

My Silk Road Journey:

Huang Jian



It is 1460 C.E., you are a devout Buddhist merchant from Beijing during the Ming Dynasty. You desire to journey west along the Silk Road for two reasons: first, to sell highly valuable porcelain to Arab merchants and second, to investigate the changes brought about in China and central Asia as a result of the success of Islamic empires. You join a camel caravan, and travel through the Gobi Desert to Dunhuang. During the travel you notice how much more difficult trading on this land route has become due to the Ming imperial court's fear of foreign intrusion and invasion, there has become greater military presence and an unwillingness to allow much exit/entrance in regards to the world outside Ming China. Still you finally arrive in Dunhuang, you take the opportunity to see the Mogao Cave paintings. After resting and resupplying, your group crosses the Taklamakan Desert and arrive exhausted in Kashgar. You spend some time exploring Kashgar, and speaking with the people about their religion of Islam. You then head on horseback through the Ferghana Valley to your next stop of Samarkand. After selling some porcelain goods there, you head south to Bamiyan to visit sites in what had been a center of Buddhism in Central Asia. You then head west by caravan to the city of Damascus in Syria, now occupied by the Muslim Ottoman Turks. You spend time there selling your porcelain to Arab merchants and speaking with Islamic scholars. Having accomplished both of your goals, you begin the journey back home.

Character 4 – Huang Jiang

Break down of required writing (more is fine, but this is minimum for your character):

- 2 paragraphs/3 images on who you are, your religion, the city you live in, and the dynasty you live under. Also talk about the goods (Ming dynasty porcelain) you are trading. And why you are taking this journey (okay to talk about planned destinations) including gaining knowledge about Islamic empires.
- 1 ½-2 paragraphs/2 images on traveling in a camel caravan and about the Gobi Desert.

- Mention that it's more difficult now to travel out of China since the Ming imperial government has more military posts on the border and thus there's more hassle trying to leave China.
- 1 paragraph/2 images on the city of Dunhuang (the buildings, the religion, the architecture, the kingdom/empire it's in, etc. – whatever is in the information on the website I provided for you) and the Mogao Caves
- 1 paragraph/1 image on crossing the Taklamakan Desert (would be again in a camel caravan).
- 1 paragraph/ 2 images about Kashgar (the buildings, the religion, the architecture, the kingdom/empire it's in, etc. – whatever is in the information on the website I provided for you) and the religion of Islam which is the dominant religion there.
- 1 paragraph/2 images about traveling by horseback through Ferghana Valley, arriving in the city of Samarkand (the buildings, the religion, the architecture, the kingdom/empire it's in, etc. – whatever is in the information on the website I provided for you).
- 1 paragraph/2 images about Bamiyan (the buildings, the religion, the architecture, the kingdom/empire it's in, etc. – whatever is in the information on the website I provided for you) and Buddhism in Central Asia
- 1 paragraph/2 images on the city of Damascus (the buildings, the religion, the architecture, the kingdom/empire it's in, etc. – whatever is in the information on the website I provided for you) and the Ottoman Empire that controls it, and what you do there.
- 1 paragraph/1 image where you reflect on your journey as you head home (people you met, cultures experienced, good times, bad times, hopes for when you get home, etc.)

Information about Buddhism:

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/religion/buddhism/buddhism.html>

Information about Beijing: <http://www.beijingtrip.com/facts/history.htm> and images of Beijing <http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/cities/china/beijing/beijing.html>

Information about the Ming Dynasty:

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/ming/ming.html>

Information about the Silk Road to China:

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/trade/trade.html>

Information on Camels of the Silk Road:

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/trade/trade.html>

Information on camel caravans on the Silk Road: [http:// www.cpamedia.com/trade-routes/silk-road-trade-transport/](http://www.cpamedia.com/trade-routes/silk-road-trade-transport/)

Information on the history of Dunhuang:

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/cities/china/dh/dh.html> and <http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/cities/china/dh/dhhist.html> Dunhuang Cave Art (Magao Caves): <http://www.silk-road.com/dunhuang/dhintro.html> and interactive guide to art of the Magao Caves <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2010/06/dunhuang-caves/caves-interactive>

Images of travel in the Gobi Desert

http://www.pbase.com/andrew_s_cheung/dunhuang_of_gobi_desert

Information about the Taklamakan Desert:

http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Takla_Makan_Desert

Information on Kashgar: <http://iranicaonline.org/articles/kashgar-kasgar-town-in-xinjiang>

Information about the history and pictures for the Ferghana Valley:

<http://www.orexca.com/fergana-valley.shtml> and customs of the people there <http://www.orexca.com/customs.shtml>

Information and images of Samarkand:

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/cities/uz/samarkand/samarkand.html>

Information and images of Bamiyan:

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/cities/afghanistan/bamiyan.html>

Information on Islam on the Silk Road:

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/religion/islam/islam.html>

Information about Syria and Damascus:

<http://www.syriagate.com/Syria/about/cities/Damascus/history.htm> Information and images of the historical sites of Damascus:

<http://www.syriagate.com/Syria/about/cities/Damascus/index.htm>

GENERAL RESOURCES ON THE SILK ROAD:

Modern Travel Journal Example: <http://www.jodypoesy.com/html/alterredbook.html>

Silk Road Travelers Maps (go to Silk Road Travelers, hit the arrow tab and scroll down to your traveler for map of where he traveled to):

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/maps/maps.html>

Information on Cities and Architecture of the Silk Road:

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/cities/cities.html>

Art and Culture from the Silk Road from the Art Institute of Chicago:
http://www.artic.edu/aic/education/trc/borrow/Selfguide_FINAL_new_.pdf

Cultures of the Silk Road:
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/timeline.html>

Religions of the Silk Road:
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/religion/religion.html>

Trade Routes of the Silk Road:
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/trade/trade.html>

Camels and Horses on the Silk Road:
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/trade/trade.html>

The Importance of Silk:
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/trade/trade.html>

Map of the Silk Road and images of goods sold on it:
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/trade/trade.html>

Cross-Cultural Exchange on art/goods produced:
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/exchange/exchange.html> (click on image of goods to the left for information on products)