

## **Core Curriculum CC3206: Development of the Silk Road**

The City University of New York--Brooklyn College  
Study Abroad in China Program

Instructor: Shuming Lu, Ph.D.

### **Required Texts**

1. Course packet to be purchased at Far Better Copy & Print (by the entrance of Brooklyn College)
2. Watch the full program of “*In the footsteps of Marco Polo*” at <http://www.thirteen.org/marcopolo/>

### **Overview**

The history of the Silk Road is long and rich, spanning many centuries and cultures. This great trade route allowed travelers to transport more than goods and wealth. Philosophical and religious ideas were carried along the route, as well. This course will investigate the development of several such ideas in some real sites in China, especially Xi'an as the starting point of the ancient overland Silk Road, and Nanjing as the starting point of the maritime Silk Road.

Dunhuang (one day from Xi'an by train) is a major site for the Silk Road and students should find more information about Dunhuang from internet, in addition to the readings in the course packet. Yangzhou, not far from Nanjing, is also an important city for the Silk Road--we highly recommend that students in this class make a side trip there.

Course lectures and readings will be supplemented by field trips to the historical sites relevant to the topics under study day-by-day. Some sessions and lectures will be held during our trips to Beijing and Xi'an. In Nanjing, class discussions may also be held in Buddhist monasteries & nunneries, Daoist temples, Muslim businesses and mosques, silk trade locations, etc.

### **Course Approach and Schedule**

Fifteen class sessions will be scheduled, with each session for 3 hours. This will be taught as a hybrid course, with Internet based activities mixed with class discussions and field trips to relevant historical sites in the Chinese cities. Students will be (randomly) placed into small groups to facilitate discussions in class and online.

The course will be conducted in two parts. The first part will combine readings (in the course packet) with online assignments based on the readings. *This portion of the course can be regarded as a structured learning experience that can (and should) be completed, as much as possible, before departure for China.* The second portion of the course will combine close observations of relevant sites in China, journal writing, and classroom discussions.

A lot of this course will be based on your observations while touring China. It will be a good idea to have a notebook and pencil or voice recorder with you all the time. Your notes will be useful when you are writing your journal, participating in class discussions, or completing the assignments.

The course will consist of:

1. Pre-departure readings and online discussions
2. On-site visits in Beijing, Xian, Nanjing and Yangzhou
3. Journal entries and essays on on-site visits
4. Class discussions and presentations in Nanjing
5. Group project on influences of the Silk Road
6. A final paper

It is in the nature of the study abroad program that it will be a little hard to anticipate the schedule of the class meetings in Nanjing. The specific schedule of visits and discussions probably won't be known until we arrive in Nanjing and may be subject to change, sometimes at short notice. The class may meet on weekend and evenings if necessary. The instructor reserves the right to make necessary adjustments in the class schedule and evaluation in response to the changing circumstances during the course of the program in China.

If we occasionally choose to meet in a café, you should note: (1) when the class is in session, all must turn off the internet access (unless otherwise instructed); and (2) each is expected to purchase a meal/snack (about \$5).

### **Side Trip to Yangzhou**

In addition to Xi'an and Nanjing, Yangzhou is also an important site for the ancient Silk Road. Each student in this class should plan for some additional fees (about \$60) for transportation, admissions and tour guide to Yangzhou not covered in the regular program.

### **Written Submissions**

All written submissions must be typed and documented in accordance with the APA style requirements. Written submissions will be evaluated by the instructor for responsiveness to the assignment, theoretical sophistication, rigor, coherence, and ingenuity of the position developed, organization, and correctness as well as clarity of expression. As regards evaluation of the mechanics of expressive correctness, students are advised that for every ten errors in spelling, grammar (including capitalization and punctuation), and documentation, the overall evaluation of a submission will be lowered by one grade. All submissions are due as specified in the syllabus and late submissions will be penalized with one grade lowered for each day late.

Non-Brooklyn College students are required to keep a course portfolio of all work and assignment submissions for this course, to be evaluated by the appropriate office and committee for equivalent credits at the home institution.

### **Course Evaluation**

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Participation         | 20%                      |
| 2. Group project         | 20%                      |
| 3. Site reports & essays | 30% (including journals) |
| 4. Final exam            | 30%                      |

*As this course is part of the study abroad program, students are advised that their behavior during the program may affect their final grade for the course.*

### **Assignments**

1. Participation includes meaningful contribution to the class discussions in class and online. Students will be asked to present on certain readings from the course packet. A one-page outline is required from each speaker the day before presentation.
2. We will be visiting many sites related to the Silk Road in Beijing, Xi'an, Yangzhou and Nanjing and some tourist shops we will be visiting may also be relevant to topics in this class. Students will keep journals of the visits, write two essays and report in class on the journals and essays:
  - a. One essay on what we visit in Xi'an (due the 4<sup>th</sup> day after our arrival in Nanjing). Sites in Xi'an include: The Wild Goose Pagoda Square, XuanZang Statue, Muslim Business Quarter, and the Great Mosque.
  - b. The other essay on what we visit in Nanjing or Yangzhou (due the 9<sup>th</sup> day after our arrival in Nanjing). Sites in Nanjing include: Jiming Temple, LinGuo Temple, Muslim Mosques, MaXiangXing Muslim Restaurant, Silk Brocade Factory, Qixia Temple, Confucius Temple, and Jinghai Temple (ZhengHe Memorial for the maritime Silk Road), Yangzhou Muslim Mosque and Puhaddin Tomb.
  - c. The essay should talk about the origin of the site(s) and current situation, and make meaningful references to readings in the course readings to discuss the position and meaning of the site(s) in the history of the Silk Road, in modern China, and in China-West exchanges.
  - d. Each essay should be about 3 pages, with two journal entries attached (two that you consider the best). In-class presentation on each essay is 10 minutes.
  - e. Develop your *unique, independent and original perspective* that is your own, and does not sound familiar to what others might have to say.
  - f. The journals should include your observations of the site and your interviews (or questions asked) with local people at the site. You should complete the relevant readings in the course packet and prepare appropriate questions before the visit.

3. A group of about 4 students do research (with analysis of the readings, site visits and interviews in China) on the assigned topic, write a group research paper (about 8 pages), and give a 20-minute presentation on one of the major topics of the Silk Road: Religions, trade, food, and art (each group chooses a different topic).
  - a. Due 2 days before the program concludes in Nanjing.
  - b. The group should submit a detailed one-page outline for the presentation the day before.
  - c. Must be informative, organized and entertaining and demonstrate research credibility. All must participate in the project equally.
4. In the (final exam) paper, you should argue, by drawing upon all relevant information from this trip, from the course readings and discussions, and from additional scholarship, how you are able to build your own unique links between East and West, ancient and modern, and present your thought-out views on some major benefits and concerns arising from globalization.
  - a. The suggested length is 5 pages, but the quality and ideas discussed are more important;
  - b. Due on the afternoon prior to departure from Nanjing.

### **Schedule and Topics of Class Activities**

1. Introduction to Course
  - a. An overview
  - b. Assignments and readings
2. Life along the Silk Road
  - a. Influences of the Silk Road in Beijing and northeast China
  - b. The Silk Road in ancient and modern China
3. Maco Polo and the Silk Road
  - a. Discussing the movie: *In the footsteps of Maco Polo*
  - b. East-West exchanges
4. Silk Road and Western China
  - a. Xinjiang, Dunhuang (Gansu), Qinhai and Tibet
  - b. Religion and art on the Silk Road
5. Iranians, Indians, Chinese, and Tibetans on the Silk Road
  - a. War and conflicts
  - b. Intercultural exchanges and mutual developments
6. Islamic culture in Western China
  - a. Field trip: The Wild Goose Pagoda and Xuanzang Buddhist Stature in Xi'an
  - b. Field trip: the Muslim Business Quarter in Xi'an
  - c. Field trip: The Silk Road Museum in Xi'an
7. The Silk Road: Trade and Travel
  - a. Religion and Trade in Ancient Eurasia
8. The Silk Road: War and Faith
  - a. The Monk's Tale
  - b. The Nun's Tale
9. Buddhist India and the Classical and Early Christian West
  - a. Syncretism along the Silk Road
10. The Buddhism Religion
  - a. Gautama's enlightenment
  - b. The Buddha as teacher
11. Buddhist Scriptures.
  - a. On morality
  - b. On wisdom
12. Asian Philosophies and the Silk Road
  - a. Chan Buddhism.
  - b. Daoism: The Daodejing
  - c. Lao Tzu. The way of life
  - d. Key concepts of Daoism and paraphrases
13. Islamization of the Silk Road
  - a. Islamic culture in Nanjing and rest of China
  - b. Field trip: Nanjing Jiming Buddhist Temple

- c. Field trip: Maxiangxing Muslim restaurant in Nanjing
- d. Field trip: Nanjing Mosque for Muslims
- 14. Group presentations
- 15. The Silk Road and Communication
  - a. Inter-cultural and inter-ethnic
  - b. Inter-faith
  - c. Peace and co-existence
- 16. Summary & review
  - a. Influence of the Silk Road in Hangzhou/Suzhou
  - b. Shanghai and the Silk Road: Building links of past and present, East and West
  - c. Rethinking the Silk Road in the age of globalization
- 17. Final examination

### **Reading & Discussion Assignment**

All page numbers in the following reading list refer to the pages renumbered in the packet (found at the bottom right or left of the page)

#### **Session 1**

Susan Whitfield. (1999). *Life Along the Silk Road*. University of California Press.

“Introduction.” pp. 1-16

Susan Whitfield. (2004). *The Silk Road: Trade, Travel, War and Faith*. Serindia Publications.

“Iranians, Indians, Chinese, and Tibetans.” pp. 17-27

#### **Session 2**

Susan Whitfield. (1999). *Life Along the Silk Road*. University of California Press.

“The Monk’s Tale.” pp. 112-124

“The Nun’s Tale.” pp. 125-134

Richard C. Foltz. (1999). *Religions of the Silk Road*. St. Martin’s Griffin.

Chapter 1: The Silk Road and Its Travelers. pp. 176-187

Religion and Trade in Ancient Eurasia. pp. 188-195

#### **Session 3**

Richard C. Foltz. (1999). *Religions of the Silk Road*. St. Martin’s Griffin.

Buddhism and the Silk Road,” pp. 195-206

Richard H. Robinson & Willard L. Johnson. *The Buddhism Religion: A Historical Introduction (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)*:

Introduction (of Part One: The Buddhist of South Asia). pp. 28-31

Chapter 1: Gautama’s Enlightenment. pp. 32-47

#### **Session 4**

Lawrence Sutin. *All Is Change: The Two-Thousand-Year Journey of Buddhism to the West*:

Buddhist India and the Classical and Early Christian West. pp. 82-99

Richard H. Robinson & Willard L. Johnson. *The Buddhism Religion: A Historical Introduction (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)*:

Chapter 2: The Buddha as Teacher. pp. 48-60

#### **Session 5**

Edward Conze (Selected and Translated). *Buddhist Scriptures*. Penguin Classics.

Chapter 1: Morality. pp. 62-73

Chapter 3: Wisdom. pp. 74-80

Patrick S. Bresnan. (1998). *Awakening: An Introduction to the History of Eastern Thought (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)*. Pearson Education.

Chan Buddhism. Pp. 160-175

#### **Session 6**

Lawrence Sutin. *All Is Change: The Two-Thousand-Year Journey of Buddhism to the West*:

Syncretism along the Silk Road. pp. 99-111

Richard C. Foltz. (1999). *Religions of the Silk Road*. St. Martin’s Griffin.

“The Islamization of the Silk Road.” pp. 207-217

#### **Session 7**

John Koller. *Asian Philosophies*. 2006.

Daoism: The Daodejing. Pages 136-140

Lao Tzu. *The Way of Life*

Introduction. pp. 142-144

Key Concepts. pp. 145-151  
Paraphrase. pp. 152-154  
Paraphrase. p. 155  
Paraphrase. P. 156  
Paraphrase. p.157  
Paraphrase. p. 158  
Paraphrase. p. 159