Mapping the Silk Roads: for the UNESCO transnational serial nomination project
An ICOMOS thematic study
1. The thematic study

To consider whether certain sections of the Silk Roads, through the assembly of sites within them, are distinctive from other sections of the Silk Roads, in terms of being manifestations of particular geo-cultural systems, and whether a case could be made for considering the Silk Roads as a collection of WH properties, linked by a concept, instead of one single WH property.
2. THE DATA
The data

- Using existing material
- Academic research
  - Available maps, books, journals, conferences, bibliographies, internet resources, etc
- State HERS, Tentative lists, etc
- Existing initiatives & interest groups: Silk Roads, Trade routes, Ceramics, etc
Annex 4: A Silk Roads bibliography

Contents

Silk Roads thematic study: consolidated bibliography


Cohn-Wiener, E. (1930) Turan: Islamische Baukunst in I


Del, A. I., Tavernier, C. (2006) Utilization d'un réseau de polygones de Theissen pour la géolocalisation robuste de caravansérails décrits dans les récits anciens de


Autobiographies

Gyorgyeva, L. V. (1898) Goral zasorele. Verblyudo [City of the golden camel]. Frunze: Ilim


China:
Tentative lists
Many versions of maps
Ball's gazetteer of Afghanistan
Caravanserais: Old World Trade
Innermost Asia: Detailed Report of Explorations in Central Asia, Kan-su and Eastern Īrān (Stein 1928)
Karadong: on Serindia
Karadong: on Innermost Asia
List of archaeological sites of the Taklamakan and Lop Desert

This list is of the archaeological sites of the Taklamakan Desert and Lop Desert.[1][2][3]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sites</th>
<th>Prefecture/Municipality (modern)</th>
<th>Province (modern)</th>
<th>Comments (ancient place connections, cross-links and resources)</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Coordinates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achik-luk</td>
<td>Kuqa County</td>
<td>Xinjiang</td>
<td>In the vicinity of ancient Kucha. Exact location unclear. Images of the site on the DIP project. There are two Lion sculptures recovered from the site by the German Turfan expeditions. Images are verifiable here:. Right-looking Lion sculpture, Left-looking Lion sculpture</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>41°29′31″N 101°06′16″E</td>
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<td>Adara-ura</td>
<td>Inner Mongolia</td>
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<td>Afrasiab</td>
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<tr>
<td>Akkupi</td>
<td>Xinjiang</td>
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<td>Andek</td>
<td>Xinjiang</td>
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<td>Gansu</td>
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<td>Aratam</td>
<td>Xinjiang</td>
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<td>Astana</td>
<td>Turpan</td>
<td>Xinjiang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balawaste</td>
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<td>Xinjiang</td>
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</table>

Map of all coordinates from Google [show]
Map of first 200 coordinates from Bing [show]
3. Organising the data

GIS, DATABASES & THE INTERNET
**Silk Road sites**

**Site Name**: Dandan Oilik

**Country**: China

**Region**: Xinjiang

**Site Type**: City

**Significance**: 4

**SR categories**: 3. Outcomes

**UNESCO WHS**: Yes

**UNESCO TL**: Yes

**UNESCO in Danger**: Yes

**Nomination criteria**: Criteria (i), Criteria (ii)

**Notes**:

Wikipedia: Dandan Oilik (Chinese: 丹丹乌里克; pinyin: Dândānuřìkè), also Dandān-Uliq, lit. "the houses with ivory", is an abandoned historic oasis town and Buddhist site in the Taklamakan Desert of China, located to the northeast of Khoto in what is now the autonomous region of Xinjiang, between the Khoto and Keriya rivers. The central site covers an area of 4.5 km²; the greater oasis extends over an area of 22 km². The site flourished from the sixth century until abandonment before the Tibetan advance at the end of the eighth century. Rediscovered and partially excavated by a succession of foreign explorers from 1896, Dandan Oilik has yielded rich finds including manuscripts, stucco reliefs, painted wooden panels, and murals. A detailed survey was conducted in 2006 although much of the site remains unexcavated. Dandan Oilik is currently off-limits to the public.
<table>
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<th>Data Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Other_Site_Name</td>
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<td>Text</td>
<td>Regional groupings</td>
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<td>Yes or No if UNESCO Review site</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitetype_3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SR categories</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Infrastructure (facilitating trade and transportation); Production (of trading goods); and Outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Memo</td>
<td>Notes on the site</td>
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<tr>
<td>A_Pre c 330BCE</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Pre-Alexandrian, Pre-Mauryan, up until the warring states in China (Shang, Zhou etc.) Approx before 330CE</td>
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<tr>
<td>B_330BCE-225CE</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Seleucid-Parthian, Xin-Han dynasties. Approx between 330BCE-225CE</td>
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<tr>
<td>C_226-650CE</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Sassanian, Pre-Islamic, Pre-Tang (3 kingdoms, Jin [E and W] and Sui). Approx 226-650CE</td>
</tr>
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**Field Properties**

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4. SITES ALONG THE SILK ROADS
Wide range of sites & landscapes

- The types of monuments, sites and cultural landscapes found along the Silk Roads have been categorized under:
  1. Infrastructure (facilitating trade and transportation);
  2. Production (of trading goods); and
  3. Outcomes (the results of contact and exchange)
Category 1 Infrastructure

Including caravanserais and inns; military posts, garrison stations and fortifications; bridges; irrigation systems; natural and cultural landmarks
Category 2 Production

- Sites reflect mining, metal working, manufacturing and handicrafts, and other industrial and production sites
  - Production sites - silk, porcelain, etc
  - Transfer of technologies - carpets, bridges, metal-working, vines, glass, etc
  - Exchange medicines
  - Movement religious ideas
  - Art - music, architecture, wall painting
  - Imports: Wine, carpets, horses, etc
• Difficult category
• Few sites
• However, many of the Silk Roads cities contained major production areas
Category 3 Outcomes

- Sites including trade cities, urban centres and settlements; religious, spiritual and ceremonial sites (including shrines, caves, tombs, sites of pilgrimage);
- and places of associations with political events, transfer of ideas, language, music, dance, poetry, etc.
The linking role of cities, towns & markets

- c 450 major historic towns & cities within study area/chronology;
- Ranging from mega-cities like Antioch, Merv and Chang’an, to substantial regional centres;
- OWTRAD settlement database has 2,456 in study area;
- Some of the larger/best surviving already nominated, but filling the gaps is complex - what criteria should we use to select?
4. ANALYSIS: ROUTES
Basic site locations & data
Historical Atlas Eurasia
Lots of routes plotted
At very different scales
• In some areas, especially extensive fertile zones or wide areas of grassland, there were probably a number of alternative routes through the landscape; all still negotiating the passage from node A to B.

• Paths may have changed, both over the centuries and seasonally: for example, fording a river at a different point depending upon whether it was the wet or dry season.
Approach: Nodes, route segments & corridors

1. identifying major **nodes** (large cities) along the Silk Roads;
2. identifying **segments** of routes between these;
3. and then broadening these out to represent the **corridors** of ‘movement and impact’ that took place between the nodes.
Node criteria: not an exact science ...

- **Size** – but in part, because size relates to other aspects of urbanism (function; agriculturally capacity of hinterland; scale of production/access to raw materials; ideological significance (rulers home town, major religious connections, etc.); etc.

- **Number of connecting routes**: but some major cities developed because they controlled a limited number of route options through a region.
The Southern Taklamakan
Routes & corridors

- Ak-Tebe Stepninskova
- Belovodsk
- Barskoon
- Betul Pass
- Aksu
- Kazigaha beacon tower
- Korla
- Luntai
- Turfan
- Kara Shahr
- Miran Chilk
- Wakhir Pass
- Sangiu Pass
- Khotan
- Rawak
- Melikawat
- Endere
- Charchan
- Gujrat
- Gujranwala
- Tebo
- Mazar Tagh
- Karadong
- Dandan Olik
- Harwan
The Way Forward

NOMINATION STRATEGY
Is the SR a single property?

Developing practical & achievable projects to foster inter-State party working
Approach

• Envisaging the Silk Roads as a number of World Heritage properties, linked by an overall framework concept
• More manageable serial nominations
• Progress at differing paces
• Still maintaining the concept of trans-national cooperation that lies at the core of this endeavour
Outcomes

• How can we protect such a diverse range of heritage?
• Capturing the infrastructure & outcomes – protecting a representative selection of the smaller sites – not just the most beautiful
• Building capacity
• & (re-)building communication