Cave temples are an architectural form commonly found throughout Asia. Excavated along mountain cliffs far away from urban centers, a cave complex typically consists of multiple units that combine sculptures, paintings, and other material objects together to facilitate religious worship and other purposes. This course focuses on representative sites in Dunhuang and Kucha, two major cultural centers along the ancient Silk Road where vibrant exchanges of ideas, goods, people, and practices had taken place for centuries. We will consider a range of issues related to their initial creation and also survival in subsequent times, including the development of Buddhist monasticism and lay devotion as seen in changes of style and iconography; political and social dimensions of patronage; techniques and materials for artistic productions; and modes of restoration and conservation. We will also critically examine the concept of the Silk Road which has been central to the development of Asian art history in the past century.

ASSIGNED TEXTS
1. Neville Agnew, Marcia Reed, and Tevvy Ball, eds., Cave Temples of Dunhuang: Buddhist Art on China’s Silk Road (Getty Conservation Institute, 2016). Available for purchase at USC Bookstore.


3. Online Course Reader. Available at class website on Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
1. Reading Analyses and Short Oral Presentations
   Each student will be asked to write two analyses on selected readings throughout the semester. At the appropriate class meeting, you will introduce that reading and lead class discussion on pertinent issues.

2. Event Reports
   There will be a class visit to the Getty Center as well as other related events to be scheduled. Besides participation in these events (mandatory), you will be asked to produce reports on them.
3. Research Project

The main assignment for this course is a research project on a topic of your choice (min. 12 pages for undergraduates; 20 for graduates). You may choose one from a list provided by the instructor (to be distributed in class by Week 7) or propose your own. In either case, you are required to discuss your topic with the instructor during office hours by Week 9. A proposal (3 pages) with bibliography is due in Week 11, at which time each student is to present his/her topic in class. A formal presentation of the paper is scheduled in Weeks 14 and 15. After incorporating comments and suggestions generated in the class discussion after presentation, a final written report is due on.

Grading:
Reading analyses (written reports), 2 x 5% = 10%
Event reports, 2 x 5% = 10%
Attendance and participation (including short oral presentations), 20%
Research project, 60% (total)
Proposal, 10%
In-class presentation, 20%
Written report, 30%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week One  Introduction
January 10: Course Overview

Week Two
January 17: Beginnings of the Silk Road
- Agnew, Reed, and Ball, *Cave Temples of Dunhuang*, 87–109.

Week Three
January 24: Defining Cave Temples
- Agnew, Reed, and Ball, *Cave Temples of Dunhuang*, 1–41.

Week Four
January 31: Mogao Caves of Dunhuang I
- Agnew, Reed, and Ball, *Cave Temples of Dunhuang*, 43–57.

Week Five
February 7: Mogao Caves of Dunhuang II


**Week Six**

February 14: Library Cave of Dunhuang
- Agnew, Reed, and Ball, *Cave Temples of Dunhuang*, select pages from Catalogue.

**Week Seven**

February 21: Conservation and Replica Caves
- Agnew, Reed, and Ball, *Cave Temples of Dunhuang*, 111–185.

**Week Eight**

February 28: Visit to the Getty Center

**Week Nine**

March 7: Meet with Instructor on research projects: No Class.

**Spring Recess: March 12-19**

**Week Ten**

March 21: Trade and Cave Temples
- Hansen, *Silk Road*, 83–139.
- Agnew, Reed, and Ball, *Cave Temples of Dunhuang*, 59–75.

**Week Eleven**

March 28: Kucha
- Presentations of Paper Proposals
  - Hansen, *Silk Road*, 56–82.
Week Twelve
April 4: Architecture of Kucha Caves
• Angela F. Howard and Giuseppe Vignato, Archaeological and Visual Sources of Meditation in the Ancient Monasteries of Kuča (Brill, 2015), 3–105.

Week Thirteen
April 11: Wall Paintings of Kizil

Week Fourteen
April 18: Mural Fragments from Kucha and Turfan
• Pavel Lurje and Kira Samosjoek, eds., Expedition Silk Road: Journey to the West: Treasures from the Hermitage (De Nieuwe Kerk, 2014), 32–39.

Week Fifteen:
April 25: In-class Presentations

Final Written Reports Due on May