

## ARTD 3105: Development of the Silk Road

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

Instructor: Professor Shuming Lu, Ph.D.

### **Required Text**

Valerie Hansen. (2012). *Silk Road: A New History*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Additional Documents/Materials:

1. Articles available for download at blackboard website under "Course Documents"
2. Watch the full program of "*In the footsteps of Marco Polo*" at <http://www.wliw.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 and technologies were carried along the route, as well, among many Eurasian empires and regions. This course will investigate the development of several such ideas in some real sites in China, especially in Xi'an as the starting point of the ancient overland Silk Road, and in Nanjing & Yangzhou as the starting point of the maritime Silk Road.

### **Course Outcomes**

1. Students should be familiar with important names, dates, and places of the development of the ancient Silk Road
2. Students should be able to identify the most important philosophies and religions that traveled along the Silk Road, and major features of these religions
3. Students should understand some of the most distinctive aspects of the Silk Road and how the development of the Silk Road influenced trade, technological innovations, art, exchange of ideas, intercultural/interfaith/inter-ethnic communication and interactions among social & political groups along the Silk Road, and how the Silk Road actually transformed cultures both east and west
4. Students should be able to think critically about historical events and reason through different explanations for causes and effects on the basis of evidence
5. Students should be able to read historical documents with a sensitivity to their temporal and cultural context

Course lectures/discussions and readings will be supplemented by multiple field trips to the historical and cultural sites relevant to the topics under study in each of the five cities on the program itinerary.

### **Side Trip to Yangzhou**

Students in this class should plan some additional fees for the side trip to Yangzhou (check the page of Side Trips at the program website for the cost). You are strongly encouraged to attend this side trip if you can afford the extra cost.

In addition to Xi'an and Nanjing, Yangzhou is also a very important site for the ancient Silk Road, with rich information in the museums and at many sites in the city about merchants of the Silk Road, China Block printing, Marco Polo (who served as governor of Yangzhou for 3 years), Buddhism, Islam, etc.

### **Course Approach & Schedule**

This will be taught as a hybrid course, with Internet and/or WeChat APP-based activities mixed with some class discussions and many field trips to relevant sites in the Chinese cities. Students will be placed into small groups to facilitate discussions and research assignments.

The course will be conducted in two parts. The first part will combine readings 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 during field trips in China, with some lectures and classroom discussions.

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. Class sessions will probably vary in both day and time. 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.

About twenty (20) tentative class sessions including field trips have been planned for the course, as seen in the Tentative Class Schedule/Sessions in this syllabus. Each session will be for 2 & half to 3 hours and some field trips may last longer or shorter, depending on the circumstances.

### **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      | 30% (online, in-class & program) |
| 2. Interpretive Paper | 20%                              |
| 3. Group Project      | 20%                              |
| 4. Final Exam         | 30%                              |

As this course is part of the study abroad program, students are strongly advised that their behavior and attitude, including journal submissions via email, during the program will affect their final grade for the course.

Participation includes meaningful contribution to the class discussions in class, at sites and online. For class meetings in Nanjing, students may be asked to submit discussion questions and/or short reflection essays based on the assigned readings the day prior to the class meeting. If students are asked to present on relevant chapters, a one-page outline is required from each speaker/group the day before presentation.

### **Written Assignments**

1. There will one short paper (3-4 pages each) on one of the assigned questions, due at 5:00 pm on the 8<sup>th</sup> day after our arrival in Nanjing. The papers are to be submitted in both hard copy and an electronic version via email and at the blackboard Safe-Assign links.
2. At the end of the course, there will be a final exam with comprehensive questions covering the whole course. The final exam should be at least 5 pages in length and is due 10:00 pm the day before the group departs Nanjing (in both hard copy and in electronic version via email and at the blackboard Safe-Assign link).

### **Questions for Short Paper:**

Choose one question and write a well-reasoned answer in response, drawing upon primary evidence from the sites you visit and from the textbooks. You can argue either side of the case, and you will be graded on how well you back up your position with evidence. Each answer should have a clear thesis and draw upon at least three pieces of evidence. You should take good notes when reading the texts and when visiting the sites in China.

Questions:

1. What things did you see at the sites in Beijing, Xi'an, Nanjing and Yangzhou as evidence of the influence of development of the Silk Road in the area of **art** and how do you interpret such influence?
2. What things did you see at the sites in Beijing, Xi'an, Nanjing and Yangzhou as evidence of the influence of development of the Silk Road in the area of **religion** and how do you interpret such influence?
3. How did the development of the Silk Road change people's ways of life?
4. How did the Silk Road play a role in the transfer of technology?

Students are strongly advised to read the CUNY and Brooklyn College's policies regarding academic dishonesty, attendance and sexual harassment.

**Group Project:**

This course on the Silk Road covers diverse topics. Upon arrival in Beijing/Nanjing, the instructor will try to put students in smaller groups based on their similar interests and assign a topic to each group for research and presentation in class.

## Tentative Class Schedule/Sessions

(Each session for 2 & half to 3 hours)

- Session 1: Before departure for China, watch full program of *"In the footsteps of Marco Polo"* at <http://www.thirteen.org/marcopolo/>
- Session 2: Introduction to the Course and China (upon arrival in Beijing)  
China & City of Beijing and the Silk Road  
History: Evidence and interpretation  
Scientific research: Archeology & Ethnography  
Course Assignments and Readings
- Session 3: The Great Wall: Functions, Usages, Meanings  
Chinese Interactions with Outside World in Ancient Times  
Golden Palace, Cloisonné and cultural influence from the Silk Road:  
From Central Europe to Germanic Peoples to Byzantine to China
- Session 4: Tiananmen Square, Imperial Palace Museum & Forbidden City  
Silk Road and Modern Chinese History  
Chinese Political System, in Comparison with Western Democracies  
Confucianism, Daoism and Western Political Philosophies  
Olympic Games Stadium  
International Communication & Understanding
- Session 5: Chinese Medicine, Chinese Tea and Chinese Food  
Tea on the Silk Road  
Teahouse and Chinese Culture in Beijing and Beyond  
Comparative Healthcare across Cultures  
Daoism and Chinese Medical Theories

## Tea &amp; Food and Chinese Medical Beliefs

- Session 6: (Arrival in Xi'an)  
Jade Art on the Silk Road: Central Asia and West China  
Cultural Meanings of Jade and Jade Artifacts  
Xi'an as Eastern Terminus of the Ancient Overland Silk Road
- Session 7: Terra-Cotta Soldier-and-Horse Museum  
Imperial System of Ancient China  
Art of Chinese funerary statues, and influence from Eurasian cultures  
Qin and Han Dynasties: Envoys to Western Territories of Silk Road  
China: Middle Kingdom & Central Asia
- Session 8: Xuanzang (Senior Monk) Statue & Wild Goose Pagoda  
Great Mosque & Muslim Quarter  
Influence of religions and cultures from the Silk Road on Chinese culture and life  
Chinese interest/eagerness to learn and adopt from others  
Immigrants from the Silk Road: Adaption to Chinese culture
- Session 9: Tangbo Art Museum  
Lecture on Chinese art and calligraphy  
Silk Road and Chinese Art  
Shaanxi Province History Museum
- Session 10: (Arrival in Nanjing)  
Observations of Beijing & Xi'an for the Silk Road  
Life along the Silk Road  
The Silk Road in North China: Beijing and Northeast  
Silk Road in Western China--Xinjiang, Dunhuang (Gansu), Xi'an and Tibet  
The Silk Road in ancient and modern China  
Group Project Assignments
- Session 11: Silk Road: Geography and Chronology; Space & Time  
Silk Road as History of cultural interactions, as interactions of ancient empires  
From overland Silk Road to Maritime Silk Road  
China's New Silk Road Strategy: One Belt One Road
- Session 12: Hansen's Silk Road, A New History: Chapters 1-4 (& Introduction)  
Major Groups along the Silk Road:  
Iranians, Indians, Chinese, Tibetans, etc.
- Session 13: Hansen's Silk Road, A New History: Chapters 5-7 (& Conclusion)  
Major Locations along the Silk Road:  
Kroraina, Kucha, Turfan, Samarkand & Sogdiana, Chang'an (Xi'an), Dunhuang, Khotan
- Session 14: Jinming Buddhist Temple in Nanjing 鸡鸣寺(\$1.5 donation for 3 pieces of incense)  
Religions of the Silk Road  
Zoroastrianism  
Manichaeism  
The Christian Church  
Buddhism and Islam  
Islamization of the Silk Road  
Confucianism and Daoism

## Syncretism along the Silk Road

- Session 15: Yangzhou Museums & Silk Road  
 Marco Polo, Arab Merchants in Yangzhou, Block Printing, Art; Buddhism  
 Yangzhou, Quanzhou, Guangzhou: the Maritime Silk Road  
 Extension of the Silk Road in East & South China, Japan and Korea
- Session 16: Nanjing Massacre Museum  
 War, conflicts and political interactions  
 Silk Road, World Peace, Co-existence
- Session 17: Culture and intercultural exchanges  
 Dimensions of cultural variability  
 Intercultural Communication  
 Inter-cultural, inter-ethnic, Inter-faith interactions  
 Group Project Presentations
- Session 18: Nanjing Museum 南京博物馆  
 Jiangsu Province Fine Arts Museum 江苏省美术馆  
 The Oriental Metropolitan Museum 六朝博物馆 (Admission: \$2.5 or 15 Chinese yuan with student ID)  
 Art and Chinese Philosophies & Silk Road
- Session 19: Maxiangxing Muslim Restaurant in Nanjing 马祥兴回民餐馆  
 Halal Food in Nanjing and China  
 Buddhist Vegetarian Restaurants  
 Buddhism and Islamic culture in Nanjing and rest of China  
 Food for Intercultural Communication and Silk Road  
 Group Project Presentations
- Session 20: Modern International Trade  
 Chinese New Silk Road Ambitions: One Belt One Road  
 Influence of the Silk Road in Suzhou & Shanghai  
 Silk in Suzhou: worm to fabric to art to trade  
 Shanghai and the Silk Road: Building links of past and present, East and West  
 Rethinking the Silk Road in the age of globalization  
 Summary & Review  
 Final Exam

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus based on changing circumstances. Prepare to be flexible.

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**Assignment of Keeping Journals**

An important goal of the program is to enable each student to explore and experience China in his or her own individual ways, such that you can obtain maximum academic benefits from this China trip. Keeping a journal during the trip will help serve that purpose well.

You will be keeping a journal during the trip and submit the journal entries as part of the trip and course participation to their course instructor (with a copy to Prof. Lu, the program director); see the instructors' email addresses below. Here are some guidelines:

### How to Write a Journal Entry

1. Describe a **specific, very meaningful, phenomenon or incident that** you observe or experience during the 2-3 days in a city, something that caught your attention and has an impact on you personally, culturally or intellectually, or something that has touched you deeply. Do not just list what you have done during the days (which will give you no credit). Tell us the story, with descriptive details, of a meaningful **intercultural encounter/instance**. This should be the 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph.
2. Then, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, analyze or reflect upon that. Write down your reflections and thoughts on that experience or observation from a cross-cultural or intercultural perspective. If you are in one of those non-language classes, try to tie that to what you have read in the textbook(s) or what we are discussing in class.
3. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, summarize or conclude this journal entry by making connections to a larger picture of what you have read, heard and studied previously in other classes, or even what you have experienced back in America and/or other contexts.
4. Each entry should be about 3 paragraphs in length. However, you are free to organize your ideas in what you believe to be creative ways; it is not a good idea to write one journal entry in only one paragraph.

### How and When to Submit

1. Write an entry about every 3 days; a total of 5 (FIVE) journals are expected of you during the trip:
  - a. ONE entry for visit to Beijing  
-- To be submitted on the day when you arrive in 2<sup>nd</sup> city of Xi'an
  - b. ONE for visit to Xi'an  
-- To be submitted on the day when you arrive in Nanjing
  - c. TWO entries during stay in Nanjing (including side trips if any)  
-- To be submitted every 6 days
  - d. ONE final entry for visit to Suzhou and Shanghai  
-- To be submitted no later than 10 pm on the eve of departure from Shanghai  
-- This final journal entry should be a bit longer than the previous ones. You need have 2 additional paragraphs in which to reflect on the overall trip experience: your gains from the trip, the impact of the trip on you, your recommendations for the trip, etc.
2. Submit your journals via email to the instructor via email:
  - a. Email each entry to: [ChinaJournals@yahoo.com](mailto:ChinaJournals@yahoo.com)
  - b. And, if you are taking a class with another professor, also copy that professor.
3. At the beginning of each journal, please clearly indicate:
  - a. the course #(s),
  - b. course title(s), &
  - c. the professor(s) of the course(s), if you are taking more than one course
4. Name each journal entry clearly, by making the subject of the message as Journal #1 (#2, #3, #4, etc.) from XXXX (your full name).
5. In one email message, only send one journal entry by way of **copy & paste** (Do not send it as attachment, please). Send each journal entry separately; Do NOT attempt to include more than one journal entry in one message.

### Grade and Reward

1. The professor will read your journals and respond if needed. If your journals are well written, professors may use them to replace some assignment(s) of the course, at the professors' discretion.
2. If you are taking more than one course, you still only write a total of FIVE journal entries; be sure you email each entry to both instructors if you are taking two courses from two professors.
3. The journals are part of the trip and course participation grade.
4. If you have been doing an exceptionally good job with the journals, the professors will give you extra credit (as much as 10% of the grade) for the course(s), at the professors' discretion.