

**AHIS/EALC 484: Studies in Chinese Art
Cave Temples along the Ancient Silk Road
Spring, 2017
Tuesdays, 2:00-4:50, THH 207**

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

- Hansen, *Silk Road*, 3–25.
- 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.
- Reader: Nancy Steinhardt, *Chinese Architecture in an Age of Turmoil, 200–600* (University of Hawaii Press, 2014), 97–106, 115–122, 158–181.

Week Four

January 31: Mogao Caves of Dunhuang I

- Agnew, Reed, and Ball, *Cave Temples of Dunhuang*, 43–57.
- Reader: Stanley Abe, “Art and Practice in a Fifth-Century Chinese Buddhist Cave Temple,” *Ars Orientalis* 20 (1990), 1–31.
- Robert H. Sharf, “Art in the Dark: The Ritual Context of Buddhist Caves in Western China,” In *Art of Merit: Studies in Buddhist Art and its Conservation: Proceedings of the Buddhist Art Forum 2012*, eds. David Park, Kuenga Wangmo, and Sharon Cather (London: Archetype Publications, 2013), 38–65.

Week Five

February 7: Mogao Caves of Dunhuang II

- Sonya S. Lee, *Surviving Nirvana: Death of the Buddha in Chinese Visual Culture* (Hong Kong University Press, 2010), 139–201.
- Neil Schmid, “The Material Culture of Exegesis and Liturgy and a Change in the Artistic Representation in Dunhuang Caves, ca. 700-1000,” *Asia Major* 19 (2006): 171-210.

Week Six

February 14: Library Cave of Dunhuang

- Rong Xinjiang, “The Nature of the Dunhuang Library Cave and the Reasons for Its Sealing.” Trans. Valerie Hansen. *Cahiers de l’Extrême-Asie* 11 (1999-2000): 247-75.
- Agnew, Reed, and Ball, *Cave Temples of Dunhuang*, select pages from Catalogue.
- Roderick Whitfield, *The Art of Central Asia: The Stein Collection in the British Museum*, Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1982), excerpts.
- Roderick Whitfield, “Ruixiang at Dunhuang.” In *Function and Meaning in Buddhist Art: Proceedings of a Seminar Held at Leiden University, 21–24 October 1991*, edited by K.R. van Kooij and H. van der Veere, 149–56. Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1995.

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.
- Rajeshwari Ghose, ed., *Kizil on the Silk Road: Crossroads of Commerce and Meeting of Minds* (Marg Publications on behalf of National Centre for the Performing Arts, 2008): 9–23.

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

- Angela Falco Howard, “Miracles and Visions Among the Monastic Communities of Kucha, Xinjiang.” *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* 2 (2007): 77–87.
- Rajeshwari Ghose, ed., *Kizil on the Silk Road: Crossroads of Commerce and Meeting of Minds* (Marg Publications on behalf of National Centre for the Performing Arts, 2008): 67–83, 95–115.

Week Fourteen

April 18: Mural Fragments from Kucha and Turfan

- Albert von Le Coq, *Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan: An Account of the Activities and Adventures of the Second and Third German Turfan Expeditions*. Trans. Anna Barwell (Oxford University Press, 1985), 17–42, 111–41.
- Sonya S. Lee, “Central Asia Coming to the Museum: The Display of Kucha Mural Fragments in Interwar Germany and the United States,” *Journal of the History of Collections* 28, no. 3 (November, 2016).
- Pavel Lurje and Kira Samosjoek, eds., *Expedition Silk Road: Journey to the West: Treasures from the Hermitage* (De Nieuwe Kerk, 2014), 32–39.
- Young-pil Kwon, “The Ōtani Collection,” *Orientalia* 20, no. 3 (1989), 53–63.

Week Fifteen:

April 25: In-class Presentations

Final Written Reports Due on May