Lecture Outline of Buddhist Art and Silk Roads

1. China's isolated geographic location; contact with the nomads; imagination of the "Other" and artistic interaction across the Eurasian steppes (Animal motifs);

2. Zhang Qian's diplomatic journey and the military expedition of the Western Han empire;

3. The opening of the Silk Roads in the second century BCE;

4. Intensified cross-cultural interaction along the Silk Roads;

(examples: hill censers; exotic animals; images of the Buddha)

5. The fall of Han and the Xianbei conquest of north China;

6. The thriving religious practice of Buddhism during the Period of Division as the most important cross-cultural mediator;

7. Dunhuang Caves on the Silk Roads and the stylstic and iconographic fusion of Han Chinese and Indian/Central Asian arts;

> 7.1. The cult of Maitreya in early Dunhuang caves; ascension to heaven; iconic style (Caves 275);
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> 7.2. Narrative paintings in Buddhist art; Jataka; multi-episodic style (Caves 275, 285);
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> 7.3. Chinese and Indian iconographies combined; Asura, Mt. Sumeru, Gate to Heaven, Queen Mother of the West (Cave 249);

8. Buddhist art, imperial patronage, and political implication (Yungang and Longmen Caves); Buddha as symbol of the ruler;

[colossal scale; static posture; non-Chinese physiognomy and costume, etc.]

9. Sinicization in Yungang and Longmen art and its political context (Emperor Xiaowen's sinification reform)

10. From Indian stupa to Chinese pagoda