CAVE TEMPLES OF DUNHUANG
BUDDHIST ART ON CHINA’S SILK ROAD

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1. The cave temples of Mogao, carved into the cliff face along the Daquan River, are shaded by poplar trees planted in the twentieth century and surrounded by austere desert. The nine-story temple can be seen at the center. Beyond the plateau above the cliff rise the Mingsha Shan—the Dunes of the Singing Sands. Photo: Sun Zhijun. © Dunhuang Academy

2. The nine-story temple (Cave 96) houses a colossal Tang dynasty Buddha statue some thirty-three meters high. Mogao caves, Dunhuang, China. © Dunhuang Academy
3. Cave 85, view of the interior, Late Tang dynasty (848–907 CE). Mogao caves, Dunhuang, China. © Dunhuang Academy


7. Cave 275, detail of wall painting, Northern Liang dynasty (420–429 CE). Mogao caves, Dunhuang, China. © Dunhuang Academy


15. Guiding bodhisattva, ca. 850–900 CE, ink and pigments on silk with gold leaf. London, British Museum, 1919,0101,0.47. © The Trustees of the British Museum
16. Śākyamuni preaching on Vulture Peak, ca. 700s CE, silk thread on silk with hemp backing. London, British Museum, Ch.00260 MAS.1129. © The Trustees of the British Museum

17. Buddha preaching the Law, ca. 701–750 CE, ink and pigments on silk. London, British Museum, 1919,0101,0.1. © The Trustees of the British Museum

18. Vajrapāṇi, ca. 850–900 CE, ink and colors on silk. London, British Museum, 1919,0101,0.132. © The Trustees of the British Museum

19. Tribute horse and camel, ca. late 800s CE, ink and pigments on paper. London, British Museum, 1919,0101,0.77. © The Trustees of the British Museum