

The World of Xuanzang and Silk Road

By Aming Tu

The project will display Chinese culture. This rich culture reached a peak in the Tang dynasty (618-907 AD), so this era has been selected as the background for the digital museum. One of best model of the culture interchange of Eastern and Western regions in Tang dynasty is Xuanzang's *A Record of the Tang's Western Regions*. There is a kind of similarities of the information interchange between the ancient Silk Road and today's World Wide Web . Through the comparison of the history and today, we can understand the universal necessary of culture interchange and enhance the international horizons and admirable courage of Master Xuanzang.

Another important content of the project will be to use the popular novel *Wukong Monkey Travels to the West (The Monkey King)* as a reference to stimulate users' interest. In other words, the project plans to use the historical Record of the Tang's Western Reaches as a base, contrasted to the popular *Wukong Monkey*. Using this beloved story will take advantage of the Internet's influence to actively promote the digital museum plan. This will be different from traditional scholarly research projects, because it will be available to both educational organizations and society at large.

The project will keep the aim of primary project of digital museums, and will be aimed at both society in general and educational organizations. We will refer related websites, and rectify certain failings, such as being overly specialized, being boring, having insufficient data, or not meeting the digital museum format. Therefore, Xuanzang's *A Record of the Tang's Western Regions* will be used to show the comparison of the cultural exchange of the history and today, to promote users' international horizons. Adding *Wukong Monkey* will stimulate users' interest.

Simply put, the project has these goals.

First, to establish a multimedia information digital social science museum based on Xuanzang's Record of the Tang's Western Reaches. Multimedia digital information includes three dimensional geographical models, information concerning geographical changes, historical materials, multimedia data, relics, and literature.

Second, using the Tang and Central Asia, Chinese and Indian cultures as background, the site will cover educational and research functions to link social science research and information technology in a social science digital museum.

Third, based on the popular appeal of *Wukong Monkey*, a lively multimedia show will attract a wide variety of viewers to the digital museum. People may use the Internet to travel across time and space as they learn. The great variety of the contents of the digital museum will provide good supplementary material for grade school and high school students' history, geography, and social sciences. This lively presentation will arouse students' interest in learning.

Fourth, the geography and relics of Central Asia will help to establish information technology for other social science digital museums, such as knowledge banks, geographical information systems, and information retrieval, display and dissemination.

The Digital Museum has eight themes:

- (1.) *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions* (大唐西域記 *Da Tan Xi Yu Ji*)**
- (2.) *A Journey to the West* (西遊記 *Xi You Ji*)**
- (3.) The Silk Road**
- (4.) Historic Collection (art/music)**
- (5.) Interactive Learning**
- (6.) Database Search**
- (7.) Reference Web Links**
- (8.) Buddhist Electronic Dictionaries**

URL: <http://go.to/silkroad>

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