

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

HIS 207: Silks and Spices: History of the Silk Road in China

Fall Semester 2021

TR 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM, Graham Building, Room 212

Instructor: James A. Anderson

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Office Hours: TR 10:00-10:50 a.m., and by appointment

Graduate Assistant:Michael Taylor, E-mail: mjtaylor2@uncg.edu**Course Description**

Following the prosperous Silk Road of the Northwest and the thriving spice trade of the South China Sea regions, Imperial Chinese courts remained engaged in international exchanges of goods and ideas since ancient times. This course will examine the intersection of trade and tribute in patterns of foreign relations China conducted with its neighbors through the arrival of European powers in the 16th century. Material trade, and the socio-cultural exchanges accompanying it, will serve as the central theme in this course. While remaining “China-focused,” we will also explore the ways in which the various peoples have existed in the region for over two thousand years, fighting during much of this time for both political autonomy and cultural self-identity. Some of the secondary topics we will explore include the fluid, border-less nature of the frontier between South China and northern Southeast Asia, a study of Late Imperial China’s “Southern Silk Road,” China's tribute relations with various southern maritime kingdoms, and a broad study of pre-modern Chinese frontier management throughout the empire. Through a critical reading of recent scholarship on related topics, we will determine for ourselves the impact that global trade patterns had on the historical development of this very important region of the world.

Note: this course meets the requirements of new General Education Competency: MAC Global and Intercultural.

Courses in this competency provide students with knowledge and critical understanding of similarities and differences across world cultures over time and emphasize the development of global perspectives and skills to engage cross-culturally.

Students taking this course should reach the following learning goals by the end of the semester:

1. Analyze historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and periods. [Historical Comprehension]
2. Use historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view. [Historical Analysis: Departmental and GEC HP goal]
3. Use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original argument, orally and in writing. [Historical Interpretation: Departmental and GEC HP]

Course Requirements

There will be a take-home final exam, six in-class “half-hourly” quizzes (including a skills quiz), and one 5-7 page (12-point font *Times New Roman* font, double-spaced, 1” margins, paginated) “think piece” paper. The paper will be due in class on **Thursday, November 11th**. The schedule for the six in-class quizzes is noted in the lecture schedule. The take-home final exam will be handed out in class on **Tuesday, November 30th** and it must be turned in to me, posted to Canvas and turned in to my office, no later than 3 p.m. on **Tuesday, December 7th**. Attendance at all lecture and discussion sections is expected. Moreover, the completion of all required written assignments is necessary for a passing grade.

E-mail Accounts:

I will require that **all** students to access their UNCG e-mail accounts regularly. This course will involve frequent interaction between the instructor and students outside of the in-person lecture periods. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

COVID-19 Course Requirements:

As we return for fall 2021, the campus community must recognize and address continuing concerns about physical and emotional safety, especially as we will have many more students, faculty, and staff on campus than in the last academic year. As such, all students, faculty, and staff are required to uphold UNCG’s culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. Such actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- [Following face-covering guidelines](#)
- Engaging in proper hand-washing hygiene when possible
- Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19
- Staying home if you are ill
- Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill.

Instructors will have seating charts for their classes. These are important for facilitating contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students must sit in their assigned seats at every class meeting and must not move furniture. Students should not eat or drink during class time.

To make it easier for students to hear their instructor and/or read lips and if conditions permit, instructors who are fully vaccinated and who can maintain at least six feet of distance from students may remove their masks while actively teaching if they choose, but will wear a mask at all other times while in the classroom, including during the periods before and after class

A limited number of disposable masks will be available in classrooms for students who have forgotten theirs. Face coverings will also be available for purchase in the UNCG Campus Bookstore. Students who do not follow masking requirements will be asked to put on a face covering or leave the classroom to retrieve one and only return when they follow the basic requirements to uphold standards of safety and care for the UNCG community. Once students have a face covering, they are permitted to re-enter a class already in progress. Repeated issues may result in conduct action. The course policies regarding attendance and academics remain in

effect for partial or full absence from class due to lack of adherence with face covering and other requirements.

For instances where the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) has granted accommodations regarding wearing face coverings, students should contact their instructors to develop appropriate alternatives to class participation and/or activities as needed. Instructors or the student may also contact [OARS](#) (336.334.5440) who, in consultation with Student Health Services, will review requests for accommodations.

Grading:

Skills Quiz	<i>Ungraded</i>
5 Graded Quizzes	30% (6% each)
Class Participation (film responses, group discussion, general participation)	30%
*Film Responses	(10%)
*Canvas Discussion Questions <u>and</u> Reflections	(10%)
*General Participation	(10%)
Paper	20%
Final Exam	20%

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

97-100 A+
 93-96 A
 90-92 A-
 87-89 B+
 83-86 B
 80-82 B-
 77-79 C+
 73-76 C
 70-72 C-
 67-69 D+
 63-66 D
 60-62 D-
 <60 F

Quizzes (Learning Goals 1, 3):

The quizzes will cover materials from the assigned readings, lectures, films, and other in-class presentations. All assigned readings will be addressed, either during lectures or during discussion sections. You are responsible for anything that is covered in class, whether or not you were present for a given class period. **No make-up quizzes will be offered for this class.** Instead, your lowest quiz grade will automatically be dropped from your cumulative course score, **only** if you have taken the ungraded skills quiz at the beginning of the semester. Once the first quiz is dropped, all subsequent missed quizzes will be graded at 0% credit. Quizzes will be evaluated by your Teaching Assistant.

Final Take-home Examination (Learning Goals 1, 3):

There is a 6-8 page, typed take-home exam. I will distribute three or four questions on the last day of the course, and you will be required to construct an essay that clearly answers two of these questions while using the primary and secondary sources provided for the class. **The exams will be posted to Canvas and due in my office (2121 MHRA) no later than 3pm on Tuesday, December 7th.** We'll talk more about this exam later in the course. The take-home exam will be evaluated by the Teaching Assistant and the Professor. **Late exams will receive no credit.**

CANVAS ASSIGNMENTS

Film Responses (Learning Goal 1):

Four in-class film screenings will take place throughout the semester. Prior to each screening, you will receive film-guide handouts featuring questions, which address the film in terms of weekly course readings. You are expected to prepare well-written and thoughtful responses to each film guide, taking care to thoroughly answer all questions. A thorough response requires a minimum of one well-developed paragraph for each of 3-5 questions present. **These responses must be posted to the appropriate forum on Canvas by the following Monday evening at 11:59pm.** These due dates are listed on the course schedule and on the Canvas forums themselves. Film Responses will be evaluated by the Teaching Assistant. **All film responses are required assignments.**

*If you miss an in-class film screening, the films are available for viewing at the Library.

* Several times during the semester, students will have both film responses and reading responses due.

Discussion Questions and Discussion Reflections (Learning Goals 1, 2, 4):

Many Thursdays we'll have in-person discussions in the classroom, and you will also be enrolled through Canvas in several smaller groups in the classroom to discuss primary and secondary sources illustrative of themes in this course. In preparation for these discussions, please post a brief passage from an assigned reading. You don't say why you chose the passage. The passage may be a point that confused you, summarized an important point perfectly, or it may be a point that you completely disagree with. **Please post your passage to the appropriate forum on Canvas by the preceding Wednesday evening at 11:59pm.**

Following your Thursday in-person discussion, please offer on Canvas in the relevant discussion thread your interpretations of at least two passages offered by two different classmates and comment on at least two interpretations you received for your passage. **Please post your interpretations by Friday at 11:59pm.**

During the weekend you are responsible for submitting a one-paragraph (3-5 sentences) discussion reflection, reveal the reasoning behind your choice as well as your reactions to other student comments. These reflections must be posted to the appropriate forum on Canvas by the following Monday evening at 11:59pm. Were there points in the passage that you wish had been discussed or elaborated upon in greater depth? Have you come to a new understanding of the passage (or the article) since the Thursday meeting? If so, please feel free to note those points here. The written exercises will be graded on a 8-point scale. If you receive straight "6s" for all exercises, you will have earned a "B" for this part of the course. To earn an "eight" you need to

demonstrate that you have thought imaginatively about the question and have put some genuine effort into your answer. The purpose of these exercises is to gain experience in reading, analyzing and writing, and they should therefore help prepare you for the paper and the take-home exam.

Discussion Questions and Reflections will be evaluated together as one assignment by your Teaching Assistant. **Late submissions will receive no credit. You are required to submit at least 8 (eight) Discussion Questions and Reflections during the semester to receive a passing grade.**

*If you are unfamiliar with Canvas, it is your responsibility to learn to use this online learning tool.

“Think Piece” Paper (Learning Goals 1, 2, 3):

The “Think Piece” Paper, which is a response to assigned topics based on the required text *When Asia Was the World* as well as several additional primary sources, will focus on ideas from your readings, section discussions, and the lectures. This paper is not a research paper; therefore, no outside reading is required. However, the quality of your writing, particularly the clarity and persuasiveness of your argument, will factor into the final grading. The “Think Piece” Paper will be evaluated by the Professor. **Late papers will be penalized half a letter grade for each day beyond the original due date.**

Academic Integrity Policy:

In this class I expect that everyone will abide by the UNCG Student Code of Conduct when submitting all assignment to avoid plagiarizing the work of others and to avoid the appearance of plagiarism. Please refer to the Students Code of Conduct in the Student Policy Handbook, posted online by the Division of Student Affairs (<http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/student-code-of-conduct/>). If you have any questions regarding plagiarism and other academic integrity violations, please don’t hesitate to contact me at any time. Each student is required to include and sign the Academic Integrity Policy pledge on all major work submitted for the course:

I HAVE ABIDED BY THE UNCG ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY ON THIS ASSIGNMENT.

Signature _____ Date _____

For more information, please refer to Appendix A of the Academic Integrity Policy as stated on the UNCG website at URL: <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>

Special Accommodations:

Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) in 215 Elliott University Center, 336.334.5440, <http://ods.dept.uncg.edu/>, ods@uncg.edu. If you have a documented disability and want to discuss academic accommodations, please talk with me before the end of the second week.

Web-site

I also have created a companion Canvas site for this classroom, which I will continue to expand as the quarter progresses. Here students can access course information, such as scheduled events (i.e. the syllabus you now hold in your hand), as well as terms mentioned in lecture. I will also list links to web sites of interest to our class. Please refer to the class site frequently for such materials.

Web-based exercise

During the first week of class I ask you to visit the web site Sacred Sites Map of Asia at the URL: <http://sacredsites.com/asia/index.html> . Please choose a sacred site from this list that is located on the network of travel routes collectively represented as the Silk Road. In a short three-sentence response please describe the kind of pilgrim that might visit this site. Send your response to the appropriate forum on Canvas.

Required Texts:

The following books are required reading for this course, and December be purchased at the UNCG Bookstore:

1. Hansen, Valerie. *The Silk Road: A New History with Documents*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. ISBN: 9780190208929.
2. Lockard, Craig. *Southeast Asia in World History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. ISBN: 9780195338119. (Also available as an e-book in the Jackson Library at <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/lib/uncg/detail.action?docID=431066>)
3. Gordon, Stewart. *When Asia Was the World*. Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2009. ISBN: 9780306817397.

All other materials for this course will be available on Canvas.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

WEEK'S TOPIC	READINGS AND DISCUSSION
TRADE & TRIBUTE: A THEORETICAL DISCUSSION	
August 17-19: Course introduction. The Various Dimensions to Tribute and Trade.	<p>Reading: Bentley, "Cross-cultural contacts and exchanges" (on Canvas)</p> <p>Discussion: "The Silk Princess" (on Canvas)</p> <p>Web-based exercise <u>due</u> by Monday (8/16) at 11:59pm (see p. 6 of syllabus for instructions)</p>
EAST ASIA: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT	
August 24-26: Chinese Culture. Characteristics of the Chinese Imperial Court. Importance of Central Asia.	<p>Reading: Yang, "Historical Notes on the Chinese World Order" (on Canvas)</p> <p>Discussion: Hansen, <i>The Silk Road</i>, 33-37.</p>
Online Skills/Map Quiz, Tuesday 8/24	
THE SILK ROAD	
August 31- September 2: The Rise of the Silk Road Trade in the Han Dynasty (206 BCE- 220 CE). Xiongnu Empire.	<p>Readings: Juliano & Lerner, The Silk Road in Gansu and Ningxia" (on Canvas)</p> <p>Hansen, <i>The Silk Road</i>, 3-24.</p> <p>Film: <i>Lost Treasures of the Silk Road</i></p>
September 7-9: Trade and Society Across Eurasia in Ancient Times.	<p>Reading: Hansen, <i>The Silk Road</i>, 38-76.</p> <p>Discussion: Hansen, <i>The Silk Road</i>, 83-91.</p>
GRADED QUIZ #1, Tuesday 9/7	
September 14-16: Religions along the Silk Road: Buddhism. The Cave Paintings of the Dunhuang Oasis.	<p>Readings: Hansen, <i>The Silk Road</i>, 285-321.</p> <p>Zekrgoo, The Spiritual Identity of the Silk Roads" (on Canvas)</p> <p>Film: <i>The Art Gallery in the Desert</i></p>
September 21-23: Religions along the Silk Road: Zoroastrianism, Nestorian Christianity, and Manichaeism.	<p>Reading: Foltz, <i>Religions of the Silk Road</i>, 61-87. (on Canvas)</p> <p>Discussion: Saeki, P. Yoshio. "The Nestorian Monument in China." London: S.P.C.K., 1916.</p>

	< https://archive.org/details/nestorianmove00saekuoft >. (also on Canvas), pp. 162-175.
GRADED QUIZ #2, Tuesday 9/21	
ASIAN AUTUMN FESTIVAL (EXTRA CREDIT EVENT)	Saturday, September 25-11:00am – 4:00pm Elliott University Center
September 28-30: Tibet, Sichuan and the Southern Silk Road.	Reading: Anderson, “China's Southwestern Silk Road in World History” at http://worldhistoryconnected.press.illinois.edu/6.1/anderson.html Discussion: “Tibetan Map (N.D.)” and “Hedin's Tibet Map (1909)” (Course Documents)
October 5-7: The Sogdians, the Uighurs and Xinjiang's Role in Central Asian History	Reading: Millward, “Central Eurasia Ascendant” (on Canvas) Discussion: Gladney, “Xinjiang: China’s Pre- and Post-Modern Crossroad” (http://www.silkroadfoundation.org/newsletter/vol3num1/2_xinjiang.php)

October 8, Friday: Instruction ends for Fall Break, 6:00 p.m.

October 13, Wednesday: Classes resume after Fall Break, 8:00 a.m.

WEEK'S TOPIC	READINGS AND DISCUSSION
October 14: The Islamization of the Silk Road region.	Reading: Hansen, <i>The Silk Road</i> , 338-372. Film: <i>Journeys into Islamic China</i>
October 19-21: Caravans and Conquest: Marco Polo, Ibn Battuta, and Kublai Khan	Reading: Hansen, <i>The Silk Road</i> , 391-417. Discussion: Hansen, <i>The Silk Road</i> , 418-434.
GRADED QUIZ #3, Tuesday 10/19	
THE SPICE TRADE	
October 26-28: The Fall of the Silk Road & the Rise of the Spice Trade.	Reading: Lockard, Southeast Asia in World History, Chapter 3, “The Kingdoms of the Golden Age, ca. 800-1400,” 34-51.

	Discussion: Gordon, <i>When Asia Was the World</i> , Chapters 4, “Ingots and Artifacts,” 57-73.
November 2-4: What was the true nature of Zheng He's Voyages?	<p>Reading: Gordon, <i>When Asia Was the World</i>, Chapter 7, “Treasure and Treaty,” 117-135.</p> <p>Film: <i>1421: When China Discovered America? (Part One)</i></p> <p>Discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Gavin Menzies's official website http://www.gavinmenzies.net/pages/evidence-1421/index.asp The “1421 Myth Exposed” website http://www.1421exposed.com/
GRADED QUIZ #4, Tuesday 11/2	
November 9-11: Pre-colonial Indian Ocean Trade and Exchange	<p>Reading: Lockard, <i>Southeast Asia in World History</i>, Chapter 4, “New Cultures and Connections, ca. 1300-1500,” pp.52-74.</p> <p>Film: <i>Spice Island Saga</i></p>
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11th	THINK PIECE PAPER DUE
November 16-18: Early Europeans along the Spice Routes	<p>Readings: Lockard, <i>Southeast Asia in World History</i>, Chapter 5, “Christians, Spices and Western Expansion, 1500-1750,” pp.75-92.</p> <p>Discussion: Gordon, <i>When Asia Was the World</i>, Chapter 9, “Medicines and Misunderstandings,” pp. 157-176.</p>
GRADED QUIZ #5, Tuesday 11/16	
November 23: The Silk Road and China’s Belt and Road Initiative: Similarities and Differences	Reading: Rahman, “A Comprehensive Overview of China's Belt and Road Initiative and its Implication for the Region and Beyond” (on Canvas)
November 25: No Class	Thanksgiving Holiday

November 30: Concluding Points and Review	
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30th	TAKE HOME EXAM QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30th	LAST DAY OF HIS 207 CLASSES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7th	TAKE HOME EXAM DUE BY 3PM in MHRA 2121

Map

THE SILK ROUTES

MAP 3



Map from *The China Project* lesson plan “Was the Silk Road the Internet Highway of the Ancient World?” URL

www.globaled.org/chinaproject/silkRoad/docs/mapSilkRoad.html

MAP QUIZ:

Please use the map on the back of this quiz to name and locate the following countries (by name or by number) of the Silk Road region; (1)Afghanistan, (2)Armenia, (3)Azerbaijan, (4)China, (5)India, (6)Iran, (7)Iraq, (8)Kazakhstan, (9)Kyrgyzstan, (10)Mongolia, (11)Pakistan, (12)Russian Federation, (13)Syrian Arab Republic, (14)Tajikistan, (15)Turkey, (16)Turkmenistan, and (17)Uzbekistan.

