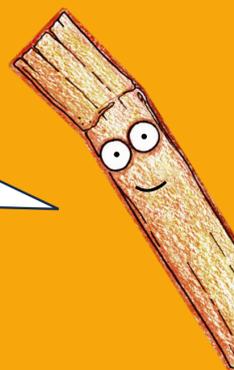


Dragon and Phoenix

Centuries of Exchange between
Chinese and Islamic Worlds

Young Visitors' Guide



اللوفا أبو ظبي
LOUVRE ABU DHABI



Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Limoges, musée national Adrien Dubouché), Mathieu Rabeau

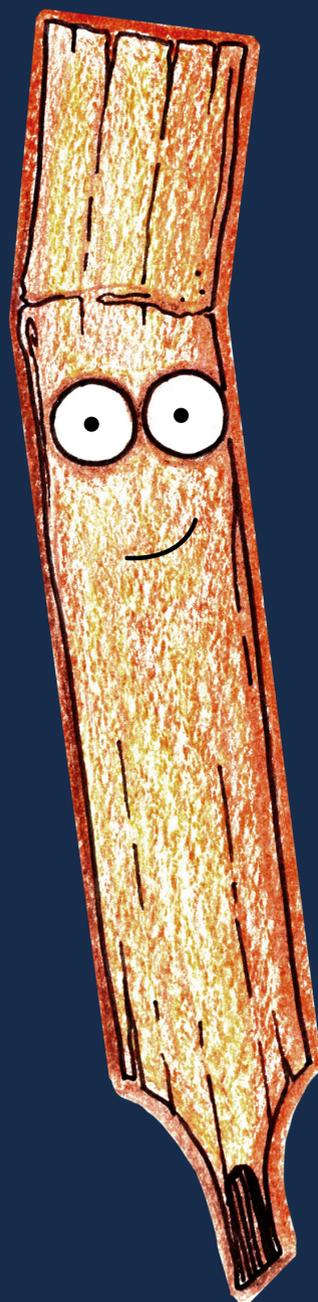


Hi there, it's Qalam. Thanks for joining me on a new journey.

I can't wait to introduce you to my friends as we travel side by side through different trade routes, by land and sea, across the Chinese and Islamic worlds.

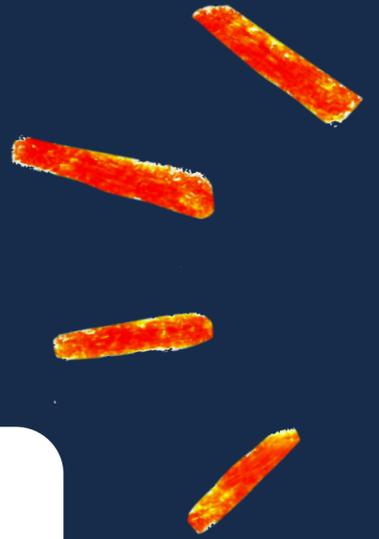
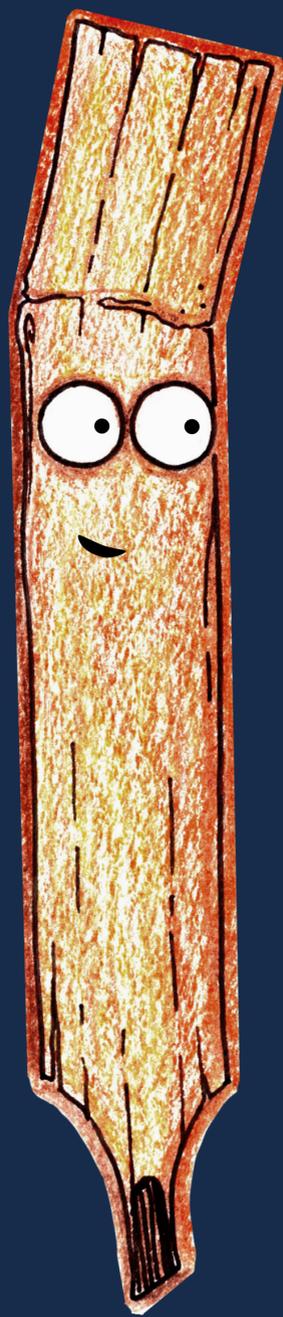
Help me learn about the cultural, material and ideas exchanges that took place between the two worlds.

Come along my friend and let's begin our journey!



I hear a loud grunt
down the road ahead.

It's Camel!



SECTION 0

Introduction



Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris), Thierry Ollivier

**Funerary figure (*mingqi*):
caravanner on a camel**
Northern China – 7th century,
Tang dynasty (618–907)
Terracotta covered with slip
and polychrome
Paris, Musée National des Arts
Asiatiques – Guimet, MA 6721

Hello Qalam, I have been waiting for your arrival. I know it was a difficult road to travel on foot. I can help you with your travels ahead.

I was used as a means of transportation in Central Asia to help nomadic merchants with carrying precious cargoes such as silk, spices, and fur for trade with China.

Although I was made in China, there are certain features of me that show I originate from Central Asia.

Look closer and try to identify them.

Answer:
a) The caravanner's bun hairstyle and costume indicates Central Asian origin.
b) The thick winter coat is a trait of a Bactrian camel from Central Asia.

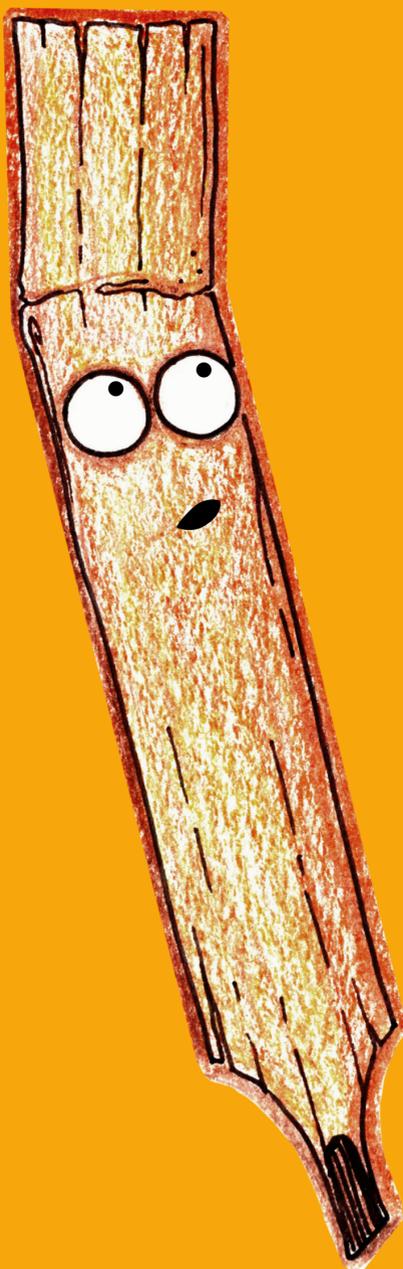


Let's continue our journey



I see something up in the sky, it looks like a majestic bird with an eagle beak, a feathered tail and is red like fire.

It's Phoenix!



SECTION 1

Travelling West

Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris), Thierry Ollivier



Phoenix-head pitcher with hunting scenes

China, second half of the 8th century, Tang dynasty (618–907)
Moulded terracotta, incision and glaze, three-colour decoration (*sancai*), D. 17 cm, H. 33 cm
Paris, Musée National des Arts Asiatiques–Guimet, MA 6587



Hi Qalam, I was on my way to China with merchants to support them travelling through the Arabian Deserts, along the Silk Road.

Because of my travels I have become famous in both worlds; where I am written about within Arabic and Chinese legends.

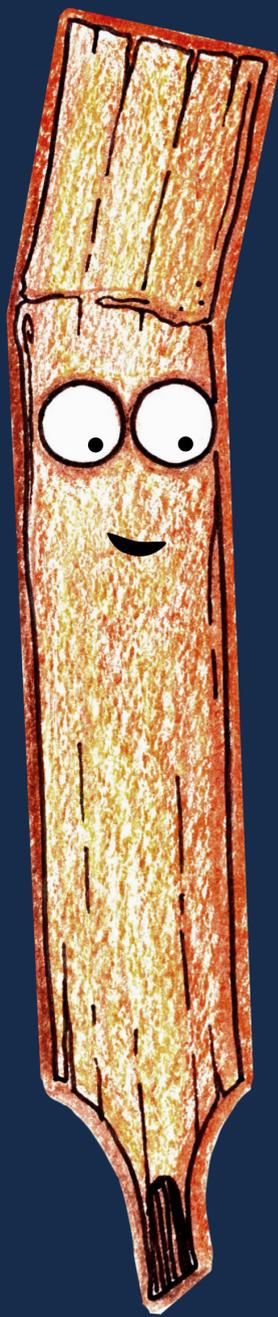
The tales talk about how I rise from the ashes of a great fire every 500 years symbolising a good omen. I was also used as a symbol to represent compassion and royalty.

What mythical animal would you choose to represent your beliefs and values? Why?

On to the next part of our journey!

Let's get on the dhow
boat and meet my
friend under the sea.

It's Goldfish!



SECTION 3

East – West: Artistic Interactions under the Mongol Dynasties

Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris), Thierry Ollivier



Dish with ring of fish

China, Zhejiang Province, Longquan
Late 13th century–early 14th century,
Yuan dynasty (1279–1368)
Moulded stoneware, celadon glaze,
traces of gold paint
Paris, Musée National des Arts
Asiatiques–Guimet, G 4585

Hey Qalam, my school and I are about to head back home to Southeast China.

In China, a school of fish is a unique motif representing wealth inspired by the Chinese word for goldfish *jin yu*, homophones for gold and abundance.

Our friends liked our symbolic design and decided to imitate it within their dishes to represent luck and prosperity. They added an inscription that describes well wishes of fame, power, success and eternal life to the owner.

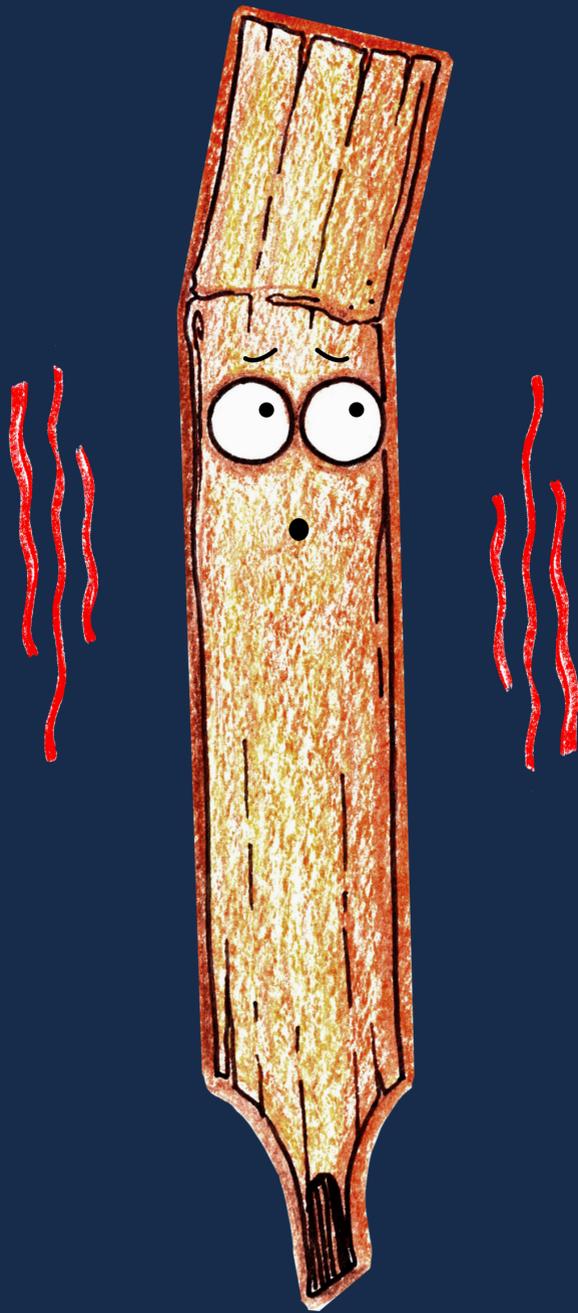
Try finding a dish next to us of a similar motif to help you complete the plate set as a gift for someone special.



Let's sail along to the final stop of our journey!

Phew, it's hot, I wonder
who it might be.

It's Dragon!



SECTION 4

The Gallery of Harmonious Exchanges



Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris), Jean-Gilles Berizzi

Cushion cover with dragon pattern

China, 18th century, Qing dynasty (1644–1912)

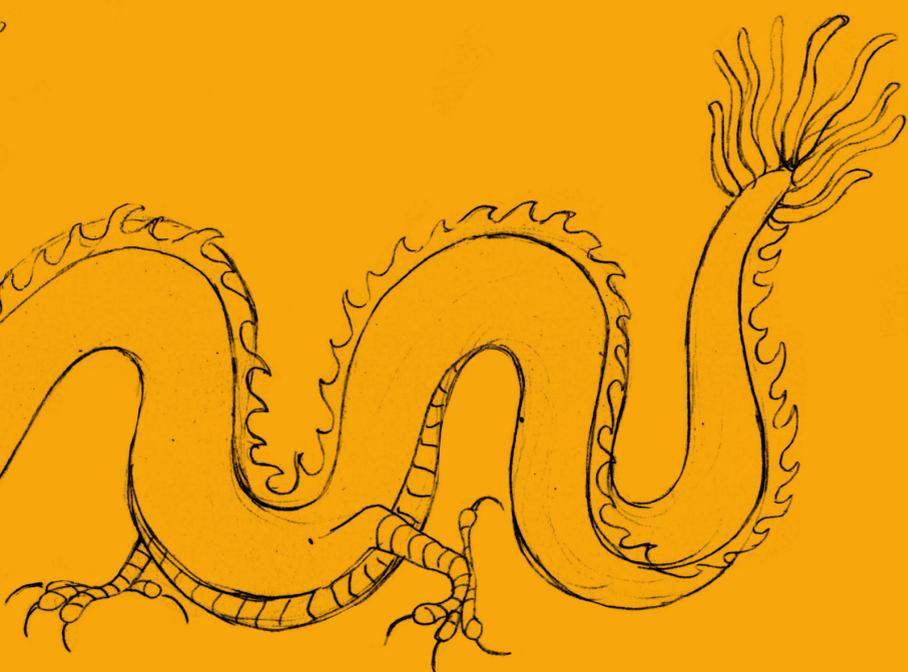
Brocade satin silk with gold thread, H. 110 cm, W. 113 cm

Paris, Musée National des Arts Asiatiques – Guimet, MA 5803

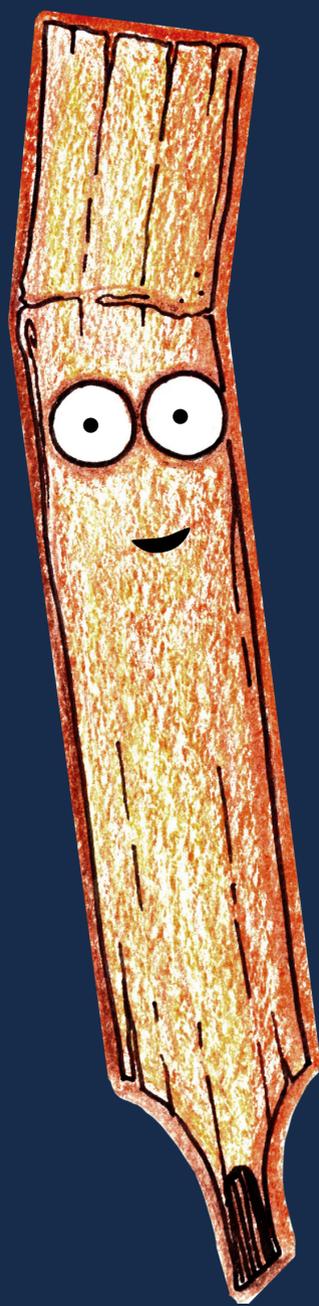
Roar! You're finally here!
Welcome to China. I have been
guarding these lands for centuries
and providing good fortune to its
people with bountiful amounts
of rain and light.

I have also been used to represent
emperors from the Chinese
dynasties for thousands of years.
I am a symbol of power, order and
luck. I have traveled beyond and
explored the Islamic world where
you can find me on luxury goods.
I can be portrayed as a powerful
creature, with reptile-like scales,
giant claws and sometimes winged.
Around me are several dragons that
are similar yet different in design.

**Try and find an image of
a dragon that you like and
share why with a loved one.**



Thank you for
accompanying me.
It's fascinating how
much we can learn
from others through
our travels.



Please share a memorable journey where you learned and appreciated something new about the country's culture, food or values.

Don't forget to share your name and age.

A large, empty white rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their response to the prompt above.