

**University of North Carolina at Greensboro**  
**HIS 588: East Asian History Selected Topics**  
**Silks and Spices: Exchanges Of Goods And Ideas Along China's Frontier**

Spring Semester 2003  
MCVR 225

T 6:00pm- 8:50pm

Instructor: James A. Anderson

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Course web site: <http://www.uncg.edu/~jaander2/HIS588>

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

### **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. 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.

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

- ≠≠ Construct persuasive written arguments regarding issues of historical interpretation.
- ≠≠ Utilize the latest methods of Web-based technology to communicate with fellow students.
- ≠≠ Understand better the effect the ancient past has had on the modern world.
- ≠≠ Exhibit self-motivation and self-expression by exploring and asking questions regarding historical topics beyond personal life experiences.

### **Course Requirements**

**PLEASE NOTE:** This course will be conducted as an upper-level seminar with a strong emphasis on classroom discussion and student presentations. I expect all students to attend and participate in all discussion sections. Moreover, the completion of all written assignments is necessary for a passing grade. It is important to note that more than three (3) will result in a failing grade in this course. No further excuses, for any reason, will be permitted. I also wish to note that no "incompletes" will be given for this class. Please remember to plan ahead!

I will require that all students establish e-mail accounts with Internet access. This course will occasionally involve interaction between the instructor and students outside of the lecture period. Please set up these accounts as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

### **Grading (Undergraduates)**

Annotated bibliography (4-5 pages) 20%

Class presentation	10%
Historiographical essay (8-10 pages)	40%
Class participation	30%

### **Grading (Graduate students)**

Historiographical essay (15-20 pages)	50%
Class presentation	20%
Class participation	30%

### **Annotated bibliography**

All undergraduate students will produce short annotated bibliographies as their first written assignments. All graduate students will supply annotated bibliographies with their final historiographical essays. An annotated bibliography is a list of books, articles, and documents, in which each entry is followed by a brief description of the source itself. These descriptions, or annotations, are provided to advise the reader on the accuracy and usefulness of the materials you have cited in your bibliography. For a better sense of what it entails to create an annotated bibliography, I urge everyone to visit the Cornell University Library's web site at <http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/research/skill28.htm>. This page contains a very good overview of the process.

### **Web Site contributions**

I have created a Web site for this classroom, which you and I will continue to expand as the semester progresses. Together we will discuss options for the expansion of the course web site during the first weeks of class. Students also 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. I urge everyone to visit the Tim Van Gelder's site *Critical Thinking on the Web* (<http://www.philosophy.unimelb.edu.au/reason/critical/>) before "surfing" through these on-line materials. Moreover, I may include additional materials on the library's Electronic Reserve list. Please refer to the class Web site periodically for such materials.

### **Class presentations**

All students will be required to present to the class a short summary and salient points from their final essays. We will discuss the nature of these presentations later on in the course.

### **Historiographical Essay**

An historiographical essay is a critical overview of a variety of historical interpretations of an oftentimes narrowly focused topic. Such essays can take different forms, and we will discuss

these forms during this course. As an example, I will place one of my own historiographical essays from graduate student days on e-reserve at the library.

Please remember that the quality of your writing, particularly the clarity and persuasiveness of your argument, will factor into the final grading. Late papers will be penalized half a letter grade for each day beyond the original due date.

### **Classroom Discussions**

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are very important components of this course. Everyone will be required to participate, and you should feel free to ask questions in every class. Each student will come to class having read the texts and prepared to discuss them. I will not hesitate to call on all students to participate. However, you should feel free to speak with me before class, if you find it difficult to speak in a public setting. In that case, you may submit your questions before each class in writing.

### **Required Reading**

1. Foltz, Richard C. *Religions of the Silk Road: Overland Trade and Cultural Exchange from Antiquity to the Fifteenth Century*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000; ISBN: 0312233388.
2. Whitfield, Susan. *Life Along the Silk Road*. Univ. California Press, 2000; ISBN: 0520224728.
3. Liu, Xinru *Silk & Religion: An Exploration of Material Life & the Thought of People, A. D. 600-1200* Oxford Univ Pr; ISBN: 0195644522; 2nd edition (April 1998).
4. Levathes, Louise *When China Ruled the Seas: The Treasure Fleet of the Dragon Throne, 1405-1433* Paperback Reprint edition. Oxford University Press, 1999; ISBN: 0195112075.
5. Frank, Andre Gunder *Reorient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*. University of California Press, 1998. ISBN: 0520214749.

For “background reading,” please consider the following sources:

1. A video in the collection at TLC, “Mandate of Heaven.”
2. Waley-Cohen, Johanna. *The Sextants of Beijing: Global Currents in Chinese History*. New York: Norton, 1999.

All other materials for this course will be available on e-reserve (electronic reserve) at the library.

## Reading Schedule

WEEK'S TOPIC	READINGS AND DISCUSSION
<b>TRADE &amp; TRIBUTE: A THEORETICAL DISCUSSION</b>	
<b>January 14:</b> Course introduction.	Film: <i>A Thousand Miles Beyond the Yellow River</i>
<b>THE SILK ROAD</b>	
<b>January 21:</b> Agents of Exchange along the Silk Road	Reading: Whitfield text Waley-Cohen article ( <b>on e-reserve</b> ) Yang article ( <b>on e-reserve</b> ) Film excerpts: <i>Glories of Ancient Changan</i>
<b>January 28:</b> Agents of Exchange along the Silk Road (cont.)	Readings: Whitfield text Adshead chapter ( <b>on e-reserve</b> ) Polanyi article ( <b>on e-reserve</b> ) Film excerpts: <i>The Art Gallery in the Desert</i>
<b>February 4:</b> Trade and Cultural Diffusion along the Silk Road	Reading: Foltz text Film: <i>The Dark Castle</i>
<b>February 11:</b> Trade and Cultural Diffusion along the Silk Road (cont.)	Readings: Foltz text Chaudhuri chapter ( <b>on e-reserve</b> ) Film: <i>In Search of the Kingdom of Lou-Lan</i>
<b>February 18:</b> Spread of Buddhism	Reading: Liu text Film excerpts: <i>Khotan: Oasis of Silk and Jade</i>
<b>No class meeting on February 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Day reserved for undergraduate student conferences regarding annotated bibliographies</b>
<b>March 4:</b> Spread of Buddhism (cont.)	Readings: Liu text Bentley chapter ( <b>on e-reserve</b> ) Film excerpts: <i>A Heat Wave Called Turfan.</i>
<b>TUESDAY, MARCH 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>UNDERGRADUATES' ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE IN CLASS</b>

**FALL BREAK: March 8, Saturday - Instruction Ends for Spring Break 1:00 p.m**

**March 17, Monday - Classes resume after Spring Break 8:00 a.m**

WEEK'S TOPIC	READINGS AND DISCUSSION
<b>March 18:</b>	Reading: Abu-Lughod chapter Film: <i>The Scorching Sun and the Southern Road of Iran</i>
<b>THE SPICE TRADE</b>	
<b>March 25:</b> What was the true nature of Zheng He's Voyages?	Readings: Levathes Text Fudge chapter ( <b>on e-reserve</b> ) Film: <i>Buddhism: Footprints Of The Buddha-India</i>
<b>April 1:</b> What was the true nature of Zheng He's Voyages? (Cont.)	Readings: Levathes Text Bouchon article ( <b>on e-reserve</b> ) Film excerpts: <i>Dance Of The Warriors</i>
<b>April 8:</b> Pre-colonial and Early Colonial Indian Ocean Trade and Exchange	Readings: Frank text Film: <i>Spice Island Saga</i>
<b>April 15:</b> Pre-colonial and Early Colonial Indian Ocean Trade and Exchange (cont.)	Readings: Frank text Pomeranz chapter ( <b>on e-reserve</b> ) Film excerpts: <i>Columbus's World</i>
<b>April 22:</b>	<b>Class Presentations</b>
<b>April 29:</b>	<b>Class Presentations</b>
<b>May 6:</b>	<b>Class Presentations Final Discussion</b>
<b>TUESDAY, MAY 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>GRADUATE ESSAYS DUE</b>
<b>TUESDAY, MAY 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>UNDERGRADUATE ESSAYS DUE</b>
<b>TUESDAY, MAY 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Last Day Of His 588 Classes</b>