocentrism. In the pre-modern world, the movements of the Central Eurasian peoples were driving history. How did horse-riding nomads emerge, and how their mobility and economic power permeated neighboring nations? What is “pre-modern world system theory” mediated by the Silk Road network? We will elucidate the caravan trade of Sogdians and Uighurs and the trends of Manichaeism, which was the biggest rival of Christianity, based on the original research results obtained from the reading comprehension of ancient documents and stone monuments remaining in various parts of Eurasia. What you can see from it is that everything is a historical product, and everything from culture, language, and thought to politics and economic activity is created in a changing and mixed manner, such as pure ethnic culture and a universal nation. The truth is that it doesn’t exist. Furthermore, it also discusses the Manichean paintings discovered in Japan in recent years and attracted worldwide attention, and reveals the true image of the Silk Road from historical materials.



7 *The Grand Ship and Tang Dynasty*

Author: Shanghai Museum

Press: Shanghai Painting&Calligraphy Publishing House

Time: September 2020

Language: Chinese

Overview:

This work is a popular educational reading for the public in conjunction with the Shanghai Museum's exhibition "The Baoli Era: Treasures from the Belitung Shipwreck". Sixteen well-known scholars were invited to give a comprehensive introduction to the Belitung Shipwreck and its era from the perspectives of navigation, trade and art. The book covers many aspects of the middle and the late Tang period. The scholars focus on the Maritime Silk Road, the Sino-foreign trade routes, the early navigation technology, the reconstruction of the ship body, and the sailors' life, etc. The porcelains, gold and silver wares, glass wares and bronze mirrors and so on unearthed from the Belitung Shipwreck were also well analyzed.



8 *Cross-cultural Art History: Images and Their Ghostings*

Author: Jun Li

Press: Peking University Press

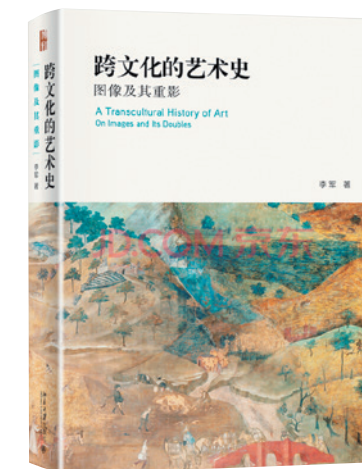
Time: October 2020

Language: Chinese

Overview:

The monograph focuses on the study of cross-cultural art history. The author has collected ten years of work, spanning east and west, tens of thousands of miles in vertical and horizontal directions, and traversing different fields such as fine arts, crafts, thought and literature. He discusses the art and cultural exchanges between China, Persia, and Italy on both ends of the Eurasian continent, as well as the media competition between different art categories and the phenomenon of cross-media generation by a plenty of cases and detailed image analysis, which represents a new approach and new method for cross-cultural art history research.

This author puts forward the concept of "Cross-Cultural Renaissance on the Silk Road", and regards the beginning of the Italian Renaissance and the modern world as a process synchronized with the introduction, consumption, imitation, and re-creation of silk. On the Silk Road, different cultures together created a renaissance that is essentially cross-cultural. The volume also explores the possibility of "another form of art history", that is, art history is a "subtle history" and "limited total history" that revolve around works of art, and it is also an exhibition based on "subtle history" and "limited total history", as well as a "visual art history".



9

New Approaches to Ilkhanid History

Author: Timothy May, A. C. S. Peacock, Kazuhiko Shiraiwa, Christopher P. Atwood, Stefan Kamola, Qiu Yihao, Koichi Matsuda, Judith Kolbas, Reuven Amitai, Na’ama O. Arom, Michael Hope, Pier Giorgio Borbone, Dashdondog Bayarsaikhan and Dmitri Korobeinikov

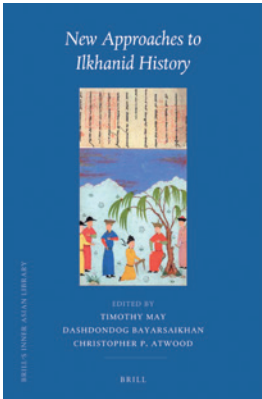
Press: Brill

Time: November 2020

Language: English

Overview:

As the title implies, this volume explores new methodologies and avenues of research for the Mongol state in the Middle East. Tge Contributors are specialists in Mongolian studies, including A. C. S. Peacock, Kazuhiko Shiraiwa, Christopher P. Atwood, Stefan Kamola, Qiu Yihao, Koichi Matsuda, Judith Kolbas, Reuven Amitai, Na’ama O. Arom, Timothy May, Michael Hope, Pier Giorgio Borbone, Dashdondog Bayarsaikhan and Dmitri Korobeinikov. Although the majority of the Ilkhanate was situated in Iran, this volume considers other regions within the state and moves away from focusing on the center and the Ilkhanid court. New consideration is given to the source material, particularly how they have been composed, but also how the sources can inform on the provinces of the Ilkhanate. Several authors also examine lower-tier personages, groups, and institutions.



10

Inscriptions from Qiuci Grottoes

Author: Li Zhao, Xinjiang Rong

Press: Zhongxi Book Company

Time: November 2020

Language: Chinese

Overview:

Xinjiang Qiuci Research Institute preserves a wealth of Tocharian materials, which is the most centralized collection unit in China. These materials are composed of two parts. One part is excavated wooden slips and fragments of documents, the other is the existing inscriptions in the caves, mainly the notes on the murals and the ink-writings or inscriptions left on the wall by the inhabitants of the caves and visitors. This three-volume set compiles all the Tocharian materials within the ancient Kucha state, especially the cave inscriptions which attracted less attention before, with detailed interpretation and research. It is an internationally academic level research monographs, which contains the relics plates, the unearthed information, the copy of the characters, the transcription, translation and annotation, the comprehensive study, the vocabulary index and the number index and so on. The works will not only present the latest achievements in the Tocharian literature research in China, but also fully reflect that Xinjiang has been a place where multi-ethnic groups live together and multi-cultural exchanges on the Silk Road since ancient times.



Academic Research List

No	The Title	Author	Publisher	Language
1	The Global Connections of Gandharan Art: Proceedings of the Third International Workshop of the Gandhara Connections Project	Wannaporn Rienjang, Peter Stewart eds.	Archaeopress	English
2	Crossroads of Cuisine: The Eurasian Heartland, the Silk Roads and Food	Paul David Buell et al.	Brill	English
3	Buddhism in Central Asia I: Patronage, Legitimation, Sacred Space, and Pilgrimage	Carmen Meinert, Henrik Sørensen eds.	Brill	English
4	New Approaches to Ilkhanid History	Timothy May et al. eds.	Brill	English
5	Lives of Sogdians in Medieval China	Moritz Huber	Harrassowitz	English
6	The Limits of Empire in Ancient Afghanistan: Rule and Resistance in the Hindu Kush, Circa 600 BCE-600 CE	Richard E. Payne & Rhyne King eds.	Harrassowitz	English
7	Writing World History in Late Ming China and the Perception of Maritime Asia	Elke Papelitzky	Harrassowitz	English
8	Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia: Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals	Michal Biran et al. eds.	University of California Press	English
9	Typical Venice: The Art of Commodities, 13th-16th Centuries	E. S. Beaucamp, P. Cordez eds.	Brepols	English Italian
10	The Church of the East in Central Asia and China	S. N.C. Lieu, G. Thompson eds.	Brepols	English
11	Johann Schreck Terrentius, SJ and the Origins of the Jesuit Library in Peking	N. Golvers	Brepols	English
12	The Buddhāvataṃsaka Literature in Old Uyghur	A. Yakup	Brepols	English
13	The Jiankang Empire in Chinese and World History	Andrew Chittick	Oxford University Press	English
14	The Indo-Roman Pepper Trade and the Muziris Papyrus	Federico De Romanis	Oxford University Press	English
15	Silk Roads: From Local Realities to Global Narratives	Jeffrey D. Lerner, Yaohua Shi eds.	Oxbow	English
16	In the Northern Cemetery of Roman London: Excavations at Spitalfields Market, London E1, 1991-2007	Malcolm McKenzie et al.	Museum of London Archaeology	English
17	Rome, China, and the Barbarians: Ethnographic Traditions and the Transformation of Empires	Randolph B. Ford	Cambridge University Press	English
18	The City of Blue and White: Chinese Porcelain and the Early Modern World	Anne Gerritsen	Cambridge University Press	English
19	Ming China and its Allies: Imperial Rule in Eurasia	David M. Robinson	Cambridge University Press	English
20	Eurasian Empires in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages: Contact and Exchange between the Graeco-Roman World, Inner Asia and China	Hyun Jin Kim, Frederik Juliaan Vervae, Selim Ferruh Adali eds.	Cambridge University Press	English
21	Empires of Faith in Late Antiquity: Histories of Art and Religion from India to Ireland	Jaś Elsner ed.	Cambridge University Press	English
22	The Collapse of China’s Later Han Dynasty, 25-220 CE: The Northwest Borderlands and the Edge of Empire	Wicky W. K. Tse	Routledge	English
23	Mongol Court Dress, Identity Formation, and Global Exchange	Eiren L. Shea	Routledge	English

24	Trade and Traders in Early Indian Society	Ranabir Chakravarti	Routledge	English
25	The Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek World	Rachel Mairs ed.	Routledge	English
26	China’s Route Heritage: Mobility Narratives, Modernity and the Ancient Tea Horse Road	Gary Sigley	Routledge	English
27	The Timurid Century: The Idea of Iran Vol.9	Charles Melville	I. B. Tauris	English
28	Natural Products of Silk Road Plants	Raymond Cooper and Jeffrey John Deakin	Milton: CRC Press	English
29	The Metal Road of the Eastern Eurasian Steppe: The Formation of the Xiongnu Confederation and the Silk Road	Yang Jianhua et al.	Springer	English
30	Studies on the History and Culture along the Continental Silk Road	Li Xiao ed.	Springer	English
31	Archaeology of Iran in the Historical Period	Kamal-Aldin Niknami and Ali Hozhabri eds.	Springer	English
32	Legendary Port of the Maritime Silk Routes: Zayton (Quanzhou)	Wang Qiang	New York: Peter Lang Publishing	English
33	The Way of Chinese Silk: Silk History and the Silk Road	Xu Zheng, Jin Lin	Zhejiang University Press	English
34	Ancient Korea in the Arabic and Persian Manuscripts	Lee Hee Soo and Mohammad Bagher Vosoughi	IICAS	English
35	Impact of Islam on the Silk Road	Masoud Bayat and Ali Salarishadi	IICAS	English
36	Cultural Heritage of Bukhara and the Bukhara Oasis	D. K. Mirzaakhmedov and S. D. Mirzaakhmedov	IICAS	Russian
37	Persianate Selves: Memories of Place and Origin Before Nationalism	Mana Kia	Stanford University Press	English
38	Religions, Society, Trade and Kingship: Archaeology and Art in South Asia and along the Silk Road, 5500 BCE-5th Century CE. Research Presented at the Twenty-third Conference of the European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art	L. R. Greaves and A. Hardy eds.	New Delhi: Dev Publishers & Distributors	English
39	Texts and Contexts. Ongoing Researches on the Eastern Iranian World (Ninth-Fifteenth C.)	Allegranzi Viola, Laviola Valentina eds.	Istituto per l’Oriente C. A. Nallino	English
40	Islamic Metalwork from Afghanistan (9th-13th century). The Documentation of the IsMEO Italian Archaeological Mission	V. Laviola	Unior Press	English
41	Ancient and Medieval Cultures of Central Asia: The Formation, Development and Interaction of Urbanized and Cattle-Breeding Societies	V.P. Nikonorov et al. eds.	IIMK RAN	Russian
42	Epigraphy the Architectural Cityscape of Khiva	B. Babadzhanov	VÖAW	Russian
43	Cities and Societies in Africa and Eurasia	Tatsuhiko Seo	Chuo University Press	Japanese
44	History and Present of Central Asia: The Prairie Wisdom	Masatake Matsubara et al.	Bensei Publishing	Japanese
45	The Eastward & Westward Transmission of Buddhism	Hiroshi Arami et al.	Bensei Publishing	Japanese
46	Ancient Japan and East Asia: Communication History of People and Things	Yasutami Suzuki	Bensei Publishing	Japanese
47	World History of the Silk Road	Takao Moriyasu	Kodansha	Japanese
48	Kara Tepe-Buddhist Complex of Termez 2014-2017	Art Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan et al.	Book 61	Japanese

49	Steppe Conquest: The Great Mongol Empire	Takashi Furumatsu	Iwanami Shoten	Japanese
50	Read the Oldest World Map: Land and Sea in hun yi jiang li li dai guo du zhi tu	Hitoshi Muraoka ed.	Hozokan	Japanese
51	China in the Arabian Geographical Literatures	Jun Zhu	The Commercial Press	Chinese
52	Study on Islam in Yuan Dynasty	Juan Ma	Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House	Chinese
53	Han and Hu: China in Contact with Foreign Civilizations	Chengyong Ge	SDX Joint Publishing Company	Chinese
54	The Grand Ship and Tang Dynasty	Shanghai Museum	Shanghai Book & Paintings Press	Chinese
55	The Four Seas and Nine Regions: Collection on the Historical Studies of Civilizations	Ding Wang、Qing Guo	Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House	Chinese
56	The Spiritual World of Chinese Ancient Eurasian Immigrants and Their Descendants	Xuesong Zhang	China Social Sciences Press	Chinese
57	Research on Dunhuang Studies in Contemporary China	Chunwen Hao、Xuechun Song、Shaowei Wu	China Social Sciences Press	Chinese
58	Mobile Community: Regional Society and Overseas Development in Quanzhou Bay since Song and Yuan Dynasties	Nan Jiang	Xiamen University Press	Chinese
59	Leopard Spot of the Silk Road (Sequel): Unexpected Communication, Casual Discovery	Wanli Ran	Science Press	Chinese
60	Study on Early Buddhist Statues on the Southwest Silk Road	Zhiguo He	East China Normal University Press	Chinese
61	The Silk Road in the Mirror Image of Tang Poetry	Yuntao Shi	China Social Sciences Press	Chinese
62	Iconographical Study on the Spread of Buddhism into China in Eastern Han Dynasty	Xu Zhu	Science Press	Chinese
63	The Palace Site of Nanyue and Nanhan States and the Maritime Silk Road	Nanviet Palace Museum	Cultural Relics Press	Chinese
64	Studies on the Histories of Turks and the West Regions in the Sui-Tang Period	Yugui Wu	Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House	Chinese
65	Study on the Beads and Pendants of Han Dynasties Unearthed from Guangzhou	Guangzhou Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology	Science Press	Chinese
66	Study on the Rounded Flower Pattern of Tang Dynasty in Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes	Chunjia Zhang	China Textile & Apparel Press	Chinese
67	Chinese Documents Unearthed from Xinjiang in Lvshun Museum	Zhenfen Wang、Xianshi Meng、Xinjiang Rong	Zhonghua Book Company	Chinese
68	Study on the Xiapu Manichaeism	Fuxue Yang	Zhonghua Book Company	Chinese
69	Study on the Character Structure and the Dating of the Uygur Contracts	Ge Liu	Zhonghua Book Company	Chinese
70	The Maritime Silk Road, the Currency Cultural Exchanges between China and Foreign Countries	Zhanbin Bao	Zhonghua Book Company	Chinese
71	Inscriptions from Qiuci Grottoes	Li Zhao、Xinjiang Rong	Zhongxi Book Company	Chinese
72	Chinese Silk Design (Selected Edition)	Feng Zhao	Zhejiang University Press	Chinese
73	Study on the Governmental Account Documents from Turpan	Lou Huang	Social Sciences Academic Press	Chinese
74	The Silk Road and the Qin and Han Civilizations: Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Silk Road and the Qin and Han Civilizations	Yunxiang Bai、Hui Wang	Cultural Relics Press	Chinese

75	Study on Administrative System and Garrison System of Western Regions in Han Dynasty	Nan Li	China Social Sciences Press	Chinese
76	Travel Accounts of the Silk Road: China and World in the 13-14th Centuries	Jiangning Qiu	Zhejiang University Press	Chinese
77	Archaeological Report of the 2019 Season Excavation of Nan Wai Zong Zheng Si Site in Quanzhou	Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences	Science Press	Chinese
78	Study on the Newly Discovered Legal Documents of the Han to Tang Dynasties along the Silk Road	Xianwen Zheng	China Legal Publishing House	Chinese
79	From Marco Polo to George Macartney: China and Inner Asia since the Mongolian Period	Weijie Cai	Gūsa Press	Chinese
80	Archaeological Research, Vol. 11: Archaeological Studies on the Silk Road	School of Archaeology and Museology, Peking University	Science Press	Chinese
81	The Evolutionary Lineage of the State's Equine Resources and Han and Tang Prosperity	Yongqi Shang	Social Sciences in China 2020/8	Chinese
82	The Discrimination about Whether Richthofen Named the "Silk Road"	Jinbao Liu	Journal of Chinese Literature and History 2020/2	Chinese
83	Zhang Bi's Visit to the Western Regions and the Silk Road in the Early Tang Dynasty	Xinjiang Rong	Journal fo Peking University 2020/1	Chinese
84	Frankicene and Silk Roads: Oman's Early Communication with China	Xiaofu Wang	Journal of Tsinghua University 2020/4	Chinese
85	Understanding Sino-Western Communication Based on the Fiber and Dye Analysis of Textile Artifact 95MN J M1:43 from Niya in Xinjiang	Yin Song	Dunhuang Research 2020/2	Chinese
86	Tianshan-Beilu and Turpan as Part of the "Chin-Khitai" During 10th to 13th Century: Focusing on Non-Chinese Historical Records	Han Zhong	The Western Regions Studies 2020/3	Chinese
87	Walking Crops: A Study of Sino-foreign Agricultural Exchanges on the Silk Road	Siming Wang、Qizhen Liu	The Chinese Journal for the History of Science and Technology 2020/3	Chinese
88	Credibility Analysis of the Travels of Marco Polo Based on the Cloth of Gold	Yusheng Hu、Yu Liu	Journal of Silk 2020/3	Chinese
89	An Analysis of the Cornucopia Pattern on the Indigo Print Unearthed at Niya Site	Jingjie Li	Palace Museum Journal 2020/1	Chinese
90	The Governance of Māzandarān under the Timurid Dynasty	Hirotoishi Yagi	The Toyo Gakuho 102/2	Japanese
91	Studies of the Two Middle Iranian Inscriptions from the 9th Century East Asia-New Edition of Sino-Pahlavi Epitaph Unearthed in Xi'an and Karabalgasun Inscription from Mongolia	Yutaka Yoshida	Memoirs of the Department of Literature, Kyoto University 59	Japanese
92	A Tocharian Tale from the Silk Road: A philological Account of the Painter and the Mechanical Maiden and its Resonances with the Western Canon	Beguš Nina	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 30/4	English
93	First Elemental Analysis of Glass from Southern Myanmar: Replacing the Region in the Early Maritime Silk Road	Laure Dussubieux et al.	Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences 12/7	English
94	The Epitaph of a Buddhist Lady: A Newly Discovered Chinese-Sogdian Bilingual	Bi Bo and Nicholas Sims-Williams	Journal of the American Oriental Society 140/4	English
95	Chinese Navigation near the Coast of Central Guangdong: Nantingshan and Nantingmen in Ming Times	Roderich Ptak	Monumenta Serica 68/2	English
96	Trans-Asiatic Exchange of Glass, Gold and Bronze: Analysis of Finds from the Late Prehistoric Pangkung Paruk Site, Bali	Ambra Calo et al.	Antiquity 94/373	English
97	Iranian Composite Creatures between the Caucasus and Western China: The Case of the So-Called Simurgh	Matteo Compareti	Iran and the Caucasus 24/2	English
98	Medieval Cities of the Ili Valley (North-Eastern Zhetysu-Semirechye) on the Great Silk Road in the VIII-XIV Centuries	K. M. Baypakov et al.	Eurasian Nations and Religions 3/24	Russian

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100	The End of the Western Roman Empire. An Event in Chinese History: Effects of Mobility from a Eurasian Perspective	Mischa Meier	Historische Zeitschrift 311/2	German
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102	East Turkestan and Mongolia. The History of their Study at the End of the 19th and First Third of the 20th Century	M. D. Bukharin et al.	Moscow: Indrik	Russian
103	Cross-Cultural Art History: Images and Their Ghostings	Jun Li	Peking University Press	Chinese



Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads

2020

REPORT

CULTURAL EVENTS



Annual Overview of Cultural Event on the Silk Roads in 2020

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Culture was originally built on the communication between people, but the sudden outbreak of the coronavirus pneumonia (COVID-19) in 2020 forced people to maintain a certain social distance, which had an impact on the effective communication and dissemination of culture. However, people in countries and regions along the Silk Roads did not shrink back, and the staff in the field of Silk Road cultural heritage also wrote a beautiful chapter of overcoming difficulties and forging ahead in their unique form and manner.

According to statistics, the number of Silk Road cultural heritage events in 2020 was significantly reduced compared with last year under the influence of the epidemic environment, but with the efforts of countries and personnel of all parties, a solid progress has been left. Regarding the cultural events section of the Annual Report of “2020 Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads”, this year we actively explored new operating modes, and cooperated with ICOMOS Xi’an Silk Road Center to assist us in collecting information on cultural events in the annual report. The information on cultural events of the Silk Road cultural heritage was manually screened and preliminarily judged, and a total of 40 major cultural events were screened out (except for archaeological discoveries, thematic exhibitions and academic achievements). We will review and introduce the related cultural events in four aspects: Conference Activities, Social Education, Silk Road Intangible Heritage, and Digital Construction.

I. Innovate the form of conference activities by combining offline and online

As a typical event with social influence and public recognition, conference activities are bound to have great impact risk in the face of sudden major public crisis. Due to the global impact of COVID-19, international conferences and cultural events in 2020 have suffered a serious negative impact, with many events postponed, canceled or even reconvened. According to incomplete statistics from relevant institutions, as of March 18, 2020, a total of 393 international conferences around the world have been affected, among which 248 conferences have been postponed, 128 conferences have been canceled and 17 conferences have been rescheduled. These include the 2020 Xi’an Silk Road International Tourism Expo originally scheduled to be held in March 2020, the 3rd 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Expo and the 22nd Cross-Strait Economic and Trade Expo which opened on May 18, 2020, the 2020 Silk Road Silk Research Alliance Annual Conference held in Italy in September 2020, and the 7th Silk Road International Art Festival originally

scheduled to be held from September to December 2020, which have all been postponed from time to time. The organizing committee will notify the specific time and the event according to the epidemic situation. In addition, due to the influence of COVID-19, some conferences such as Tokyo Art Fair 2020, Silk Road International Expo and China-West Cooperation and Investment and Trade Fair, were directly cancelled by relevant departments after discussion.

1. Offline meetings

As an old saying goes, “Constant dripping wears away the stone.” Even in the face of the epidemic, there were still a number of offline meetings and activities held as scheduled in 2020. However, different from the past, in order to effectively prevent and control the epidemic and ensure the safety of the conference, the organizers have placed disinfectant water and masks and other necessary items at the check-in tables of all offline conferences. Guests were also required to show their health codes when entering the conference, so as to identify abnormal people. Not only that, some conference organizers also adopted infrared thermal imagers to detect the temperature of the guests in real time, so as to know the situation of the on-site personnel in time and ensure the safety of the site. It was the comprehensive and thorough control of the conference site that achieved the expected results of the conference; It is these few offline meetings and activities that formed the precious historical footprints of the 2020 Silk Road Cultural Heritage Conference.

The China National Silk Museum (NSM) has proposed the “Silk Road Week”to take place in Hangzhou, China from June 19 to 25, 2020. It was hosted by the National Cultural Heritage Administration and the People’s Government of Zhejiang, with the theme of “The Silk Roads: Mutual Learning for future Collaborations”. The event featured museum led activities such as exhibitions, performances, reports, and seminars, celebrating the anniversary of the successful inscription, in June 2014, of the Silk Road-from Chang’an to the Tianshan Corridor, onto UNESCO’s list of World Heritage.

On November 2, the 2020 Council of the Silk Road Cultural Heritage Preservation Crafts Alliance was held at the Shaanxi Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics Protection. A total of 34 people from Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai, Ningxia and other provinces (autonomous regions) of China’s cultural relics bureau leaders and council members attended the meeting. The meeting conducted many useful innovations and explorations on the goals and methods of “Silk Road Cultural Heritage Protection & Traditional Crafts and Technology Inheritance”, focusing on promoting the inheritance and utilization of traditional crafts, strengthening the construction of cultural heritage protection, and promoting the spirit of Silk Road craftsmen. Cultural heritages along the Silk Roads should be well protected, studied, inherited and utilized to retain its cultural roots, maintain the national spirit and enhance cultural confidence and national pride in the process of conservation.

From November 7th to 10th, the “2020 Dunhuang Forum: Academic Symposium on Commemorating the 120th Anniversary of the Discovery of the Library Cave and Member Representative Conference of Dunhuang Turpan Society of China “, co-sponsored by Dunhuang Academy and Dunhuang Turpan Society of China and funded by China Dunhuang Grottoes Protection and Research Foundation, was held in Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang. More than 100 experts and scholars from various universities, research institutes and museums in China discussed the development of Dunhuang studies and explored the opportunities and challenges faced in the new era. The relevant results of this forum not only commemorate the 120th anniversary of the discovery of the Library Cave, but also provide necessary academic accumulation and intellectual support for the development and growth of Dunhuang Studies in the new era, and generate many new academic growth points.

On December 10, the “2020 Silk Road International Industry-University-Research Cooperation Conference” sponsored by the Ministry of Education and the People’s Government of Shaanxi Province, and jointly sponsored by the Shaanxi Provincial Department of Education and Northwest University, was held in Xi’an, China. At the meeting, the “Silk Road Alliance for Cultural Heritage Preservation and Inheritance “ initiated by Northwest University was unveiled. The alliance would interpret the rich historical information contained on the Silk Road cultural heritage, and provide decision-making support for countries and international organizations along the Silk Road to promote the joint application of world cultural heritage. A total of 54 units from 17 countries have joined the alliance, and the alliance secretariat is located at Northwestern University.

2. Online Meetings

Since people cannot gather in large numbers offline during the epidemic, “Cloud” Internet conferences and activities become

popular in various regions around the world. Therefore, the advantages of online conferences and activities are prominent, providing new channels for interaction among various parties, and forming a complementary role with offline activities. Online meeting breaks the limitation of time and space. Participants can use APP to display various effects in multiple dimensions for online meeting, which can not only accurately understand the actual situation of each link of the meeting, but also realize the secondary transmission of content through video playback after live broadcast. For an online activity, it will be promoted by advertising, EDM, targeted invitation before the activity, or the invitation poster will be used to share, in order to achieve fission drainage of the community to attract a large number of audiences. Therefore, online conference activities are undoubtedly a breakthrough for national institutions and museums in the face of the epidemic, and are gradually becoming a global trend. At the end of February in 2020, Facebook announced the cancellation of the F8 developer live conference originally planned to be held in San Jose, California in May, and later announced that it would be replaced by an online conference; Apple's summer developer conference WWDC was also changed to an online live broadcast. As for the Silk Road cultural heritage field, many conferences and activities are also presented in different online formats:

On May 11, the Cultural and Tourism Industry Seminar Network of the Silk Roads has been held, the cultural and tourism industry cooperation between China and Uzbekistan is on the fast track. The two sides exchanged views on the current situation, development trend and cooperation prospects of the cultural tourism industry during the epidemic period of the two countries. On May 18, the Dunhuang Academy of China live-streamed a 150-minute panorama of the Mogao Grottoes, Maijishan Grottoes, Yulin Grottoes, Binglingsi Grottoes, West Thousand Buddha Caves and North Grottoes in Gansu Province, witnessing the glory of the Silk Road. From June 19th to 24th, "2020 Silk Road Week" successfully held a series of online activities in the form of online and offline linkage, including the live broadcast of "Masters on the Silk Roads", the "Heritage Lighting up the Silk Roads" museum Live broadcast relay, "Stories of the Silk Road Treasures" poster relay, "Find the Beauty of Silk Road" short video relay and colorful display methods such as "Silk Road Pattern Coloring Game". On November 19, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan jointly hosted a video conference on "China-Tajikistan 'One Belt And One Road' Cooperation: Opportunities and Challenges". Gao Xiang, Vice President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Saydov, Vice President of the Tajik Academy of Sciences attended the meeting and addressed the opening ceremony. On December 18, under the guidance of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage and under the auspices of the International Council of Monuments and Sites Xi'an International Conservation Center (IICC-Xi'an), China and Tajikistan held an online meeting on the protection and management planning of the "Fergana-Syr River Corridor" heritage sites in Tajikistan. In the context of the global epidemic, all countries are actively exploring new models of international cooperation in cultural heritage, and strive to create phased and practical cooperation within the framework of the epidemic.

II. Give full play to the social and educational function of the Silk Road

Under the new situation of rapid development in the current era, the cultural heritage on the Silk Roads needs to be continuously inherited and developed. As an important undertaker of social education function and the main positions, museums, major organizations and social groups in various countries are shouldering the task of publicizing the history and culture of the Silk Road, so as to cultivate people of different ages, identities and different moods to cultural heritage. Among the "major events" of the Silk Road cultural heritage in 2020, the proportion of events and activities that reflect social and educational functions has increased by 32% compared with last year. Taking the United Kingdom and China as examples, various regions have adopted multiple channels to disseminate social education ideas and methods, and they have been widely carried out diversified activities, making the social education function more profound in the Silk Road heritage and play an increasingly important role.

During the epidemic, the Museums Association and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) jointly created a new series of "Culture in Quarantine". As a vital art and cultural program, it landed on major radio stations, TV stations and digital platforms to organize and share educational resources and entertainment activities, so that children who study at home could also be happy. At the same time, the Royal Academy of Arts launched the "RAdailydoodle" challenge to encourage people to draw at home; MyLearning, a free learning platform designed for teachers, was working with major cultural institutions to develop digital content related to courses; Ben Melham, director of Mortice Consulting, also published a LinkedIn article listing several ways that viewers can continue to engage and support the cultural heritage.

Meanwhile, On July 29, in order to give full play to the social education function of the West Thousand Buddhas Caves and promote the extensive and profound art of Dunhuang grottoes, the cultural relics protection institute of the West Thousand Buddhas Caves held a social education activity for young people. More than 20 young people from Dunhuang participated in the activity. This activity mainly centered on the theme of "murals making". The success of this event not only made the youth fully feel the charm of China's excellent traditional culture, but also made them deeply understand the history and culture of their hometown, inspired their love for the country and the countryside, and enhanced their awareness of taking the initiative to participate in the protection of cultural heritage.

On September 26, in the lecture hall on the second floor of the Guanshanyue Art Museum in Shenzhen, China, the "Sifang Salon" opened a wonderful lecture. Zhao Shengliang, Dean of Dunhuang Art Research Institute, gave a lecture entitled "Inheritance and Innovation of Dunhuang Art", and actively exchanged ideas on issues related to the research and dissemination of Dunhuang studies, layered murals, and the characteristics of Dunhuang colored sculptures in different historical stages. Which attracted a large number of Dunhuang art fans.

On October 6, the first reader meeting of My Return to Dunhuang: A Brief Narration of Fan Jinshi, co-sponsored by Phoenix Media, Yilin Publishing House, Nanjing Teaching and Research Office, and Phoenix International Book City, was held in Nanjing Phoenix International Book City. The book, narrated by Fan Jinshi, honorary dean of the Dunhuang Research Academy, and written by Gu Chunfang, professor of the School of Arts, Peking University, tells the touching stories of the Mogao Grottoes people represented by Fan Jinshi, who devoted their whole lives to guarding Dunhuang.

At the meeting, Fan Jinshi and Gu Chunfang talked about the origin of the writing of Dunhuang, the story of the book, the work of literary protection, and the expectation of young people, which made the audience deeply encouraged and touched.

In addition, the two-year documentary "The Dialogue between Mogao Grottoes and Angkor Wat" produced by Dunhuang Research Institute and CCTV Documentary Channel was awarded as an outstanding feature-length domestic documentary and creative talent support project, becoming China's first Asian Civilization Dialogue theme. The documentary reflected on the rise and fall of civilizations along the "Belt and Road" through dialogues to explore the context of the two historical cultures; There is also the "National Treasure" Grotto Guardian Program public welfare project, taking the ancient Silk Road as the main line, taking the cave temple ruins as the carrier, using the "study model" as the main method, and promoting excellent traditional culture as the main goal to hold the activity combined with various social forces. Giving full play to the social and educational function of the Silk Road cultural heritage not only allows people to fully feel the charm of our country's excellent traditional culture, but also allows them to deeply understand the history and culture of ancient silk, inspire their patriotism and love for their homeland, and enhance their active participation in cultural heritage.

III. "Intangible Cultural Heritage" along the Silk Roads is becoming more popular

From December 14th to 18th, 2020, during the 15th regular session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage held simultaneously at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France, Kingston, Jamaica, and online, a total of 35 projects submitted by 46 countries passed the review, of which 3 were included in the "List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Protection", 29 were included in the "List of Representatives of Human Intangible Cultural Heritage", and 3 were selected in the "List of Excellent Conservation Practices". According to the statistics of the country list provided on the UNESCO Silk Road Project website, 23 of the 46 applicant countries are countries along the Silk Roads, accounting for 50%; 21 of the 35 selected projects are Silk Road Countries along the Belt and Road declared, accounting for 60%, which is a significant increase compared to the previous years. Along the way, intangible cultural heritage has gone from "endangered", "rescued", "excavated" to "seeing people, objects, and life". The protection, inheritance, and development of intangible cultural heritage have undergone earth-shaking changes. The popularity of "Intangible Cultural Heritage" is also gradually rising. With the news that "Ong Chun Ceremony" and "Tai Chi" are included in the intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO in 2020, they have added a strong and colorful touch to the inheritance of human cultural heritage. At the same time, countries along the Silk Roads are also actively carrying out a series of activities and meetings to create an environment in which everyone cares about cultural heritage and everyone participates in the protection and utilization of cultural heritage in the whole society.

On November 18th to 19th, a webinar and online strategic meeting on Silk Roads intangible cultural heritage (ICH) networking

were held, co-organized by the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP) and the International Institute for Central Asian Studies (IICAS). The webinar “Towards Reviving the Glory of the Silk Roads through ICH” focused on “Life, Environment, and ICH along the Silk Roads” and explored topics such as humanity, the environment and the Silk Roads, the contributions of an ICH Network towards sustainable development, the viability and sustainability of ICH festivals along the Silk Roads, and artistic performances for the co-existence of humanity and nature. The strategic meeting brought together representatives from international organizations from across Central Asia who contributed to fostering an intangible cultural heritage (ICH) network along the Silk Roads. The network aimed to facilitate the exchange of information on integrated approaches to safeguarding ICH, develop a network of ICH festivals along the Silk Roads, establish a networking system along the Silk Roads to promote stakeholder information exchanges concerning ICH, and to accumulate ICH information along the Silk Roads to promote regional cooperation.

The festivals and customs that have been included in the list of human intangible cultural heritage this year make the “Intangible Cultural Heritage” even more icing on the cake. For example, the annual three-day pilgrimage to St. Thaddeus Apostle Monastery in northwestern Iran is held each July. The pilgrimage venerates two prominent saints: St. Thaddeus, one of the first apostles preaching Christianity, and St. Santukhd, the first female Christian martyr. The commemoration ceremony includes special liturgies, processions, prayers and fasting. It culminates in a Holy Mass with Holy Communion. Special times are set aside for traditional Armenian folk performances and Armenian dishes are served. The pilgrimage is the primary social and cultural event of the year. Bearers of the element preserved cultural memories of the pilgrimage and transmitted it to families and communities. In addition, Nar Bayrami is an annual festival in October/November in Azerbaijan’s Goychay region that celebrates the pomegranate and its traditional uses and symbolic meaning. Pomegranate culture is a set of practices, knowledge, traditions and skills related to the cultivation of the fruit, which is used not only in a range of culinary contexts, but is also referred to in crafts, decorative arts, myths, storytelling and other creative outlets. The fruit enjoys great visibility in society as both the pomegranate and Nar Bayrami perform a range of cultural and social functions- everything from its use in traditional meals and clothes to being cited in poetry. Zhang Qian of the Western Han Dynasty was sent to the western regions, going back with full of pomegranates, grapes, walnuts, watermelons and other imported fruits. Zhang Hua, a writer in the Western Jin Dynasty, wrote in his book “Records of Natural History” : “Zhang Qian of the Han Dynasty went on a mission to the Western Regions and got the species of pomegranates. It was the ancient Silk Road that traversed the east and west, connected Europe and Asia, and opened China’s first agricultural exchanges and cooperation with other countries.”

It is worth mentioning that the Ong Chun ceremony was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO on December 17, 2020. The ceremony and related practices are rooted in folk customs of worshipping Ong Yah, a deity believed to protect people and their lands from disaster. Its element, developed in southeast China’s Fujian Province between the 15th and 16th centuries, is now centered in Xiamen Bay and Quanzhou Bay, as well as in Chinese communities in Melaka, Malaysia. The ceremony includes people gathering by the sea to welcome Ong Yah to temples or clan halls, erecting lamp poles to summon “good brothers” (people lost at sea), and delivering them from torment, through which it honors the connection between humans and oceans with performances featuring gezai opera, various dancing, dragon and lion dances and puppet shows.

In recent years, the application for intangible cultural heritage items to be included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List has not only become a cultural trend that is actively practiced all over the world, but also an important part of all countries to actively fulfill the responsibilities and obligations of States Parties to the Convention on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The inclusion of certain projects in China as “intangible cultural heritage” in 2020 fully reflects China’s increasing level of intangible cultural heritage protection and performance. It is of great significance to carrying forward China’s fine traditional culture, demonstrating the innovation and creativity of the Chinese nation, enhancing the international influence of Chinese culture, and promoting people-to-people bonds and exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations.

IV. Digital construction of museums during the epidemic

The sudden epidemic disrupted the museum’s plan to serve society, but it also provided an opportunity for consideration. When this thinking is traced back to the time and space interlaced background, we cannot leave the deep influence of the network digital age, nor can we escape the law of “adapt to the environment and then change the environment”. During the outbreak, the

world’s largest museum work has not closed due to it, they integrated with the fastest speed of digital resources, innovation mode of transmission, the use of artificial intelligence, big data, cloud computing and other modern information technology means, through the portal, mobile client, WeChat small procedures such as the carrier, to build cloud exhibition, online museum and virtual museum, realize the digitization, creativity and visualization of museum displays and exhibitions, fine collections, and relevant knowledge maps, forming a new museum knowledge production and dissemination system that is supported by online and offline interaction and complementary to each other. For example, about 250,000 digital artworks owned by Art UK are open to the public online and the five major websites of the Science Museum Group are promoting its 325,000 online collections. According to statistics from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, China has established 108 million state-owned movable cultural relics information databases in 2020, and opened more than 5,000 museum network maps. Only 185 museums in various places have launched more than 2,000 online exhibitions, and the total number of views exceeds 5 billion people. Large-scale Internet platforms such as Douyin, Bilibili, and Kuaishou have successively held live events such as “Cloud Museums” and social media such as WeChat and Weibo have promoted museum network topics, broadcasted museum TV programs, and developed online games.

On the evening of April 8, the Dunhuang Research Academy and Huawei jointly launched a new display tour technology outside the caves of Mogao Grottoes. The Huawei River Map Platform integrated the results of Dunhuang studies, digital high-precision Dunhuang fresco images and 3D cave models with the real Mogao Grottoes in real time, which not only realized the real scenery guide of scenic spots, but also created a brand new digital grottoes experience mode. On April 13, Dunhuang Academy, together with Tencent Pictures and Tencent Animation, jointly produced Dunhuang Animation Drama, premiered simultaneously on WeChat and QQ mini-program “Yunyou Dunhuang”. Users can not only watched and shared the series, but also participated in the dubbing and interaction of the animated series. This was a major version upgrade one month after the launch of the “Cloud Tour Dunhuang” mini program, and it was also an important exploration for the digital content innovation of Dunhuang culture through the “new cultural creation” mode, which was jointly made by Dunhuang Academy, Tencent Pictures and Tencent Animation. At the same time, online and live streaming on International Museum Day, which took place on May 18, has made museums more egalitarian and diverse. The Dunhuang Academy took 150 minutes to present the six grottoes in Gansu, including Mogao Grottoes, Maijishan Grottoes, Yulin Grottoes, Bingling Temple Grottoes, West Thousand Buddha Caves and North Grottoes.

In June, under the promotion of the UNESCO World Heritage Center (UNESCO WHC), the ICOMOS International Conservation Center Xi’an(IICC-X) and the UNESCO International Natural and Cultural Heritage Space Technology Center (HIST) held a tripartite online meeting on the protection of the Silk Road cultural heritage. In order to deepen cooperation and improve the monitoring and management level of the Silk Road cultural heritage, it is recommended that the WHC be guided by the Xi’an Cultural Heritage Bureau to provide projects and financial support to promote the implementation of bilateral cooperation projects in Xi’an. Regarding the protection and sustainable development of the Silk Road transnational world cultural heritage, HIST can provide digital technical support in cyberspace technology, big data processing, and data sharing. In the future, ICOMOS International Conservation Center Xi’an can play a role in the monitoring and protection of the Silk Road cultural heritage. The cooperation between the International Institute of Central Asian Studies (IICAS, Samarkand) and HIST can help the Silk Road series of transnational inscriptions and the protection and monitoring of cultural heritage.

During an online meeting on July 20, the Chinese authorities and UNESCO invited national and international experts to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the UNESCO Silk Roads Project and the Launch Ceremony of the Digital Archive of the Silk Roads Project (DAS). This anniversary event was organized by the China National Silk Museum, the Quanzhou Maritime Museum and the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, in coordination with the World Heritage Centre, and was opened by Mechthild Rössler, Director of the World Heritage Centre. The event involved the participation of several Chinese national experts from Tsinghua University, Peking University, Nanjing University, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the Chinese Academy of Cultural Heritage, along with international experts such as Doudou Diène, former Director of the Division of Intercultural Dialogue and Coordinator of the UNESCO Silk Roads Project. To make the research and information collected about the Silk Roads in the last 30 years available to all those interested, Feng Jing, Chief of the Asia and the Pacific Unit of the World Heritage Centre and Coordinator of the Serial Transnational World Heritage nomination project, announced the launch of the Digital Archive of the Silk Roads project (DAS), to be based at the International Institute for Intercultural Dialogue on the Silk Roads (IIDOS) of the China National Silk Museum (Hangzhou, China), which will also complement the UNESCO Silk Road Online Platform, managed by the UNESCO

Social Sciences Sector.

On November 7, with the support of the digital technology of Dunhuang Academy and the Dunhuang Academy as the leading unit, the project “Digital Dunhuang: Digitization Project of Dunhuang Cave Cultural Relics-Digitization Return of Dunhuang Cultural Relics Lost Overseas” was proposed to realize the “Digital Regression” of Dunhuang Cave Cultural Relics. This “Digital Regression” is not simply to take images of cultural relics lost overseas, but to collect complete information of cultural relics through high-precision scanning and other technologies. Through the digitized results, the cultural relics can be “copied” according to the original appearance. The results of the “Digital Regression” of Dunhuang cultural relics can be shared with the world and are of great value for research and appreciation. Through cooperation at home and abroad, the project will strive to realize the digitization of cultural relics of Dunhuang Cave, build the cultural relics database and network publishing platform of Dunhuang Cave, which is of great significance for China to enhance its cultural strength and cultural confidence.

In fact, regarding the online exhibition experience, various cultural and cultural institutions have been doing this exploration many years ago. For example, the Palace Museum, the Louvre in France, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and other institutions have achieved excellent results in online exhibitions. The epidemic will cause museums to think more about the perception and experience of online exhibitions under the trend of technological development, provide more possibilities for exhibition viewing, and also prompt people to rethink the practical significance of museum digital construction. The epidemic is rapidly changing the shape of the cultural industry and the way people experience museums. Although the epidemic will not last forever, the digital transformation that accelerates development under the catalysis of the epidemic will not disappear, it is likely to become the new normal. As museums advance their digital strategy at an unimaginable speed, the museum industry will increasingly rely on digital experience, content and channels in the future. We need to be fully prepared for this.

V. Conclusion

In the context of globalization, the “Silk Road” has become a synonym for the exchange and integration between different regions and civilizations. Both the study and discussion of the land and maritime Silk Road were involved in the cultural events of 2020. However, the COVID-19 in 2020 has had an unprecedented impact on the dissemination and promotion of cultural heritage, and it is the epidemic that has made us deeply aware of the importance of “Cultural Digitization”. “Cultural Digitization” extends the dissemination of cultural heritage, expands the coverage of social education, and also guarantees that people of different regions and classes enjoy equal cultural rights in cultural heritage knowledge learning and traditional art appreciation. It allows us to use modern virtual technology to touch the history, to inspire the future, and finally form a “triad” cultural system covering the past, present and future.

1 World Heritage Centre Celebrates 30-Year Anniversary of the Silk Roads Project and Launch of the Digital Archive of the Silk Roads

Time: July 20, 2020

Venue: Paris, France; Hangzhou, China (online)

Overview:

During an online meeting on July 20, the Chinese authorities and UNESCO invited national and international experts to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the UNESCO Silk Roads Project and the Launch Ceremony of the Digital Archive of the Silk Roads Project (DAS).

This anniversary event was organized by the China National Silk Museum, the Quanzhou Maritime Museum and the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, in coordination with the World Heritage Centre, and was opened by Mechtild Rössler, Director of the World Heritage Centre. The event involved the participation of several Chinese national experts from Tsinghua University, Peking University, Nanjing University, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the Chinese Academy of Cultural Heritage, along with international experts such as Doudou Diène, former Director of the Division of Intercultural Dialogue and Coordinator of the UNESCO Silk Roads Project.

To make the research and information collected about the Silk Roads in the last 30 years available to all those interested, Feng Jing, Chief of the Asia and the Pacific Unit of the World Heritage Centre and Coordinator of the Serial Transnational World Heritage nomination project, announced the launch of the Digital Archive of the Silk Roads project (DAS), to be based at the International Institute for Intercultural Dialogue on the Silk Roads (IIDOS) of the China National Silk Museum (Hangzhou, China), which will also complement the UNESCO Silk Road Online Platform, managed by the UNESCO Social Sciences Sector.



2 Webinar: Life, Environment, and ICH along the Silk Roads & Strategic Meeting on Silk Roads ICH Networking

Time: November 18, 2020- November 19, 2020

Venue: Online

Overview:

On November 18 to 19, a webinar and online strategic meeting on Silk Roads intangible cultural heritage (ICH) networking were held, co-organized by the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP) and the International Institute for Central Asian Studies (IICAS).

The webinar “Towards Reviving the Glory of the Silk Roads through ICH” focused on “Life, Environment, and ICH along the Silk Roads” and explored topics such as humanity, the environment and the Silk Roads, the contributions of an ICH Network towards sustainable development, the viability and sustainability of ICH festivals along the Silk Roads, and artistic performances for the co-existence of humanity and nature.

The online strategic meeting on the Silk Roads ICH network were divided into three sessions: “Case Studies on the Vitalization of the Silk Roads ICH: ICH Festivals & Sustainable Development”, “Cooperation and Solidarity for Operating the ICH Network along the Silk Roads”, and “Collaborative Work and Benefits through Activities of the Silk Roads ICH Network”. The strategic meeting brought together representatives from international organizations from across Central Asia who contributed to fostering an intangible cultural heritage (ICH) network along the Silk Roads.

The network aimed to facilitate the exchange of information on integrated approaches to safeguarding ICH, develop a network of ICH festivals along the Silk Roads, establish a networking system along the Silk Roads to promote stakeholder information exchanges concerning ICH, and to accumulate ICH information along the Silk Roads to promote regional cooperation.



3 The Launch of “Silk Roads Alliance for Cultural Heritage Preservation and Inheritance”

Time: December 10, 2020

Venue: Xi'an, China

Overview:

On December 10, the “2020 Silk Road International Industry-University-Research Cooperation Conference” sponsored by the Ministry of Education and the People’s Government of Shaanxi Province, and jointly sponsored by the Shaanxi Provincial Department of Education and Northwest University, was held in Xi’an, China. At the meeting, the “Silk Road Alliance for Cultural Heritage Preservation and Inheritance ” initiated by Northwest University was unveiled. The alliance would interpret the rich historical information contained on the Silk Road cultural heritage, and provide decision-making support for countries and international organizations along the Silk Road to promote the joint application of world cultural heritage. A total of 54 units from 17 countries have joined the alliance, and the alliance secretariat is located at Northwestern University.

The alliance was composed of universities, research institutes, experts and scholars who have long been engaged in the archaeological, preservation, inheritance and exhibition of cultural heritage along the Silk Road. The goal was to jointly carry out cooperative research in the field of value recognition, preservation and inheritance of cultural heritage along the Silk Road; Jointly cultivate high-level professionals in the field of cultural heritage research for countries along the Silk Road; Build a high-level, open and shared science and technology platform for carrying out international cooperative research and joint training of talents to provide technical support.



4 The First “2020 Silk Road Week” Event

Time: June 19, 2020

Venue: Hangzhou, China

Overview:

The China National Silk Museum (NSM) has proposed the “Silk Road Week” to take place in Hangzhou, China from June 19 to 25, 2020. It was hosted by the National Cultural Heritage Administration and the People’s Government of Zhejiang, with the theme of “The Silk Roads: Mutual Learning for future Collaborations”. The event featured museum led activities such as exhibitions, performances, reports, and seminars, celebrating the anniversary of the successful inscription, in June 2014, of the Silk Road – from Chang’an to the Tianshan Corridor, onto UNESCO’s list of World Heritage.

Museums, institutions, and companies along the Silk Roads were encouraged to devise and organize associated activities in the spirit of “Silk Roads Week” and were invited to follow the online activities taking place as part of the event. At the same time, organizers announced the release of the “Annual Report on Silk Road Cultural Heritage 2019”, an academic document about the major Silk Road events in 2019 rolled out by 31 experts from nine countries. Two temporary exhibitions called *The Silk Roads: Before and After Richthofen* and *Mutual Learning on the Silk Roads: Stories of the Silk Road Treasures*, were unveiled with the opening of Silk Road Week, bringing to life ancient cultural relics and stories from along the road.



5 2020 Dunhuang Forum: Academic Symposium on Commemorating the 120th Anniversary of the Discovery of the Library Cave and Member Representative Conference of Dunhuang Turpan Society of China

Time: November 7, 2020- November 10, 2020

Venue: Dunhuang, China

Overview:

From November 7th to 10th, the “2020 Dunhuang Forum: Academic Symposium on Commemorating the 120th Anniversary of the Discovery of the Library Cave and Member Representative Conference of Dunhuang Turpan Society of China”, co-sponsored by Dunhuang Academy and Dunhuang Turpan Society of China and funded by China Dunhuang Grottoes Protection and Research Foundation, was held in Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang. More than 100 experts and scholars from various universities, research institutes and museums in China discussed the development of Dunhuang studies and explored the opportunities and challenges faced in the new era.

The Dunhuang Library Cave preserves nearly 60,000 pieces of cultural relics from the 4th to 11th centuries, including manuscripts, embroideries, silk paintings, and artifacts, such as religious classics, sub-collections of scriptures and history, official and private documents, minority languages, etc., involving ancient history, geography, politics, economy, literature, language, folklore, music, science and technology and many other fields. It can be described as “the encyclopedia of the Middle Ages” and “the ocean of ancient academics.”

Wang Guoqiang, Deputy Director of the Propaganda Department of the Gansu Provincial Party Committee, said that over the past 120 years, under the painstaking and in-depth research of Dunhuang scholars from all over the world, the cultural relics of the library caves lost in various places have been gradually sorted and published, basically revealed what the cultural relics of the library cave are and what its precious value is. The relevant results of this forum not only commemorated the 120th anniversary of the discovery of the Library Cave, but also provided necessary academic accumulation and intellectual support for the development and growth of Dunhuang Studies in the new era, and generated many new academic growth points.



6 The UNESCO World Heritage Centre Publishes a Special Issue on the Silk Road

Time: November, 2019- January, 2020

Venue: UNESCO, Paris, France

Overview:

In 2014, after years of preparation among countries, the property of the Silk Roads: the Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor was inscribed on the World Heritage List. This 5,000 km section of the extensive Silk Roads network is a transnational site crossing China, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, stretching from Chang'an/Luoyang, the central capital of China in the Han and Tang dynasties, to the Zhetyssay region of Central Asia. Thirty-three components are included in the routes network, including capital cities and palace complexes of various empires and Khan kingdoms, trading settlements, Buddhist cave temples, ancient paths, beacon towers, sections of the Great Wall, fortifications and religious buildings.

In this issue, we learn about the complicated process of establishing this extraordinary site, and efforts underway to carry this work further through the South Asian Silk Roads World Heritage nomination project. We examines the particularities of the Silk Roads in Iran and Turkey, and the natural heritage along the way, such as Tajik National Park and the Saryarka-Steppe and Lakes of Northern Kazakhstan.

There is an interview with Doudou Diène, who led UNESCO's original Silk Roads research project. He shares with us the origins of this groundbreaking project and the significance of carrying forward this work today.

We also shared the results of the 43rd session of the World Heritage Committee in Baku, Azerbaijan from 20 June to 10 July 2019, including the Committee's decisions concerning sites in danger and new sites inscribed on the World Heritage List.



7 The Ong Chun Ceremony by China and Malaysia Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

Time: December 17, 2020

Venue: China, Malaysia

Overview:

Ong Chun ceremony, also known as Wangchuan or Wangkang, rituals and related practices for maintaining the sustainable connection between humans and oceans, is inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO on December 17, 2020. It was jointly put forward by China and Malaysia.

The ceremony and related practices are rooted in folk customs of worshipping Ong Yah, a deity believed to protect people and their lands from disaster. Its element, developed in southeast China's Fujian Province between the 15th and 16th centuries, is now centered in Xiamen Bay and Quanzhou Bay, as well as in Chinese communities in Melaka, Malaysia.

The ceremony includes people gathering by the sea to welcome Ong Yah to temples or clan halls, erecting lamp poles to summon “good brothers” (people lost at sea), and delivering them from torment, through which it honors the connection between humans and oceans with performances featuring gezai opera, various dancing, dragon and lion dances and puppet shows.

The Ong Chun ceremony is usually hosted once every three or four years in a fixed lunar month, but the certain date is determined by poe divination.



8 Japan Supported Afghanistan’s Efforts towards Removing the Bamiyan Site from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Time: February, 26, 2020
Venue: Afghanistan

Overview:

On February 26, Mitsuji Suzuka, Japan’s ambassador to Afghanistan, signed an agreement with the director of UNESCO’s Kabul office and representative in Afghanistan to formally approve a new project in the field of culture.

The Government of Japan announced that it would provide USD 3.8 million dollars in financial support to the World Heritage property of “Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley” in Afghanistan. The property was inscribed simultaneously on the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2003, after the destruction of the Giant Buddhas, in recognition of its values as a testament of interconnectedness and shared history between Western and Eastern civilizations.

Approved on the 90th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Japan and Afghanistan in 2020, this initiative will provide a new impetus towards fulfilling the necessary conditions to remove the World Heritage property of Bamiyan Valley from the List of World Heritage in Danger. The authorities of Afghanistan and the international community, already very active in joining forces to preserve component sites and build national capacities for heritage conservation and management, are further encouraged to be associated with this endeavour. Field operations are expected to start in the autumn of 2020 after the necessary technical preparations have been completed.



9 Ancient Life-sized Statue of Buddha Smashed into Pieces in Northwest Pakistan

Time: July 23, 2020
Venue: Mardan District, Pakistan

Overview:

Construction workers deliberately smashed a life-sized statue of Buddha into pieces with a sledgehammer in Pakistan’s northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province on July 17, believing that they were fulfilling their religious duty of destroying an idol. It belonged to the Gandhara civilisation and was nearly 1,700 years old.

Four persons were arrested on Saturday for vandalising the statue that was discovered during excavation at an agriculture farm in tehsil Takht Bhai of Mardan district. The suspects had followed the orders of a local Maulvi. The arrests were made after a video went viral on social media showing a man smashing the statue, parts of which were still embedded underground, into pieces with a sledgehammer. Other construction workers can be seen looking on as the statue is being destroyed while a couple of people were making videos.

Director Archeology and Museums Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Abdus Samad Khan said on Sunday that the pieces of the destroyed statue have been recovered to assess its archaeological value.



10

Guiding Opinions of the General Office of the State Council PRC on Strengthening the Protection and Utilization of Grotto Temples

Time: October 23, 2020

Venue: Beijing, China

Overview:

Guiding Opinions of the General Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China on Strengthening the Protection and Utilization of Grotto Temples [2020] No. 41 People’s governments of all provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government, ministries and commissions of the State Council, and institutions directly under the State Council: In order to thoroughly implement the spirit of the important instructions of the President Xi Jinping on the protection and utilization of cave temples, implement the decisions and arrangements of the Party Central Committee and the State Council, and effectively strengthen the protection and utilization of cave temples in the new era, with the consent of the State Council, the following opinions are hereby put forward.

(1) Strengthen the rescue protection of the cave temple. (2) Establish a long-term security mechanism for the cave temple. (3) Deepen academic research and value mining. (4) Strengthen the digital protection and utilization of cave temples. (5) Improve the comprehensive display level of the cave temple. (6) Regulate the tourism development activities of the cave temple. (7) Deepen cultural exchanges and cooperation in the cave temples. (8) Give full play to the supporting and leading role of science and technology. (9) Improve the talent education and training system. (10) Promote the reform and innovation of system and mechanism.

Grotto temples in China are widely distributed, large in scale and complete in system.

Strengthening the protection and utilization of grotto temples is of great significance as it bears on the inheritance and development of fine traditional Chinese culture, the building of a strong socialist culture, the high-quality joint construction of “One Belt One Road” and the promotion of exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations.



Cultural Event List

No.	Event Title	Date	Venue
1	Online Meeting on the Protection and Management Planning of the "Fergana-Syr River Corridor" Heritage Sites in Tajikistan	2020/12/18	Beijing, China Xi 'an, China Dushanbe, Tajikistan Paris, France (online)
2	The Establishment of "Silk Roads Cultural Heritage Preservation and Inheritance Alliance"	2020/12/10	Xi 'an, China
3	One Belt And One Road Cooperation: "Opportunities and Challenges" Video Conference	2020/11/19	Online
4	Digital Dunhuang: Digitized Cultural Relics of Sutra Cave-Digitized Return of Dunhuang Cultural Relics Lost Overseas Project	2020/11/7	Dunhuang, China
5	2020 Dunhuang Forum: Academic Symposium on Commemorating the 120th Anniversary of the Discovery of the Sutra Cave and Member Representative Conference of Dunhuang Turpan Society of China	2020/11/7-11/10	Dunhuang, China
6	2020 Annual Member Conference of the Collaborative Working Platform for Industrialization and Application of Cultural Relics Protection Equipment & 2020 Annual Conference of the Silk Road Cultural Relics Science and Technology Innovation Alliance	2020/11/3-11/5	Chongqing, China
7	Guiding Opinions of the General Office of the State Council PRC on Strengthening the Protection and Utilization of Grotto Temples	2020/10/23	Beijing, China
8	2020 Council of the Silk Roads Artisan Alliance for Cultural Heritage Conservation	2020/11/2	Xi 'an, China
9	Announcement of Research Achievements on the Protection of Longmen Grottoes and Academic Exchange Conference on the 20th Anniversary of the Inclusion of Longmen Grottoes on the World Heritage List	2020/10/19	Luoyang, China
11	The First Reader Meeting of My Return to Dunhuang: A Brief Account of Fan Jinshi	2020/10/6	Dunhuang, China
13	Dialogue between Mogao Gaves and Angkor Wat and Jiayuguan Pass in Hexi Corridor Selected as 2019 Excellent Feature Film Domestic Documentaries and Creative Talent Support Projects	2020/9/16	Beijing, China
14	The Public Welfare Project of "National Treasure" Grottoes Guardian Program	2020/9/13	Qingyang, China
15	The Copy of the Recovery of the First Entire Grottoe from the Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes	2020/9/8	Dunhuang, China
16	The Seminar on Archaeology, History and Culture of Yumen Pass	2020/8/21	Beijing, China
17	The Seminar on the Protection, Management, Inheritance and Innovation of Cultural Heritage in Dunhuang	2020/8/19	Dunhuang, China
18	The Establishment of Gansu Provincial Research Center for Conservation of Dunhuang Cultural Heritage	2020/8/19	Dunhuang, China
19	The Discovery of Ancient City by the Great Wall of Han Dynasty in Yumen	2020/8/13	Yumen, China
20	The Social Education Activity of "Civilization at Your Fingertips-Clay Prints"	2020/7/29	Dunhuang, China
21	The 2020 Silk Roads Week	2020/6/19	Hangzhou, China
22	The Violent Destruction of the Buddha statues in Gandhara	2020/7/23	Mardan, Pakistan
23	The 30th Anniversary of UNESCO Silk Roads Programme and Digital Archive Launched	2020/7/20	Paris, France Hangzhou, China (online)

24	The Digital Protection of Grottoes along the Silk Roads	2020/7/9-7/10	Datong, China
25	The Establishment of Chang Shuhong Dunhuang Art Special Fund of China Dunhuang Grottoes Preservation and Research Foundation	2020/1/8	Lanzhou, China
26	The 3rd International Academic Forum on Silk Road Music and Dance Art & Xi 'an Drum and Music Performance	2020/11/20-11/22	Hangzhou, China
27	Webinar: Life, Environment, and ICH along the Silk Roads & Strategic Meeting on Silk Roads ICH Networking	2020/11/18-11/19	Online
28	Japan Helped Bamiyan Site in Afghanistan from Danger	2020/2/26	Afghanistan
29	The Uzbek President Inspected the Site of the Restoration of Historical and Cultural Relics in the Ancient City of Ushwa	2020/3/12	Uzbekistan
30	The Exhibition Tour Outside Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes	2020/4/8	Dunhuang, China
31	The Premiere of Dunhuang Animation Series	2020/4/13	Dunhuang, China
32	The Cultural and Tourism Industry Seminar of the Silk Roads	2020/5/11	Chongqing, China (online)
33	Dunhuang Academy: 150 minutes across the Thousands of Miles Live Broadcast of the Six Grottoes	2020/5/18	Dunhuang, China (online)
34	The Rescue of Part of the Dangerous Rock Mass in Tiantishan Grottoes	2020/5/26	Wuwei, China
35	Pilgrimage to the St. Thaddeus Apostle Monastery Added to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO	2020/12/14-12/18	Armenia, Iran
36	Nal Byrami Traditional Pomegranate Festival Added to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO	2020/12/14-12/18	Geokchay, Azerbaijan
37	Ong Chun/Wangchuan/Wangkang Rituals Added to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO	2020/12/17	China, Malaysia
38	The Special Issue on the Silk Road Published by UNESCO World Heritage Centre	2019/11-2020/1	UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France
39	The Tri-Party Online Conference on the Protection Space Technology of the Cultural Heritage of the Silk Roads.	2020/6/1	Paris, Beijing, Xi 'an (online)
40	The Special Study on the Silk Road World Heritage Site Application by ICOMOS	2020/12/1	UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France



Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads

2020
REPORT

List of Expert Teams

List of Expert Teams 2020

Archaeological Discovery Team:



Guowu (Chief Expert)
 Researcher of Frontier Ethnic Archaeology Department, Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Vice Leader of Xinjiang Team



Liu Wensuo
 Professor, Department of Anthropology, Sun Yat-sen University



Jianjun Mei
 Director of the Needham Institute



Tong Tao
 Associate Researcher, Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences



Bobby Orillaneda
 Senior Researcher, National Museum of the Philippines



Farhad Maskhsudov
 Director of Uzbek Archaeological Institute



Svend Hansen
 Director of the Eurasian Archaeological Institute of the German Archaeological Institute

Thematic Exhibition Team:



Peter Stewart (Chief Expert)
 Director of Wolfson College, Oxford University, Center for Classical Art Research



Helen Wang
 Curator of the British Museum



Julian Raby
 Director, Freer Sackler Museum of Art, USA



Maria Menshikova
 Senior Researcher, Hermitage Museum, Russia



An Laishun
 Vice Chairman of International Museum Association, Professor of Shanghai University



Hang Kan
 Professor of Peking University, Vice President of Shanxi University



Pan Shouyong
 Distinguished Professor of Shanghai University



Pei Jitong
 Director of the National Museum of Korea

Academic Research Team:



Rong Xinjiang (Chief Expert)
 Boya Chair Professor of Peking University, Distinguished Professor of Changjiang Scholars of Ministry of Education



Liu Jinbao
 Professor, Department of History, Zhejiang University



Saren Gaowa
 Research Librarian of National Library



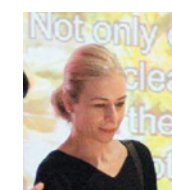
Zhang Baichun
 Director of the Institute of Natural History of the Chinese Academy of Sciences



Dagmar Schaeffer
 Director of the Institute for the History of Science and Technology of the Mazon Center, Germany, Emeritus Professor of Technology History at the Technical University of Berlin



Daniel Waugh
 Emeritus Professor, University of Washington, Seattle, USA



Luisa Mengoni
 Director of Asian and African Collections, British Library, Director of the International Dunhuang Project (IDP)



Nathalie Monnet
 Researcher of the French National Library

Cultural Event Team:



Jing Feng (Chief Expert)
 Director of Asia-Pacific Department of UNESCO World Heritage Center



Bamoqubue
 Researcher, Institute of Ethnic Literature, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Director of Oral Tradition Research Center



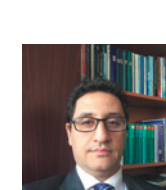
Lv Zhou
 Professor, School of Architecture, Tsinghua University, Vice Chairman of Chinese Committee for the International Council on Monuments and Sites



Sun Hua
 Professor of Peking University School of Archaeology, Director of Peking University Cultural Heritage Protection Research Center



Dmitriy A. Voyakin
 Official of the National Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan



Mehrdad Shabahang
 Project Leader of UNESCO Silk Road



Susan Denyer
 ICOMOS World Heritage Advisor, Secretary of ICOMOS-UK



Tim Williams
 Professor of University College London UK, member of the International Scientific Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management (ICAHM)

Epilogue

The annual report of “Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads 2019” was officially released to the public during the first “Silk Road Week” event last year, and has been greatly praised and by the participants. In order to continue the significance of annual report, we have been making unremitting efforts this year for the compilation of the “Cultural Heritage on the Silk Roads 2020”. However, due to the sudden epidemic, the information collection of the annual report is extremely difficult. The hardships and the joy of solving problems are far from what these words can convey.

For this year, we have changed the mode of information collection, but still retained the same framework as last year. Its archaeological discoveries, thematic exhibitions, academic researches and cultural events have been respectively collaborated with the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the International Museum Observatory of Nanjing University of the Arts, the Center for Research on Ancient Chinese History of Peking University and the Department of History of Zhejiang University, and the ICOMOS Xi'an Silk Road Center, and conducted multiple detailed discussions with the Commercial Press on editing and publishing matters.

Thanks to the joint efforts of all the experts and the editorial team, special thanks to the Editor-in-Chief Zhao Feng for his professional knowledge and meticulous academic attitude. This annual report will be published soon. Here, we would also like to thank the experts of each team for their cooperation, thanks to the careful guidance of Director Jing Feng, the support and help of Mr. Guo Wu and Mr. Luo Shuai, thanks to the dedicative academic writing of Mr. Gao Zhenhua and Mr. Tong Tao, the pictures provided by Mr. Xu Jin and Erico, the collection of exhibitions by Ms. Liu Shiting, and the meticulous and practical work of the responsible editor Yang Hanlin. Meanwhile, we would like to thank the Commercial Press for its contribution and cooperation in publishing the annual report. If the pictures in the book involve copyright issues, please contact the China National Silk Museum with a certificate of ownership. Due to the limited compilation time, readers and friends from all walks of life and leading colleagues are welcome to criticize and advise on the inappropriate aspects of the annual report.

The research on the cultural heritage of the Silk Roads is just the beginning. I hope that more people will pay attention to this cross-cultural communication and the protection of world heritage in the future. We hereby extend our most sincere gratitude and highest respect!