



before the modern era

examines the history of the silk road the name given to a series of three major trade routes and hundreds of smaller side roads by which goods were transported from china to countries and empires around the mediterranean sea and discusses the importance of the silk road in the exchange of information and ideas

the silk road was the contemporary name for a complex of ancient trade routes linking east asia with central asia south asia and the mediterranean world this network of exchange emerged along the borders between agricultural china and the steppe nomads during the han dynasty 206bce 220ce in consequence of the inter dependence and the conflicts of these two distinctive societies in their quest for horses fragrances spices gems glassware and other exotics from the lands to their west the han empire extended its dominion over the oases around the takla makan desert and sent silk all the way to the mediterranean either through the land routes leading to the caravan city of palmyra in syria desert or by way of northwest india the arabian sea and the red sea landing at alexandria the silk road survived the turmoil of the demise of the han and roman empires reached its golden age during the early middle age when the byzantine empire and the tang empire became centers of silk culture and established the models for high culture of the eurasian world the coming of islam extended silk culture to an even larger area and paved the way for an expanded market for textiles and other commodities by the 11th century however the silk road was in decline because of intense competition from the sea routes of the indian ocean using supply and demand as the framework for analyzing the formation and development of the silk road the book examines the dynamics of the interactions of the nomadic pastoralists with sedentary agriculturalists and the spread of new ideas religions and values into the world of commerce thus illustrating the cultural forces underlying material transactions this effort at tracing the interconnections of the diverse participants in the transcontinental silk road exchange will demonstrate that the world had been linked through economic and ideological forces long before the modern era

this gorgeously illustrated oversized book brings the history and cultures of the silk road alive from its beginnings to the present day covering more than 5000 years

celebrating the cultural heritage of the countries along the silk route this text explores the ancient trade route between europe and the far east more specifically between rome and

the old chinese capital of xian it examines the beautiful works of art discovered in each country and sets them in their historical and geographical context the author provides a comprehensive history of the silk road drawing freely on anecdotes and literary and historical sources he examines the lives of the merchants and other travellers who used this route vignettes and poems from the heyday of the great trading route punctuate a lively and colourful text which also features antonia tozer s evocative photographs

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in the recent years trade cultural exchange and transfer of knowledge in the indian ocean have come increasingly into the scope of various scholarly disciplines the previous perception that the exploitation of this sea did only start with the european colonial expansion at the end of the 15th century had to be abandoned the europeans absorbed the long existing structures rather than creating new ones this concept of the indian ocean as a coherent space of transfer is also adopted in this volume some of the articles were presented at a conference held in vienna while the others were supplied independently the contributions are arranged around the two poles represented by the western and the eastern part of the indian ocean especially iran and china but also other cultures and the manifold relations with the land based silk road are discussed the time frame ranges from the 14th to the 17th century

the silk road generally evokes images of places cultures and peoples linked by the exchange of exotic goods and fabled treasures the notion of the subject however often disregards the historical fact that the silk road routes functioned as a unique channel for spreading religious ideas culture and literature the personal or community beliefs of the silk road were changed radically as a result of the impact of external influences silk road footprints transnational transmission of sacred thoughts and historical legacy demonstrates that sacred communities interacted coexisted competed and influenced each other over long periods these include those local traditions that evolved in ancient china the middle east africa central asia korea and japan and the subsequent larger traditions that arose in the region judaism buddhism christianity and islam as well as the shamanistic and animistic traditions of various nomadic peoples the history of religions along the silk road is a

remarkable illustration of how beliefs and civilisations often reflect a broad pattern of synthesis rather than clash this book indicates that asia south southeast east asia and china one of the most pluralistic religious regions in the world has become a center of attention as a bridge between cultures ultimately the creative study of the silk road and religious transnationalism evidences the implication that the local groups have been developed under the new environment of sacred principles and traditions as well as political influence

from the great game to the present an international cultural and political biography of one of our most evocative compelling and poorly understood narratives of history the silk road is rapidly becoming one of the key geocultural and geostrategic concepts of the twenty first century yet for much of the twentieth century the silk road received little attention overshadowed by nationalism and its invented pasts and a world dominated by conflict and cold war standoffs in the silk road tim winter reveals the different paths this history of connected cultures took towards global fame a century after the first evidence of contact between china and europe was unearthed he also reveals how this remarkably popular depiction of the past took hold as a platform for geopolitical ambition a celebration of peace and cosmopolitan harmony and created dreams of exploration and grand adventure winter further explores themes that reappear today as china seeks to revive the silk roads for the twenty first century known across the globe the silk road is a concept fit for the modern world and yet its significance and origins remain poorly understood and are the subject of much confusion pathbreaking in its analysis this book presents an entirely new reading of this increasingly important concept one that is likely to remain at the center of world affairs for decades to come

this volume approaches china s belt and road initiative as a process of culturalization one that started with the silk road and continued over the millennium in mainstream literature the belt and road initiative bri has been portrayed as the geo economic vision and geo political ambition of china s current leaders intended to shape the future of the world however this volume argues that although geo politics and geo economy may play their part the bri more importantly creates a venue for the meeting of cultures by promoting people to people interaction and exchange this volume explores the journey from the silk road to belt road by analyzing topics ranging from history to religion from language to culture and from environment to health as such scholars academics researchers undergraduate and graduate students from the humanities social sciences and business will find an alternative approach

to the belt and road initiative

in the first 1000 years after christ merchants missionaries monks mendicants and military men travelled on the vast network of central asian tracks that became known as the silk road linking europe india and the far east the route passed through many countries and settlements from the splendid city of samarkand to the tiny desert hamlets this volume recounts the lives of some of the people who used the silk road and some of those who lived in the central asian towns along it during the 8th to the 10th centuries

stretching from the ancient chinese capital of xian across the expanses of central asia to rome the silk road was for 1 500 years a vibrant network of arteries that carried the lifeblood of nations across the world along a multitude of routes everything was exchanged exotic goods art knowledge religion philosophy disease and war from the east came silk precious stones tea jade paper porcelain spices and cotton from the west horses weapons wool and linen aromatics entertainers and exotic animals from its earliest beginnings in the days of alexander the great and the han dynasty the silk road expanded and evolved reaching its peak during the tang dynasty and the byzantine empire and gradually withering away with the decline of the mongol empire in this beautifully illustrated book which covers the china section of the silk road from xian through loulan korla turfan and khotan to kashgar and onwards to india jonathan tucker uses travellers anecdotes and a wealth of literary and historical sources to celebrate the cultural heritage of the countries that lie along the silk road and illuminate the lives of those who once travelled through the very heart of the world

this book focuses on prehistoric east asian maritime cultures that pre dated the maritime silk road the four seas and four oceans navigation system recorded in historical documents of ancient china origins of the maritime silk road can be traced to prosperous neolithic and metal age maritime oriented cultures dispersed along the coastlines of prehistoric china and southeast asia the topics explored here include neolithisation and the development of prehistoric maritime cultures during the neolithic and early metal age the expansion and interaction of these cultures along coastlines and across straits the two layer hypothesis for explaining genetic and cultural diversity in south china and southeast asia prehistoric seafaring and early sea routes the paleogeography and vegetation history of coastal regions neolithic maritime livelihoods based on hunting fishing foraging adaptations rice and millet cultivation and their dispersal along the coast and across the open sea and interaction between farmers and maritime oriented hunter fisher foragers in addition a series of case

studies enhances understanding of the development of prehistoric navigation and the origin of the maritime silk road in the asia pacific region

this first and only english translation of rong xinjiang s the silk road and cultural exchanges between east and west is a collection of 28 papers on the history of the silk road and the interactions among the peoples and cultures of east and central asia including the so called western regions in modern day xinjiang each paper is a masterly study that combines information obtained from historical records with excavated materials such as manuscripts inscriptions and artefacts the new materials primarily come from north western china including sites in the regions of dunhuang turfan kucha and khotan the book contains a wealth of original insights into nearly every aspect of the complex history of this region

a celebration of the cultural heritage of the countries along the silk route this book explores the ancient trade route between europe and the far east more specifically between rome and the old chinese capital of xian it examines the beautiful works of art discovered in each country and sets them in their historical and geographical context the author provides a comprehensive history of the silk road drawing freely on anecdotes and literary and historical sources he examines the lives of the merchants and other travellers who used this route and the way in which their activities related to the works of art that were created vignettes and poems from the heyday of the great trading route punctuate a lively and colourful book which also benefits from antonia tozer s exceptionally evocative photographs of landscapes and people chapters range from precursors and the manufacture of silk through china and central asia to rediscovery in the twentieth century and lost art of the silk road there is a glossary of foreign and technical terms as well as chronologies for each period of history for the main sections of the silk road and a bibliography and index jonathan tucker and antonia tozer are partners in both business and marriage they operate a gallery in st james london and are both former employees of spink and son where jonathan ran the indian and southeast asian department and antonia was a specialist in the chinese department they both share a passion for the culture and history of asia and much of their recent travel has been to research the silk road art and history

□□□□ the silk road in southwest china

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