

***Ancient Bronzes of the Asian Grasslands***  
**Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University**  
**January 21 – April 1, 2006**

**Teachers Guide**

This guide is to help teachers prepare students for a field trip to the exhibition, *Ancient Bronzes of the Asian Grasslands*; propose ideas to reinforce the gallery experience and broaden curriculum concepts; and offer ways to lead their own tours. Teachers, however, will need to consider the level and needs of their students in adapting these materials and lessons.

**Goals**

- ❑ To introduce students to the culture of the ancient nomadic peoples of the Asian grasslands, or steppes.
- ❑ To introduce students to the art of the ancient nomadic peoples of the Asian grasslands.
- ❑ To introduce students to the major themes found in the exhibition: Personal Ornament and Adornment; Tools for Survival: The Animal World; and the Spirit World.

**Objectives**

Students will be able to

- ❑ Identify characteristics of the art of the ancient nomadic peoples of the Asian grasslands.
- ❑ Discuss how individual objects relate to the major themes found in the exhibition.
- ❑ Explore use and meaning of objects through observation and inference.
- ❑ Discuss the role of archaeology in learning more about the objects in the exhibition.

**Preparing for a Self-Guided Tour**

- ❑ If possible, visit the exhibition on your own beforehand.
- ❑ Using the images (print out as overhead transparencies, print out sets for students, create a bulletin board, etc.) and information in the teacher packet, create a pre-tour lesson plan for the classroom to support and complement the gallery experience. If you are unable to use images in the classroom, the suggested discussions can be used for the Museum tour.
- ❑ Create a tour
  - Build on the concepts students have discussed in the classroom.
  - Have a specific focus, i.e., the major themes listed above.
  - Be selective – don't try to look at or talk about everything in the exhibition.
  - Include a simple task to keep students focused.
  - Plan transitions and closure for the tour.
- ❑ Make sure students are aware of gallery etiquette.

## **At the Museum**

- ❑ Review with students what is expected – their task and museum behavior. Emphasize the “no touching” rule.
- ❑ Focus on the works of art. Emphasize looking and discovery through visual scanning (a guide is included in this packet). If you are unsure where to begin, a good way to start is by asking, “What do you see here?” Follow with questions that will help students back up their observations: “What makes you say that?” or “Show us what you have found.”
- ❑ Balance telling about a work with letting students react to a work.
- ❑ Use open-ended questions to guide students in looking and to focus their thinking on certain topics and concepts.
- ❑ Slow down and give students a chance to process.
- ❑ Respect all responses and deal with them.
- ❑ Be aware of students’ interest spans (usually about 40 to 50 minutes) and comfort.

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*The following information text was written by Trudy S. Kawami, Ph.D., Director of Research, Arthur M. Sackler Foundation. Suggested discussion and activities and other supporting materials prepared by the Hallie Ford Museum of Art.*

## **I. ABOUT THE COLLECTION**

### **Arthur M. Sackler Foundation, New York, New York**



**Image #1**  
**Arthur M. Sackler**

The Arthur M. Sackler Foundation was founded in 1965 by Arthur M. Sackler MD (1913-1987), a research psychiatrist, medical publisher, connoisseur and collector of art. Dr. Sackler established the Foundation to make his extensive art collections available to the general public. He once said, “Great art, like science and the humanities can never remain as the possession of one individual, creator or collector...great art and all culture belongs to all humankind.”

The Foundation collection was formed through purchases of art selected by Dr. Sackler and gifts from Dr. Sackler and his family. It consists of over 900 works of art ranging from Chinese ritual bronzes and ceramics to Buddhist stone sculpture and the renowned Chu Silk Manuscript, the oldest existing Chinese written document.

Since 1973, the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation has organized numerous exhibitions of the Foundation’s collection and the Arthur M. Sackler Collections that have traveled extensively throughout the United States and abroad. It has also published eleven scholarly art catalogues of the Arthur M. Sackler Collections. The Foundation has donated art to museums in the United States since its inception. Currently the Foundation has works of art on loan to many museums, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Washington, DC; and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

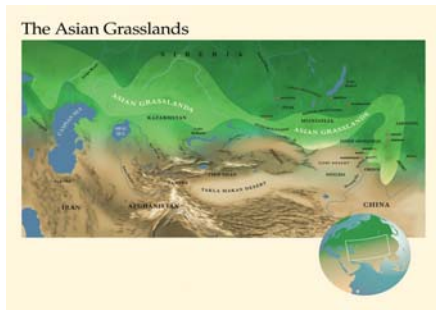
## How The Sackler Steppes Collection Was Formed

Most of the pieces in this exhibition were acquired in China during the 1920s and 30s by American teachers and medical missionaries, EK and Grace Goodrich Smith, and William and Isabel Ingram Mayer. Other pieces were originally owned by Dagny Carter, author of several books on Chinese art and widow of the missionary and China scholar, Thomas F. Carter, and by the German diplomat Walther Dietrich Hoops. These early collectors lived and worked in northern China and Inner Mongolia, were fluent in Chinese and had a deep interest in the ancient cultures of China.

Dr. Sackler acquired these historic collections from the late 1950s to the mid-1960s. *Ancient Bronzes of the Asian Grasslands from the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation* is the first comprehensive look at these important pieces.

- ❑ Discuss collecting and ask students about their own collections. When and why did they start collecting these objects? How did they obtain them? Have each student write an introductory label to an exhibition of his or her collection.
- ❑ Discuss Dr. Sackler's statement, "Great art, like science and the humanities can never remain as the possession of one individual, creator or collector...great art and all culture belongs to all humankind." Do you agree with this philosophy about art? Why or why not?
- ❑ To learn more about the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation, go to **[www.arthursacklerfdn.org](http://www.arthursacklerfdn.org)**

## II. THE PEOPLES OF THE ASIAN GRASSLANDS



**Image #2**  
**Map of the Asian Grasslands**



**Image #3**  
**Steppe Dweller**

The Eurasian grasslands, also known as the steppes, cover a region extending from northern China westward through Mongolia to the plains of Eastern Europe. This exhibition focuses on the eastern or Asian steppes, whose rolling grassy plains are punctuated by snow-topped mountain ranges like the Tien Shan (Heavenly Mountains), and deserts like the Gobi and Taklamakan. The eastern steppes were home to a remarkable culture, whose art, richly decorated with animal motifs, is only now beginning to be understood by scholars. The bronze ornaments, weapons, tools and vessels presented in this exhibition, provide a glimpse into the lives of the ancient peoples of the steppes including their work, dress, spiritual beliefs and social structure.

In 2000 BCE\* villages of farmers, hunters and fishermen populated the grasslands. By 1400 BCE many people left their villages to range widely over the steppes, managing herds of sheep, goats, cattle and horses. They sold meat, wool and leather to people living in the cities of Asia, and became increasingly dependent on the settled population for agricultural produce and manufactured goods. Horses, first domesticated in the steppes, were integral to this new way of life. They allowed the herdsmen to range farther for grass, and to manage larger flocks and herds. By 900 BCE the steppe dwellers, now legendary as riders and breeders, began to supply horses to the empires of eastern and western Asia. The famous trade routes linking Asia and Europe in ancient times, such as the Silk Road that connected China and Rome, passed through the grasslands. The steppe peoples guided and supplied the trade caravans that followed these routes, playing an essential role in the transportation of goods and ideas between east and west.

The steppe peoples were pastoralists who traveled to specific regions in a seasonal cycle to provide grazing land for their livestock. They had no permanent dwellings, living instead in portable, tent-like structures (the modern equivalents of these shelters are Turkic *yurts* and Mongolian *gers*).

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\* A Note about BCE and CE. BCE (Before Common Era) is used instead of BC (Before Christ) and CE (Common Era) is used instead of AD (*Anno Domini*). This is standard in disciplines which are not a direct part of Western European history, like East and Central Asian studies.

Most likely the steppe dwellers were organized around family, clan, and tribal units, with the family being the smallest unit and the tribe the largest. Authority was awarded by consensus and tradition similar to modern tribal cultures. At times, charismatic leaders would emerge to unite the tribes into a large and powerful confederation, or to respond to threats from settled populations.

Though they belonged to different tribes and clans, and spoke several different languages, the people who lived in the Asian grasslands shared the same manner of living, dress, social organization and spiritual beliefs. They left few written records of their own, so some of our knowledge is based on the accounts of writers who were not part of their culture like the Greek historian Herodotus and the ancient Chinese chroniclers.

Most of our information comes from archaeological excavations carried out over the last thirty years by Chinese and Russian researchers. These excavations have focused on the large cemeteries that probably served as clan or tribal centers. To judge from grave goods, there was a fair amount of intermarriage between high-ranking individuals of different clans and tribes. We also know from Chinese historical accounts that their princesses were married to grasslands chieftains to secure allegiance and cooperation.

- ❑ Review basic map skills. Locate the general area of the Asian Grasslands on a contemporary map.
- ❑ Discuss the life style and culture of the ancient nomadic steppe peoples. Have students research the life style and culture of nomadic steppe peoples in contemporary Mongolia and compare to their ancient counterparts.\* How are they similar? How are they different?

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\* While the exact ancestry of the contemporary nomadic tribes in Mongolia is debated, their traditional culture, social customs, and religious beliefs reflect those of the ancient nomadic peoples who inhabited the Asian steppes.

### III. ARTS OF THE EASTERN GRASSLANDS

The steppe dwellers made art objects that were easy to carry, pack or wear because of their mobile lifestyle. They favored bronze for its strength, light weight and resilience, and used it to make tools, weapons, vessels and ornaments to decorate their clothing. Steppe artisans made small bronze plaques and roundels in **abstracted** animal and bird forms. Other objects featured geometric patterns and shapes. Decorative one-and two-piece bronze buckles were another important steppe artifact. The horses that carried the steppe dwellers in life, and were often buried with them in death, were also decorated with bronze ornaments. Bronze is the best-documented artistic medium, but remains of wool and silk textiles, felt appliqués, wooden cups, leather bags, and birch bark containers have also been excavated at archaeological sites.

The only large-scale sculptures produced by the grasslands cultures are “deer stones” (Image #6), tall obelisk-like stones each depicting a simplified male figure.<sup>♦</sup> Details such as earrings, necklaces, and tools and weapons hanging from belts show us how the ornaments and gear were carried. Images of wild game, usually deer, were carved in low relief over the remaining surface. The deer stones were placed at cemetery sites, and more than 500 are known in Mongolia. Others have been found throughout the steppes as far west as Germany. Petroglyphs, simply incised figures of men, horses, and game animals cut into the rocks, have also been found in a few regions, like the Minusinsk basin in southern Siberia.

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<sup>♦</sup> Little is know about the deer stones. Scholars are still trying to determine their age, function and meaning within their social, cultural, religious or artistic contexts.



## Personal ornament: dress and decoration

Both men and women of the ancient steppes wore sleeved jackets, a garment they invented and that is still worn today. The jacket, secured at the waist by a belt, was usually made of leather, a sturdy practical material for people who were outside for extended periods. Trousers completed the men's dress; women usually wore long full skirts. Both men and women wore tall soft boots.

The steppe dwellers decorated their clothing with applied fabric, fur and metal ornaments, usually of bronze. The degree of decoration varied according to the rank, status and wealth of the wearer. High-ranking men and women were buried in clothing covered with small gold plaques. Belt buckles, which varied in size and intricacy of design, were also important in conveying status. The larger and more ornate the buckle, the higher the rank of the person who wore it.



**Image #4**  
**Belt Ornament**  
**Bronze**  
**Southwestern Inner Mongolia**  
**6<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century BCE**  
**Length 4.4 cm, height 1.7 cm, weight 7.6 g**



**Image #5**  
**Ornaments on belt**

This ornament has small bars on the back of each ball. It would once have been fastened onto a backing with dozens of identical pieces, and worn around the waist (Image #5). The sharply angled edge of each piece would have been interlocked, creating a flexible belt. The flattened and worn surface of the belt suggests that someone wore this belt for many years.

This ornament is an example of **indirect lost-wax** casting from a model on which two attachment bars were bent inwards.

- The following exercise explores what can be learned from an object through observation and inference, and how archaeological information can enhance our knowledge. How this object was used could only be speculated upon until others like it were discovered in archaeological burial sites, where several were found adorning belts worn by the deceased.<sup>\*</sup> This made it possible for archaeologists and scholars to reconstruct its purpose and even how it would have been worn.
  - Without giving any information about the object to students, show them Image #4, the belt ornament. Have them pretend they found this object in a shop that sells artifacts from the ancient steppes nomadic culture. Have them describe what they see (include the elements of art, such as line, shape, texture, etc). What do they think the object is? Why?
  - Using the information from “Peoples of the Asian Grasslands” and “Arts of the Asian Grasslands” above, make a list of things we know about the people, their culture, and their art. How might this object have been used by the ancient peoples of the steppes?
  - Describe for them what they can’t see – the small bars on the back of each bar. What is the purpose of these bars? Does this discovery affect student’s original answers?
  - Show Image #5 of the ornaments on a belt. Discuss the importance of archaeology in reconstructing cultures and the meanings/uses of their artifacts.
  
- Have students design their own belt ornaments that when duplicated would create interlocking geometric shapes.

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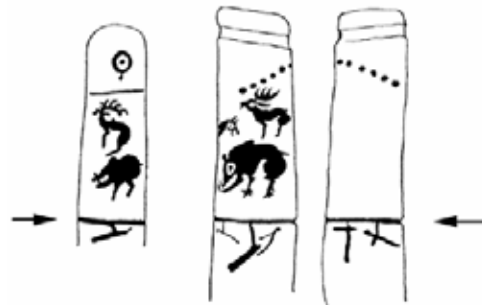
\* A variety of cultural remains have been discovered buried in graves with the deceased, including weapons, horses, and vessels.

## Tools for Survival

Every individual, male and female, needed a knife to cut vegetation, meat, leather, and wood; an awl or punch to make holes in leather; and cases in which to keep these pointed tools. Steppe dwellers used axes and adzes to cut firewood and fashion wooden bowls and cups, and to dig holes and pound in pegs for tents, canopies and animal tethers. For hunting they used bows and arrows tipped with bone or metal points, as well as bow-cases and quivers. Sharp-pointed weapons, such as short swords and battleaxes, were relatively rare, probably because they had no use in daily life.



**Image #6**  
**Knife**  
**Bronze in laid with turquoise**  
**Northwestern China**  
**13<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century BC**  
**Length 31.8 cm, weight 235 g**



**Image #7**  
**Deer stones depicting belts hung with important tools and weapons**

This tool is a knife; it has only one cutting edge. Each circular pommel features an intricately cast roundel that appears to float in the center of the pommel. The roundel and the rowels that jut from the pommel are inlaid with small turquoise disks. The complex casting and decoration of this knife suggests that it may have been more for a display of personal status than for daily use. Notice the mold marks on the spike like projections. This indicates that the knife was made using the **piece-mold** technique.

- ❑ How do we know this is a knife and not a sword?
- ❑ Describe the knife using the parts of art. Discuss the **patina**. What do you think the knife looked like when it was new? Compare to how it looks now. Which do you prefer? Why? Find examples of other ancient objects (sculpture, pottery, bronze vessels) or ruins from a variety of cultures that we see today. Discuss how they may have

looked when they were new and how they look now. Again, which do you prefer and why?

- What can the object tell us about how it was used and who may have owned it? Why do you think it has a loop below the pommel? (to attach to belt – note this on the deer stone, which is a symbolic representation of the male) What about the slits (to be wrapped with leather or fabric)? What do the inlaid turquoise disk tell us about the object, and perhaps its owner?
- Show students the drawing of the deer stone (Image #7). Discuss the importance of the deer stone in learning more about the ancient steppe culture.

## **The Animal World**

The steppe dwellers depended upon both the domestic animals that they herded – horses, sheep, goats and camels – and the wild animals they hunted, especially deer, giant argali sheep, mountain goats and ibex. The powerful predators of the nearby mountains – leopards, Siberian tigers, bears and birds of prey – appear in their art. The representation of wild and domesticated animals in the personal ornaments of the steppe peoples illustrates their profound identification with the animal life around them.

Some animals were probably tribal or clan **totems**. Their image proclaimed membership in a specific social group. Fantastic animals like wolves with stag antlers and dragon-like creatures may refer to myths, epics and legends, aspects of religious beliefs now forgotten.



### **Image #8**

#### **Buckle Plaque**

#### **Bronze**

#### **Southern Siberia**

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE**

**Length 10.4 cm, width 6.1 cm, weight 67 g**

**Formerly collection of CT Loo, Paris**

The Bactrian camels and leafy vines on this buckle may indicate that the owner or his clan were involved in supplying camels and feed for the trade caravans which traveled the routes that linked ancient Asia and Europe. Note how the artist emphasized the distinctive heavy coat of the Bactrian camel that even today supplies the fine warm wool of camel-hair coats.

Belt buckles and plaques such as this were also important in signifying rank within the clan or tribe. For example, a person with a large belt buckle was presumably more important than a person with a smaller buckle carrying the same motif. The most prestigious buckles were cast gold; some were inlaid with colored stones. Below this ranked gold-covered bronze, followed by the silver-colored tin-coated bronzes. Most common were the plain bronze buckles.

This piece was probably cast from a wax model formed in a two-**piece mold**.

- Discuss the importance of animals to the ancient steppe peoples. Compare and contrast the role of animals, wild and domesticated, in ancient steppe culture to how animals are viewed in our culture today.
- Have students research the Bactrian camel and its importance to the Silk Road.  
**-[depts.washington.edu/uwch/silkroad/exhibit/trade/horcamae.html](http://depts.washington.edu/uwch/silkroad/exhibit/trade/horcamae.html)**  
**-[www.mongoliansculture.com/mhistory.html](http://www.mongoliansculture.com/mhistory.html)**  
**-[www.silkroadproject.org](http://www.silkroadproject.org)**
- Discuss the belt plaque as a symbol of its owner's occupation and/or place in society. What personal items do we have today that may serve the same purpose?
- Discuss **symmetrical balance** and **mirror image** as they apply to Image #8. Have students choose an animal that has special meaning to them and design a belt plaque depicting the animal as part of a symmetrical composition. The figure of the animal can be used more than once, as long as it is symmetrical. Use line and shape to create symmetrical decorative patterns within the plaque format. Younger students can use the "folded paper" technique to duplicate the image. For ideas, visit:  
**-[www.lessonplanspage.com/more/Science LA Art Math MD Butterfly Unit 7-Symmetry](http://www.lessonplanspage.com/more/Science%20LA%20Art%20Math%20MD%20Butterfly%20Unit%207-Symmetry)**  
**-[www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/elem/elem17.html](http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/elem/elem17.html)**

## The Spirit World

Steppe dwellers practiced **shamanism** to engage the spirit world. The shaman was a special individual, male or female, who linked the mundane, real world and the supernatural. To enter a trance-like or ecstatic state the shaman would chant, drum, dance, repeatedly jingle small bells, and inhale the fumes of psychotropic herbs. In this condition, the shaman could contact animal and human spirits and the forces of nature. Magical animal companions might serve the shaman as messengers and means of transportation. At times the shaman could also take on the shape of these animals. Shamans have been identified by their burial goods that included bells, jingles, rattles, and the small spoons with which to grind, measure and dispense the sacred herbs.



### Image #9

#### Finial with Bell

#### Bronze

#### Northwestern China

#### 12<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century BC

#### Height 11.6 cm, weight 120 g

#### Formerly collection of Dr. Walther Dietrich Hoops

This curved finial or pole top may have ornamented the tip of a shaman's staff. The bell announced the shaman's approach, and the terminal indicated the animal spirit, in this case a ram, that was the shaman's companion and messenger. The round cells of the eyes were probably inlaid with turquoise.

The bell was cast using the lost-wax process, then joined to a pre-cast loop that was cast into the finial. The finial has piece-mold marks down the back and inside the bell loop.

- ❑ Discuss shamanism as it relates to nature, natural objects, and natural phenomenon. Why would this belief system be so important to ancient peoples like those who lived on the Asian steppes?
- ❑ Have students describe the object and identify the animal depicted and how they think the object was used. Share with students how it was used.

- ❑ Discuss the role of animal spirits in shamanic beliefs and ritual, and the relationship between the shaman and his animal spirit. Why might the shaman have identified with this particular animal spirit?
- ❑ What kind of sound would this bell make? Clear and high? Low and dull? Try to replicate it using voice, instruments or everyday objects. What might be the significance of the use of bells, rattles and jingles in shamanic ritual? How might the repeated sounds enhance the experience?



## IV. GLOSSARY

**abstracted** referring to an image in which natural forms and objects are not rendered in a naturalistic or representational way, but are simplified or distorted to some extent, often in an attempt to convey the essence of the form or object.

**indirect lost-wax casting** lost-wax technique wherein a master model of the ornament is created and a mold is made of the master. Numerous identical wax copies are then made from this mold. These copies are then individually invested with clay, heated and cast. The result is multiple identical copies of the same piece. **See lost-wax casting**

**lost-wax casting** a technique used to make complex, three-dimensional bronze pieces. A wax model of the desired item is covered with a fine clay mold. This mold is heated causing the wax to run out or evaporate. The molten bronze is then poured into the clay mold, filling the space left by the melted wax. After the bronze cools, the clay mold is broken to reveal the metal figure within. Because the mold has to be broken, each lost-wax cast bronze is unique.

**mirror image** an image that is identical to another one except that its parts are reversed, as they would appear in a mirror.

**open mold** technique in which flat pieces without projections are cast in a simple open or one-piece mold. This mold is usually stone or a material resistant to the heat of the molten metal. The molten metal is poured into the mold and cools, shrinking a bit from the molds surface. When an open-mold is used, the décor is only on one side. The back or open face of the mold is plain and relatively flat. Since the mold remains intact and can be reused, many identical pieces can be made this way. **See piece mold.**

**patina** a thin layer of colors, usually green and sometimes reds or blues, that forms on copper or copper alloys such as bronze as a result of oxidation and corrosion.

**piece mold** another version of the open mold process that uses a mold with two or more parts to form one cast object. Because the edges of the mold do not meet precisely, the cast work will have raised ridges or mold seams marking the edge of each mold section. Although the metalsmith usually smoothes these mold marks, they often remain faintly visible. **See open mold.**

**Shamanism (shamanic, adj.)** the belief in the existence of individual spirits that inhabit natural objects (trees, rocks, etc) and phenomena (weather, sickness, death, etc.). The early shamanic religion of the steppe peoples was chiefly concerned with perpetuating the familiar cycles of nature, thereby ensuring the continuing life of people, animals and vegetation.

**symmetrical balance** compositional balance where the parts are organized so that one side duplicates, or mirrors, the other. **See mirror image.**

**totem** an object, animal, plant, or other natural phenomenon revered as a symbol of a clan or society.

## V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bunker, Emma C., et. al. *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, Trudy S. Kawami with John Stevenson, eds. The Arthur M. Sackler Foundation, New York, 1997.

Di Cosmo, Nicola. "The Northern Frontier in Pre-Imperial China," *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 BC*, Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy, eds., Cambridge University Press, 1999.

CD ROM: DIGART (digital gallery of art) Presents *Ancient Bronzes of the Asian Grasslands from the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation*. System, graphic script: DIGART (Andrej Sumbera, Zdenek Proks, Petr Kolinsky), Text: Trudy S. Kawami, Ph.D., Director of Research, Arthur M. Sackler Foundation; Photography: Andrej Sumbera, Zdenek Proks, Archive of the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation; Program: Zdenek Proks.

### **The following books are available through the Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service**

Cotterell, Arthur, *Ancient China (Eyewitness Books)*, Alfred A Knopf, Inc., New York. 1994  
Includes a chapter on the Silk Road.

McIntosh, Jane, *Archaeology (Eyewitness Books)*, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York. 1994

The following books are about the nomadic peoples of Mongolia, past and present. While the exact ancestry of the historic Mongols and contemporary nomadic tribes is debated, their traditional culture, social customs, and religious beliefs reflect those of the ancient nomadic peoples who inhabited the Asian steppes.

Brill, Marlene Targ, *Enchantment of the World: Mongolia*, Children's Press, Chicago, 1992.  
grades 7-9

Fisher, Frederick, *Festivals of the World: Mongolia*, Gareth Stevens Publishing, Milwaukee, WI, 1999.  
grades 3-4

Reynolds, Jan. *Mongolia: Vanishing Cultures*, Harcourt Brace & Company, Orlando, FL, 1994.  
grades 3-5

Taylor, Robert. *Life in Genghis Khan's Mongolia (The Way People Live)*. Lucent Books, San Diego, CA. 2001.  
grades 6-10

## **VI. VISUAL SCANNING**

Scanning is meant to guide the viewer in looking at a work of art. To avoid tedium, one may choose not to use all six points during each scanning.

### **1. SUBJECT**

Subject is usually a good starting place, but should one of the other points “speak” to the viewer first, by all means, begin there.

What is the subject of the work?

What objects can be identified or recognized?

If there is no imagery, the formal qualities may be the subject (line, shape, color, etc.)

### **2. COMPOSITION**

Identify the formal qualities (line, color, shape, form, etc.)

How are these formal qualities organized?

*repetition*

*contrast*

*balance*

*movement*

*scale*

*unity*

*visual rhythm*

### **3. TECHNIQUE & MEDIUM**

How was the work made? (painting, sculpture, prints, textiles, installation, etc.)

Does the particular technique contribute to the total? How?

### **4. EXPRESSION**

What is the role of cultural conventions? (Egyptian, for example)

What is the mood or emotional content?

What is the message or meaning?

What has the artist done to “send” the message?

### **5. CONTEXT (STYLES)**

How is the work a product of a particular culture?

Where and how does the work fit into history?

### **6. CRITIQUE**

Has the artist succeeded in expressing thoughts, emotions, and ideas? How?

Viewer’s response: like or dislike. Why?

How can a work that one dislikes still be a valid statement of the artist?

## **VII. COMMON CURRICULUM GOALS**

The suggested discussions and activities included in this packet can be used to support the following Common Curriculum Goals developed by the Oregon Department of Education. For specific benchmarks for your grade level check with your school district or on the Oregon Public Education Network (O.P.E.N.) [www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=53](http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=53)

### **The Arts**

#### Aesthetics and Criticism

- Use knowledge of technical, organizational and aesthetic elements to describe and analyze one's own art and the art of others.
- Respond to works of art, giving reasons for preferences.

#### Historical and Cultural Perspectives

- Identify both common and unique characteristics found in works of art from various time periods and cultures.
- Understand that the arts have a historical connection.
- Explain how a work of art reflects the artist's personal experience in a society or culture.
- Understand how the arts serve a variety of personal, professional, practical and cultural needs.

#### Create, Present, and Perform

- Apply artistic elements and technical skills to create, present and/or perform works of art for a variety of audiences and purposes.
- Communicate verbally and in writing, using knowledge of the arts to describe and/or evaluate one's own artwork.
- Express ideas, moods and feelings through various art forms.

### **Language Arts**

#### Writing

- Use a variety of written forms (e.g. journals, essays, short stories, poems, research papers) to express ideas and multiple media to create projects, presentations and publications.

#### Speaking and Listening

- Communicate knowledge of the topic, including relevant examples, facts, anecdotes and details.
- Demonstrate effective listening strategies.

#### Media and Technology

- Acquire information from print, visual and electronic sources, including the Internet.

## **Social Sciences**

### Geography

- Understand the spatial concepts of location, distance, direction, scale, movement, and region.
- Use maps and other geographic tools and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.
- Locate major physical and human (cultural) features of the Earth.
- compare and analyze physical (e.g., landforms, vegetation, wildlife, climate, and natural hazards) and human (e.g., population, land use, language, and religion) characteristics of places and regions.
- Understand how people and the environment are interrelated.

### History

- Understand recognize, and interpret change and continuity over time.

## **Math**

### Geometry

- Use visualization, spatial reasoning, and geometric modeling to solve problems.
- Apply transformations and use symmetry to analyze mathematical situations.



# The Asian Grasslands

