

Reimagining the Silk Roads

Interactions and Perceptions Across Eurasia

**Edited by Julian Henderson, Stephen L.
Morgan, and Matteo Salonia**

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>viii</i>
<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>List of Contributors</i>	<i>xii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>xvi</i>
1 Reimagining the Silk Roads: An introduction	1
JULIAN HENDERSON, STEPHEN L. MORGAN, AND MATTEO SALONIA	
PART 1	
Environment	23
2 Climates of the Silk Road through the Common Era	25
MATTHEW D. JONES	
3 Ecological variability and early agriculture along the Proto-Silk Roads	37
TENGWEN LONG	
4 Diseases and the medieval Silk Roads	51
CHRIS KING	
PART 2	
Material culture	63
5 Roman Palmyra as a hub of trade and commerce: Material, epigraphic, and numismatic evidence	65
ANDREAS J.M. KROPP	

6	Abbasid Caliphate and Tang Dynasty in the ninth and tenth centuries CE: Trade, acculturation, and transformation	79
	JULIAN HENDERSON	
7	Natron glass and the Silk Roads in the first millennium BCE	95
	QIN-QIN LÜ	
8	A ‘Lion’ on the Silk Road	110
	GILBERTO ARTIOLI, IVANA ANGELINI, AND MASSIMO VIDALE	
 PART 3		
	Faiths and social groups	129
9	Buddhist missionaries at medieval Chinese courts: State ideologists and soul savers	131
	JUNQING WU	
10	The Sogdians, the ‘Cultural Bees’ of Eurasia	145
	PIN LYU	
11	Huns and Romans in the fourth century	161
	GEORGE WOULDHUYSEN	
12	Christianity on the Silk Roads	174
	TENG LI	
13	Dzhankent (Kazakhstan) – an early medieval trading node on the Northern Silk Road?	186
	IRINA ARKADEVNA ARZHANTSEVA AND HEINRICH HÄRKE	
14	Replacing the Silk Road? Central Asian merchants between China and Scandinavia, 840–1000 CE	200
	MAREK JANKOWIAK	
15	Slavery and human trafficking along the medieval Silk Roads, c.800 to c.1350 CE	212
	CLAIRE TAYLOR	
 PART 4		
	Patterns of Eurasian trade	225
16	Mapping European knowledge about the Silk Roads in the fifteenth century	227
	GEORG SCHINDLER	

17 The Silk Road in Northeast Asia: Courtly gift-giving, 668–1449	239
JAMES FUJITANI	
18 Iberian Silk Roads: Spices, silver, and souls	251
MATTEO SALONIA	
19 Southeast Asia, China, and the ‘maritime Silk Roads’, c.900–1650	265
STEPHEN L. MORGAN	
PART 5	
Historical myths and reconceptualisation	279
20 The birth of Silk Road studies in China: Hedin, Andersson, and Sino-Swedish collaboration in Republican China	281
JAN MAGNUS ROMGARD	
21 The Belt and Road Initiative at ten (2013–2023): A crucial juncture for China’s infrastructure geopolitics	298
BENJAMIN BARTON	
22 The road which binds: The BRI, nationalism, and the securitization of Xinjiang	309
DAVID O’BRIEN AND MELISSA SHANI BROWN	
23 Visualising the Silk Roads	322
JULIAN HENDERSON, STEPHEN L. MORGAN, AND MATTEO SALONIA	
24 Conclusion: Questioning and recovering the Silk Roads	338
MATTEO SALONIA, STEPHEN L. MORGAN, AND JULIAN HENDERSON	
<i>Index</i>	347

Figures

1.1	Map of selected land and sea routes connecting Eurasia at varying times up to c.1700	12
2.1	Selected time series of Common Era climate and environment	29
3.1	The topography of Eurasia	38
3.2	The rainfall pattern and distribution of major biomes in Eurasia	39
3.3	Major domestication centres and associated domesticates	41
5.1	Monumental base with three camels	71
5.2	Sarcophagus panel with camel and two men	72
5.3	Ship relief from the tomb of Julius Aurelius Maronas, AD 236	73
5.4	Standard typology of Palmyrene coinage	75
5.5	New typology of Palmyrene coinage	76
6.1	A map of Chang'an	81
6.2	The round city of Baghdad between 150 and 300 AH (842–922 CE) by William Muir 1883	83
6.3	Early Islamic scratch-decorated glass vessel from the Famen Temple	86
6.4	Early Islamic lustre-decorated glass vessel from the Famen Temple	87
6.5	Trace elements associated with silica in early Islamic glasses made in the western Asian silk road hubs	88
6.6	Trace elements associated with plant ash in early Islamic glasses made in western Asian silk road hubs	88
7.1	Blue monochrome beads and blue-and-white eye beads in National Museum of Georgia	100
7.2	Eye beads in National Museum of Georgia	100
7.3	Eye beads in the Metropolitan Museum of Art	101
7.4	East Asian sites dating to the mid first millennium BCE with glass objects that are natron-based or possess typical forms closely associated with natron-based glassmaking	102
8.1	The two statues in San Marco's square, Venice in a classical representation. Luca Carlevaris (1663–1730)	111
8.2	The two statues in San Marco's square, Venice in a modern photograph	111
8.3	Front page of the Scarfi (1990) volume, published in several languages on the occasion of the last restoration	113
8.4	Canaletto (1697–1768), Venice: the Riva degli Schiavoni	114
8.5	Camille Corot (1796–1875), Venice, La Piazzetta, circa 1835–45	114

8.6	Close-up picture of the bronze lion from Venice	116
8.7	Close-up picture of the muzzle features of the bronze lion from Venice (lower right)	117
8.8	The oldest known depiction of the so-called “crab-like” lion	120
8.9	The different phases defined by Scarfi (1990, Table XV)	121
8.10	LIA plots of the measured data compared with the best-fitting European, Mediterranean and Near Eastern ores	123
8.11	LIA plots of the measured data compared with the best-fitting Chinese ores	124
8.12	The best-fitting copper and polymetallic ore deposits to the measured LIA data on the samples extracted from the lion of St. Mark’s statue	125
9.1	The famous seventh-century Chinese monk Xuanzang on his way to India	132
10.1	Map of Sogdiana and its major settlements	146
10.2	Mural on the southern wall. Reconstruction	148
10.3	Mural on the southern wall. Reconstruction	150
10.4	Mural inside the arch. Reconstruction	151
10.5	Stone bed in the tomb of Kang Ye (d. 571 CE)	156
10.6a	House-shaped sarcophagus in the tomb of Shi Jun (d. 580 CE)	157
10.6b	Skeletal remains on the stone divan in the tomb of Shi Jun	157
13.1	Map of Syr-Darya delta, with locations of Dzhanakent and other key sites	187
13.2	Dzhanakent in its landscape today (drone photo)	188
13.3	Cat remains from Dzhanakent	189
13.4	Geomagnetic anomalies superimposed on topographic plan of Dzhanakent (by Igor Modin)	190
13.5	Pottery styles at Dzhanakent	191
13.6	Distribution map of Central Asian towns with finds of tenth-century coins	195
14.1	Map of the silk roads and the “dirham for slaves” system	201
16.1	The Zeitz world map	232
18.1	A hidden bay in Taohua Island, Ningbo	255
19.1	Index of nominal prices of pepper in England and Venice, 1390–1503	272
20.1 a and 20.1b	The Loulan ruins photographed by Hedin in 1901	282
20.2	Photo of Richthofen with dedication to Hedin, dated 1890	283
20.3	Andersson during fieldwork for the Chinese Government in Henan Province, 1918	285
20.4	The Sino-Swedish Expedition leadership in the field 1927	291
20.5	Signing of the contract between Hedin and the Federation members, 26 April 1927 at Peking University	292
23.1	Petra in Jordan, a UNESCO world heritage Nabataean (fourth-century BCE to first-century CE) city	323
23.2	The desiccated remains of Yingpan man in a tomb in the Lop Nor region of Xinjiang, China	324

23.3	Ying Zheng, the first (Qin) emperor of China and the terracotta army buried in his tomb	325
23.4a	A small polychrome glass bead from West Asia excavated at Cham Island, Vietnam	326
23.4b	The deep translucent glass core of the bead contains pieces of scrap red and blue glass	326
23.5	A lustre-decorated plate from the late twelfth to first-half of the thirteenth century may have been made in al-Raqqa, Syria	327
23.6	The Qiyun Pagoda is part of the White Horse Temple in Luoyang, one of the ancient capitals of China	328
23.7	The upper section of the Xian Stele, which was erected by Chinese Christians in 781	329
23.8	An image of the ‘Polo Brothers Leaving Constantinople’ from the <i>Livre des merveilles et autres récits de voyages et de textes sur l’Orient</i> , an illuminated manuscript produced in the 1410s	330
23.9a	This ‘Nanban byōbu’ (screen of the Southern Barbarians) represents the arrival of a Portuguese vessel in Japan	331
23.9b	Detail from the right side of the screen showing the landing party	331
23.10a	This pictorial map of Tainan, a coastal town in Taiwan is an example of material culture along the maritime silk roads	332
23.10b	Detail that shows farming around one of the forts	332
23.11	Ancient Southeast Asian sailing vessels are depicted on the bas-reliefs of the ninth century Borobudur Temple in Central Java	333
23.12a	Porcelain bowls from the ninth century Belitung Shipwreck found in 1998 off Sumatra	334
23.12b	Changsha bowls were packed inside huge Guangdong-made storage jars on the Belitung shipwreck	334
23.13a	A sketch of the black pepper (<i>Piper nigrum</i>) plant is native to the Malabar Coast in southwest India but grown in Java by the eleventh century	335
23.13b	An image of the nail-like cloves (<i>Syzygium aromaticum</i>) are the fragrant dried flower buds of a tree that once only grew on the Maluku islands in Eastern Indonesia	335
23.14a	This silk screen portrays Japanese and Portuguese sailors on a “red seal” (朱印船, <i>shuinsen</i>) ship in the seventeenth century	336
23.14b	Japanese and Portuguese are relaxing with a tobacco pipe and tea while watching a dance performance	336
23.14c	Japanese and Portuguese are engaged in a game of Go (Chinese <i>weiqi</i>), a strategy game like chess	336
23.15a	A poster for the “Exhibition of Intangible Cultural Heritage along [the] Silk Road in China” held at the National Minorities Cultural Museum in Beijing in 2019	337
23.15b	A screenshot of the British Museum’s promotion of an exhibition on the silk roads in 2023–24	337
24.1	A seventeenth-century Chinese panel of embroidered silk	340

Tables

1.1	Chronology of selected developments related to the land and sea routes across Eurasia	5
3.1	Major rivers in Eurasia and their global rank of length	40
3.2	Examples of plants and animals possibly domesticated in Southwest Asia	42
3.3	Examples of plants and animals possibly domesticated in China	43
7.1	Compositional types of natron glass objects (eighth to second century BCE) from the Mediterranean and Europe	97
7.2	Four types of the mid-1st millennium BCE stratified eye beads across Eurasia	103
17.1	Diplomatic gifts during the eighth century	241
17.2	Courtly gifts during the twelfth century	243
17.3	Diplomatic gifts in the fifteenth century	245