dices.

It must be emphasized that none of these issues will keep readers from understanding and appreciating the book and its contributions. But it is frustrating to find such problems in a book in which the author clearly has taken so much care to provide his readers with meticulous descriptions and observations of the materials, along with thoughtful analysis of those materials in their historical context.

Readers who are familiar with the field of Sogdian studies will wonder how Huber's book compares to Patrick Wertmann's 2015 *Sogdians in China: Archaeological and Art Historical Analyses of Tombs and Texts from the 3rd to the 10th Century AD* (Darmstadt: Verlag Philipp von Zabern). The two titles alone reveal that the authors are dealing with very similar topics and are focused largely on the same period. Both build their arguments from the archaeological record presented by the same tombs. Both are based on the authors' dissertations, although it is clear that Wertmann has modified his dissertation (Freie Universität Berlin, 2013) significantly in the process of creating his book. Wertmann's book thus is in some ways more inviting to the general reader, as it presents its information in a narrative form, while Huber's text retains the dissertation format of dividing everything into numbered (and sub-numbered) sections, emphasizing the scientific nature of the author's enterprise and presenting the supporting data as clearly and distinctly as possible. Each book seems well-organized for its purposes.

In the final analysis, although there is significant overlap in the two books, both authors have important ideas and information to present. With the addition of the online appendices, Huber's work is far more voluminous. Wertmann's, however, is easier to use in many ways, particularly for the non-specialist reader, and contains a rich collection of maps, drawings, and color photographs (pp. 219-334) that are of very fine quality. Many of the same illustrations are found in Huber's electronic appendices, but Wertmann's book excels in the presentation of important—and beautifully photographed—images from the tombs of An Jia (also called An Que), Shi Jun, and Yu Hong, as well as other types of material remains connected to Sogdian culture such as ossuaries and funerary couches. Huber's book will appeal to specialists who are eager to have a single source that contains a large amount of scientific data, presented clearly and systematically, while Wertmann's book will appeal to persons looking for a smoothly-presented and well-illustrated narrative. Both authors have much to tell us about Sogdians in China, and both of their books will be of interest and use to those drawn to the subject.

- Michael Drompp

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Hermann Kreutzmann. *Hunza Matters: Bordering and Ordering between Ancient and New Silk Roads*. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2020.

Hermann Kreutzmann is the recognised world expert on what he calls the "Pamirian Crossroads" and the "Wakhan Quadrangle." *Hunza Matters* is the latest in his impressive series of scholarly works on the region, and is the third in a trilogy that comprises the eponymous two first volumes (Harrassowitz, 2015 and 2017).

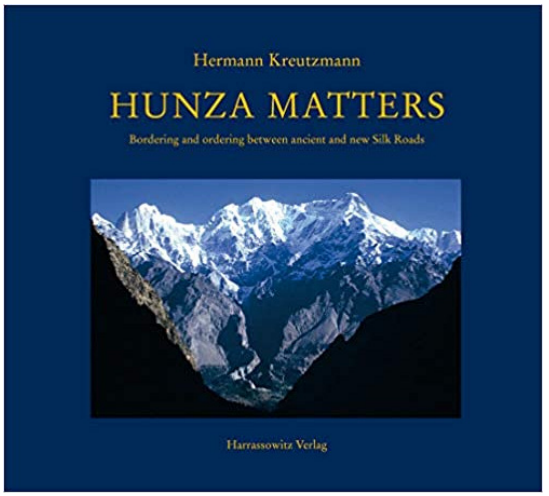
Kreutzmann has found a publisher the quality of whose work matches his own. Richly (even lavishly) illustrated with maps from Markus Hauser's Pamir Archive, superb paintings and portraits by Alexander Yakovlev[1] and hitherto unpublished archival photographs, together with many of his own, these three volumes complete—but probably do not terminate—his life's work that comprises, to date, more than 100 articles, chapters, and books.

The Avant-propos of *Hunza Matters* is a nostalgic reminiscence of his and his wife's more than forty

[1] The work of Alexander Yakovlev is virtually unknown in the West. His prolific landscape painting and portraits of people in the Northern Areas of Pakistan date to a very short period in 1931-32, when he accompanied a most unusual expedition (the so-called "Yellow expedition") sponsored by the car manufacturer Citroën to promote its P17 Kégresse track vehicles.

years' experience in and of the region,[2] initially inspired "by imperialism theory and dependency debates to explain relations between colonisers and colonised, and to analyse asymmetries, deformations and marginalisation in world economic relations" (p. 10) and subsequently by a deep love of and respect for the simple and hospitable (and ultimately wise) people of the region.

Despite—or perhaps because of—his scholarly approach, Kreutzmann's work is all about historical and political context. The history of Hunza has centered on control of and access to this remote region. From perceived Russian threats to British India in the 19th c., to contemporary concerns about the role of China in the region, the Northern Areas of Pakistan, and Hunza in particular, have been subjected to policies that had very little, if anything, to do with the interests of their inhabitants, a situation made worse by the stalemate in the Jammu-Kashmir conflict and the failure of the Pakistan government to settle the status of the region. He writes:



> The dispute constellation has left the region stigmatised as part of an unsolved South Asian crisis that has led to ambiguity under international law and created a constitutional limbo that limits political leverage and participation in decision-making. (p. 9)

The language is sometimes problematic for the non-specialist reader: "An alleged vectorial entropy could be understood in energetic categories as an accumulative unilinear direction of modernisation processes." The author rapidly returns, however, to the main focus of his work, namely, a refutation of the perception that "world history is moving from East to West, and Europe represents the final stage of world history per se" (p. 11). Kreutzmann explains that:

> Western supremacy emerged as an unchallenged and constitutional element of the modernisation process on a path without a return option. The 'demystification of Asia' implied a shift from European admiration of the culturally superior Asian continent to a region that could and/or should be forcefully conquered and economically dominated. ... The discourse about the Great Game between Russia and Great Britain has revealed actors and supporters, thinkers and policy-makers, and resulting academic affirmations of allegedly inevitable modernisation processes. (p. 11)

Kreutzmann has spent his academic career attempting to alter such world-views, and this volume is in many ways his testament from a rich and highly focused experience as educator and researcher. He observes that

> Shifting attention from the centres of decision-making and coastal ports to the interior margins and mountain peripheries allowed, for example, to place regions located in between imperial spaces and/or post-colonial states into focus. (p. 11)

The mountainous interface between Central and South Asia provided

> a rural setting in a region between the centres of decision-making. ... Suddenly the interface between China, Central and South Asia became quite a prominent space with historical depth, and the Karakoram Mountains—previously stigmatised as 'remote' and negligible—were suddenly and surprisingly placed in a central location of attention. Their geopolitical significance as contested spaces in boundary-making and providing exchange corridors was obvious even when perceived as sparsely populated valleys of insignificant economic importance. For our empirical undertakings the advantage of a mountain abode was evident: in a less crowded place there would be ample opportunities to get into close contact with actors and stakeholders. The chosen area had never been one of the mainstream examples for testing various theories in development studies and mountain research. (pp. 11-14)

At the same time, he writes:

> Beyond any academic discourse we were attracted

[2] Kreutzmann's wife, Sabine Felmy, a scholar in her own right, reinforces, through her work, her husband's emphasis on local cultural and survival traditions (see her *Märchen und Sagen aus Hunza*, Diederichs Verlag, 1986 and *The Voice of the Nightingale: Personal Account of the Wakhi Culture in Hunza*, OUP Karachi, 1996).

by the openness and hospitality that welcomed visitors in Pakistan. Travel opportunities provided access to rarely visited parts of the Hindukush, Karakoram and Himalaya that opened up a complex and fascinating new world to us. Available literature was quite limited and consisted of reprinted colonial travelogues and gazetteers. The body of literature was augmented by very few post-independence scholarly works from Pakistan, some anthropological studies from international researchers and a growing number of esoteric and popular accounts. The marketing and popularisation of the Hunza myth were coordinated by the authority of the *mir* of Hunza and his relatives who enjoyed the help of diplomats, journalists, travellers, writers and filmmakers. Providing a monopolistic protective screen to any visiting guest, he succeeded in promoting himself as a benevolent ruler in a happy country of centenarians[3] devoid of crime and disease, thus supporting the expectations of searchers looking for and finding a Shangri-La as a self-fulfilling prophecy. (p. 14)

Historical Perspective

Hunza Matters corrects these myths and redefines the historical and contemporary perspective:

> By the middle of the 19th century, the Hunza road seemed to represent the hope for an alternative access from Kashmir to Kashgar and an opportunity to control a larger area of the northwest of the continent. British India and Kashmir were the dominant forces in this endeavour to enter an area that had managed to maintain its autonomy by preserving a difficult physical approach.[4] (p. 59)

The Russians, however, were rapidly expanding their influence and control in Central Asia, and the prospect of a Russian attack on India seemed increasingly plausible, despite the manifest impracticability of the local "roads." Even Francis Younghusband, the archetypal Great Game player, considered that the route could not be declared practicable for laden animals; moreover, "Hunza cannot support a single man of the garrison," and he was convinced that the Russians could never send more than 500 or 600 soldiers through the Hunza valley and that their window of activity would be limited to four months at these altitudes (p. 79).

Kreutzmann comments:

> Nevertheless, the promoters of a more active involvement and 'forward policy' interpreted the road conditions quite differently. Many authors supported the view of imminent danger.[5] (p. 80)

The Great Game

These fears were exacerbated by the *mir* of Hunza's warm reception in 1888 of a visit by a Russian officer. The officer in question, Colonel Bronislav Ludwigovich Grombchevsky, claimed to be on a private journey, but his "visit only contributed as a prerequisite for the hawks of the *raj* to promote an immediate conquest of Hunza and Nagar" (p. 94).

Kreutzmann gives credence to Grombchevsky's claim that his visit was private, but alarm bells had sounded and a military force was sent into Hunza in 1891. The campaign lasted less than a month; the *mir* fled to China and his half-brother was installed as a British puppet. Kreutzmann notes:

> The military defeat and the loss of sovereignty reversed the attitudes of the inhabitants of the valley towards the British. (p. 93)

Subsequent wiser counsels led to the 1907 border agreement between the British and the Russians. As Kreutzmann observes,

> The successors of these last warriors of the Great Game enjoyed a professional form of cooperation. The mountain area, which had functioned as a buffer zone between British India and Russia, now became an area of common interest and communication. (p. 96)

However, much changed with the October revolution in Russia. From 1893 a track from Osh in Kyrgystan had been created to supply the Russian base in Murghab in the Pamirs,[6] but, in 1933, under

[3] One of my colleagues at the Aga Khan Foundation recounted having met an ancient inhabitant who proudly announced that he was 85. Two years later, my colleague overheard the same inhabitant describing to a tourist that he was 95. Confronted on it, he replied that "the tourists like it better that way."

[4] The 3rd century Chinese traveller, Yu Huan, confirmed the difficulty of the routes to the West: the southern branch went "through the Congling [the Pamirs], and through the Xuandu [the "Hanging Passages"].

[5] See Robert Middleton, *The Great Game - Myth or Reality?*, University of Central Asia, Research Paper #1, 2019 (https://www.ucentralasia.org/Content/Downloads/CHHU%20RP%201.pdf).

[6] In 1914, the Russian Commander in Khorog, Grigori Andreevich Shpilko, arranged the transport of a piano from Osh

the Soviet régime, a fully paved road was opened between Osh and the town of Khorog, the new capital of the Soviet Pamirs. These Soviet infrastructure achievements obliged the British to redefine their strategy:

> It took three decades to change the public attitude and opinion towards a highly competitive drive to win the loyalty of the Hunza rulers and to present the results as the winning streak in a gentlemen's game in the Karakoram. The political implications had been controversially discussed in diplomatic and intelligence circles. Finally, the proponents of the control of the 'Northern Frontier' had succeeded in integrating the mountain region into British colonial control limited by international boundaries; consequently, they would promote the implementation of an adequate infrastructure. (p. 97)

Infrastructure

If the Russians and Soviets were single-minded in the development of the infrastructure in the Pamirs and devoted at an early stage vast resources to its development and expansion, the British (and, subsequently, the independent state of Pakistan) were more ambivalent. Initially conceived with a view to "pacification" of the region, improved road connections to Hunza raised inevitably the question of China's intentions in the region. From the time of the 1907 Anglo-Russian border settlement, possible Russian invasion plans were no longer an issue. However, "the gateway to the Karakoram mountains was wide open, though on difficult tracks in a challenging terrain. ... Consequently, the British authorities were contemplating another upcoming competition: how to cope with it and what would be the best and safest link between British India and the Kashgar oasis" (pp. 102-3).

In 1928, Sir Evelyn Howell, Foreign Secretary to the government of India, described the main considerations as military and stated British policy "to make the Hunza, little Gujhal road, good enough for a trickle of trade but not so good as to destroy what was then held to be the strategical factor" (p. 124).

The establishment of air communications from Dushanbe (then Stalinabad) to the Pamirs in 1932 led the British to intensify work on air links from the South to the Northern Areas:

> Anglo-Soviet competition and different air routings became obvious when in the summer of 1935 an outbreak of 'pneumonic plague' occurred in Kashgar. ... The British authorities flew the serum from India to Gilgit airport from where runners took fifteen days to deliver it at Kashgar. ... Russian medicine and specialists ... were flown from Moscow via Tashkent and had the easier access by avoiding the high and steep Himalayan and Karakoram passes. (p. 126)

However,

> In general, air lifting with the state-of-the-art technology of the first half of the 20th century could not fulfil the demands of material transport required for the supply of administrative and military stations, and for trade and commerce. In awareness of the immediate demand for modern traffic in the mountains, the quest for roads on the ground continued as imperial demands for territorial control grew and political confrontation in Central Asia increased. Flight connections did not take off on a big scale until today. The two operating airports in Northern Pakistan—Gilgit and Skardu—annually served between thirty to forty thousand civilian and military passengers at the beginning of the 21st century. The hope of replacing ground transport by air services never materialised. (p. 129)

In the absence of a motor road, the British authorities did, however, initiate some development activities, although half a century later than their Russian counterparts in the Pamirs.[7] In 1936, a "Rural Uplift Gilgit" program was started, which Kreutzmann describes as "the beginning of rural development activities that are not far off from measures and packages that are discussed in recent programmes" (p. 150). Both imperial powers pursued similar ideas in fostering local agricultural production, but

> in terms of transport infrastructure they were heading in different directions. After the October Revolution in the neighbouring Soviet Union the commencement of reforms and infrastructure devel-

to Khorog. It was brought by cart on the track to Murghab, and then the remaining three hundred kilometres by some twenty bearers. It now has pride of place in the Khorog museum.

[7] See Robert Middleton, *Russians in the Great Game*, University of Central Asia, Research Paper #2, August 2019 (https://www.ucentralasia.org/Content/Downloads/CHHU-RP2.pdf).

> opment posed significant ideological and political challenges in an environment where British India was not leading technological advancements, especially when it came to motor roads and railways.[8] (p. 151)

China-Pakistan Relations

At the same time, for yet different reasons, Hunza again became central to British strategical thinking. As Kreutzmann observes,

> The 1930s developed into a period of turmoil and rebellion in Xinjiang. During this exciting time, the trade routes between British India and Xinjiang were often interrupted or closed. Trade from Gilgit to Yarkand more or less ceased to exist; so-called Indian traders—Shikarpuri, Pathan, Kashmiri and sometimes Afghans—lost their properties, were expropriated and expelled by Xinjiang's Soviet-backed warlord Sheng Shicai. Regularly refugees would cross the Kilik and Mintaka passes on their exodus from Xinjiang and find their first shelter in Hunza before proceeding to Gilgit. The British authorities had urged *mir* M. Nazim Khan to terminate his loyalty to the Chinese authorities in Yarkand and to abandon their annual gift exchange. The reasoning was not much concerned with Hunza itself, but they feared that in the probably inevitable conquest by Soviet troops of Xinjiang, including the Taghdumbash Pamir, a confrontation could occur that was to be avoided by all means. The maintenance of buffer zones between British India and the Soviet Union would then collapse. (p. 155)

Questions inevitably arose concerning the loyalty of the *mir*. Once again, the development of Hunza was made subordinate to great power strategy.

Paradoxically, in the 1940s, strategic considerations led in the opposite direction:

> The issue of constructing a motor road was now embedded in a comprehensive strategy to backstop Guomindang rule in Xinjiang and fend off separatist Turkish movements. Consequently, the plan of having a trans-mountainous motor road matured. (p. 161)

Despite the obvious advantages for the people of Hunza, the plan never materialised because its completion would have been too late to provide any "substantial advantage to the prosecution of the war" (p. 165).[9]

Kreutzmann concludes:

> The voices of the affected mountain dwellers remained unheard: a constellation that has changed only little since. ... Favourable conditions for the implementation of such a costly and challenging project needed further changes in the structure of regional politics. The major road link between the Grand Trunk Road of South Asia and the Central Asian highways was realised only after Pakistan's independence and the Chinese revolution. Connecting the Grand Trunk Road with the southern Silk Road became feasible when Pakistan and China joined forces in a symbolic and strategic effort to fend off a common enemy. (p. 166)

The former Anglo-Russian confrontation was replaced by an enduring Indo-Pakistan conflict over the status of Kashmir. The conclusion of the Sino-Pakistan Frontier Agreement in 1963 gave impetus to the construction of the Karakoram (or China-Pakistan Friendship) Highway, begun in 1959 and opened in 1979. The current Chinese "Belt and Road Initiative" continues the same strategy, and today "Hunza occupies a special position as the hub for Central Asian trade and entrepôt for China" (p. 188).

If this is an indication of a new Great Game being played out in Central and South Asia, it is clear who already has the strategic advantage. Hunza is one of the main beneficiaries. Kreutzmann points out, however, that

> The impression prevails that a road that was built mainly for military and strategic purposes would only reluctantly initiate additional utilisations and value-generation on both sides. (p. 192)

Economic Development and Rural Support

During the short political career of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (1973-1979), the government of Pakistan took limited steps to improve the status of Hunza. In 1974, Bhutto decreed the end of the Hunza state and its merger with Pakistan, at the same time announcing reforms in land ownership. However, as Kreutzmann points out, "in Hunza and Nagar no land was distributed among the landless" (p. 187).

[8] By 1889, the Russians had already completed a railway line from the Caspian to Tashkent. As previously noted, a supply line from Kyrgyzstan to the Pamirs in the form of a paved road was opened in 1933. A similar connection from Dushanbe was completed in 1940.

[9] Quoted by Kreutzmann from a Memorandum by the "Government of India's Road Engineers," October 1944.

A major natural disaster in 2010 brought sharply into focus the neglect of Hunza by the central government authorities. On January 4, a massive rockfall blocked the Hunza valley at Atabad, causing 20 deaths and leading to the formation of a lake that effectively cut off human settlements to the north, leaving communities to cope as best they could. Kreutzmann comments:

> This singular event was of a dimension that has affected all considerations about safety and security for habitations, impacted on activities in road-building, communication infrastructure and supply lines, and created a challenge for public disaster management institutions that seemed unprepared for such events and have been blamed and cursed for their disastrous performance since. (p. 223)

In the absence of adequate government support, the World Food Programme and a number of Aga Khan agencies stepped in to support the residents until water transport services could be organised on the new lake.

This highlights the fact that the substantial presence in Hunza of Aga Khan institutions since 1946 (schools, health, house-building, and finance) and, from 1982, the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme, has greatly contributed to modernization of the region and improvement in living conditions. Kreutzmann's unrelenting focus, however, is on the individual human component of development, which he does not find in "conventional" approaches that emphasise isolation as a negative factor rather than a component of cultural identity. He questions the

> conventional approach [that] followed a dual principle in attributing societal stagnation to 'tradition'. In a first approach it did not distinguish among mountain people between poor and rich, between landed and landless, between members of different denominational groups with their own communal setups and structures. ... A description of isolation is quite surprising and seems out of date in an environment where people have been traders and migrants for centuries. (p. 257)

In the same context, Kreutzmann criticizes the guiding philosophy of the Aga Khan network:

> The transition from 'cooperative capitalism' to 'corporate globality' might be an appropriate description for how change is promoted and implemented in Gilgit-Baltistan and in Hunza in times of globalisation and neoliberalism. The advantages of community-based cooperatives seem to have translated into communication and network structures that have transgressed national bound¬aries and spanned continents. The historical and political contexts have changed from colonial to post-colonial; nevertheless, the forces of developmentalism and modernisation persist and prevail. (p. 461)

And again:

> The colonial-communal joint venture has critically influenced developments within Hunza and external interventions during the imperial age. The evidence presented here has underlined how the two major forces of modernisation—British colonialism and Ismaili reformism—have shaped an assemblage of various fields. Modernisation as a developmentalist model disguises itself in various designs as the blueprint for change; the powerful concept not only survived the fight for independence but also seems to have remained the major structuring agency and successful tool reinforced by private and state-run development programmes. (p. 462)

For Kreutzmann,

> Modernisation is here reflected as leading to inertia although modernisation theory claims to overcome stagnation in 'traditional' societies. The effort to provide a role model for modern development that is applicable in all Ismaili settlement regions might have caused a highly abstract modernisation strategy that has neglected local conditions and preferences for the purpose of main-streaming a diverse community along the lines of the dominant *khoja* group.[10] (p. 462)

It is not my intention in this review to take part in a debate about development policies, or "developmentalism." I would note, however, that it is easy to ignore three central factors in the strategy of the Ismaili Imam. In the first instance, by not limiting his interventions to his own followers, the Aga Khan has reduced conflict potential between the religious communities in the areas where his institutions work, thus protecting the interests of the Ismailis who are everywhere in a minority in the national and regional context.[11] Secondly, by his high-profile presence as a "head of state without a

[10] In mentioning the dominant "khoja" group, Kreutzmann refers principally to the Ismaili community in the urban centres of the sub-continent—and immigrants from this community to western countries.

[11] Except in the Tajik Pamirs.

state," he has access to centers of power that would not otherwise take cognizance of the needs of remote communities. Lastly, and perhaps most important, secular western authors very much underestimate the role of faith in mobilising communities: the rapid transition from Soviet farms to private farming in the Pamirs (and accompanying significant crop yields and improvements in self-sufficiency), for example, was greatly aided by the conviction that this was the will of the imam.

I have seen with my own eyes the increased dignity and self-confidence of the communities served by the Aga Khan network in the Northern Areas of Pakistan, in the Pamirs of Tajikistan, and in Gujarat. We are here at the heart of the philosophy of development. At its simplest level, from my own dialogues with villagers in the Pamirs there emerged clear and unprompted priorities for communities: adequate food ("there is a danger of famine, help us increase our crop production"), electricity ("otherwise we live like animals, following the sun" and "our children die on the steep slopes collecting firewood"), water supply ("we women have to walk long distances to fetch water"). At one level, it can indeed be argued that modernization leads to a loss of specific cultural identity: supply of electricity turns on the TV sets and people sing and dance less; market forces create societal tensions; the walk to the river was an opportunity for discussions among women that may now be lost. At another level, the definition of Aga Khan program objectives is today firmly based on the express wishes of the people in the target areas.

It is true that, in the Tajik Pamirs, the Aga Khan Foundation started with a much more egalitarian society with less social stratification and a higher level of local education, both resulting from Soviet policies. This facilitated an open and participatory dialogue. Kreutzmann's argument is that in Hunza it has taken much longer to weaken entrenched hierarchical and authoritarian structures that date from pre-colonial times and were reinforced during the colonial period. He argues that, in the past, the Aga Khan institutions and their *khoja* leadership may have, perhaps unintentionally, reinforced these structures:

> In terms of participation, the process of implementing new rules and regulations conflicted with inherited power structures and traditional influence by elite groups. (p. 460)

More recently, these institutions have "offered well-educated and trained people opportunities to influence their chances of prosperity and well-being; besides politics, this was the most effective avenue for social mobility and transformation" (p. 460). Many choose to return and put their acquired skills at the disposal of their community—this is the most powerful agent of change.

The title chosen by Kreutzmann is a play on words that declares his intentions: for him, indeed, Hunza matters.

- Robert Middleton

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***The Sogdians: Influencers on the Silk Roads*. A digital exhibition hosted by the Freer and Sackler Galleries, part of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. http://sogdians.si.edu**

This digital exhibition launched in April 2019, but it is still interesting to invite readers to explore the incredible depth and width on offer here, which may not be apparent at first sight to everyone.[1] This is the first exhibition on the Sogdians in any format (as we shall see below, the project started as a real exhibition). I am not sure whether this digital exhibition has received sufficient publicity, although it was announced on several scholarly blogs and platforms. It is extremely important and very enjoyable to view, and the result of years of very carefully weighed work by the best scholars in this field.

[1] This project has been curated by Thomas Wide (Smithsonian Institution), Judith A. Lerner (Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, NYU), and Kimon Keramidas (XE: Experimental Humanities & Social Engagement, NYU). The exhibition team has comprised Sana Mirza (Freer|Sackler), Julie Bellemare (Bard Graduate Center), and Matthew Dischner (independent scholar). The initial idea for this project came from Julian Raby, Director Emeritus of the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery. See also https://asia.si.edu/the-sogdians-influencers-on-the-silk-roads/