Queens College research tools and electronic sources

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PowerPoint created by Paola M. Rodriguez
TRADE
The Chinese silk industry began in about 3630 BC, approx. Chinese emperors were the main consumers of silk goods and would often use them for gifts, in this way popularizing the consumption of silk goods. Chinese silk was one of the main motors for the creation and expansion of the silk routes across Asia.
Chinese Silk Looms
Textiles of the Silk Road
Uzbek silk overcoat
More than Silk-
Other Trade Goods
of the Silk Route-
Porcelain

Ming Dynasty Porcelain
Porcelain
Spices were another important trade good. Originally used for medicinal and religious purposes, they soon became a culinary staple. Saffron, cumin, nutmeg and the lesser known spikenard and cubeb- a trade which continues to exist today.
Spices
Scythian Jewelry
Scythian Gold

Scythians were warriors, perhaps the first to perfect mounted warfare, roaming the plains in what is now Ukraine. Their mobility, contacts with China, and mercantile activity undoubtedly reinforced the Silk Route trade activity and exchange of cultures. Jade and gold were particularly valued by the Scythians. Their decorative objects and jewelry often have hunting motifs—deer, warriors, and horses. On the next slide can be seen a golden decorative object, possibly a brooch, in a traditional deer form.
Persian Jewelry:
Gold, turquoise, garnet, lapis-lazuli, carnelian and pearl pendants from Tillya Tepe, Afghanistan depicting a mythic scene from Ancient Persia
Precious cargo-Jade was another important trading good. Below can be seen examples of antique Chinese jade.
Central Asian horses were important on the Silk Road. At left, a woman's saddle in wood and copper from Kyrgyzstan.
The bustling cities that sprang up along the routes were a melting pot of ethnicities and religions, a fusion which led to new, hybridized cultures.
Taklamakan Desert, Northwest China—a part of the Silk routes
Mongols expanded their control around 1200 on the Silk Route, their nomadic lifestyle shaping the Silk Road's societal construction. Above, Genghis Khan and his army.
Pamir Mountains- Tajikistan. The Silk Road crossed its peaks. In this image a traditional yurt can be seen.
Samarkand - A Silk Road Metropolis
Alma-Aty: Center for Trade on the Silk Road
Pingyao, China
Tajikistan
Yazd in Iran is one of the oldest cities in the world and was a major city along the Silk Road.
Jaisalmir, India – Important trade center on the Silk Road
Caravans were often seen on the Silk routes - trading, exploring and traveling with horses, expanding man's mobility across deserts and mountains.
Architecture
Caravanserais- Oasis for caravan travelers
Architecture and layout of a caravanserai
Inside the caravanserai
The Bukhara Mosque
Kalon mosque complex in Bukhara, Uzbekistan
Gur-e-Amir mausoleum in Samarkand
Ummayad Mosque in Aleppo, Syria was an architectural masterpiece built in 11th century. Now destroyed but was intact until 2006.
Over time, the constant flux of travelers lead to an exchange of ideas, philosophies, lifestyles and religions.

Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Manichaeism, Islam and Zoroastrianism were spread, and in some cases, led to a blending of these religions along the Silk Road trade routes
Statue of Buddha
Zoroastrianism- the Farvahar symbol, now more of a national rather than religious symbol of Iran
Nestorian Christianity - Christianity in Asia.
Above can be seen a wall painting from Tang, China, 7-8th century, showing a Palm Sunday procession.
Detail from Nestorian Temple, Khocko 9th century

Image from Artstor
Nestorian Stele describing the introduction of Christianity to China
Hinduism- Ganesh enthroned in gold and wood
Art
The Gandhara Buddha, 1-2\textsuperscript{nd} century. Greco-Buddhist art is a prime example of the syncretization of cultures aided by the Silk Road trade. The Buddha shows Greco-Roman influence in the contrapposto pose, use of himation and anthropomorphism.
Greco-Buddhist
Gandhara
Buddhist gods
Panciko and Hariti,
3rd century
Tocharians-The Tarim Basin

Buddhist art of the Tarim Basin offers fascinating examples of hybridization of art methods and materials, testimony to the flux of travelers. Here, fragments of a Tarim Basin fresco from a stupa or Buddhist monastery in Miran, China.
The Mogau Caves are a unique and fascinating example of Buddhist Art. Called "Caves of the Thousand Buddhas" they are located in the strategically placed Gansu region of China.
Reclining Buddha - Caves of Mogau
Mogao Caves
Fresco, detail
Soghdian murals, Penjikent

Soghdians facilitated trade between China and Central Asia along the Silk Road. Soghdian art bears many traces of influence from Greco-Buddhist art.
Soghdian murals from Penjikent, Tajikistan
Soghdian groom and camel, Tang dynasty
Chinese Buddhist Art
Chinese silk print art
Silk Road Textual Culture
Sutras, Diaries and Manuscripts
Indian Sutras- Buddhist monk Xuanzhang of the Tan dynasty traveled the Silk Road from China to India to collect “Sutras”, short aphoristic texts, in an attempt to unify Buddhist thought. Above, the “Diamond Sutra”. 
Detail from the "Lotus Sutra"
Illustrated manuscript, possibly the Quran from Bukhara (Uzbekistan), 1537, approx. Image from Artstor.
Above, a Latin edition of *Travels of Marco Polo*, with handwritten annotations by Christopher Columbus - his discovery of America resulted from his attempting to find a shorter route to India!
Cartography— an important part of Silk Road exploration
Silk Road: Traditional Costumes and Fashion
Armenian women national costume
Kazan Tatar dress
Manchurian style Chinese dress from the Qing Dynasty
Persian dance costumes
Ladies with golden teeth and traditional scarves in Bukhara, Uzbekistan
Traditional dress of Samarkand women: colorful dresses and headscarves
Bukhara’s clothes market
Tajikistan women’s costume
Uzbek dance costume
Silk Road Instruments and Music
Spikelute
The music of the Silk Road is an example of the hybridization of cultures that transpired among the people who lived and traveled in and around the main routes.

Here, a morin khuur or horse fiddle, so called because of the horse head found on the bow, from Mongolia.
A Chinese moon lute, its strings are made from twisted silk.
Modern music shop in Uzbekistan still selling traditional instruments