



## Syllabus

### ***PRE-ISLAMIC IRAN AND CENTRAL ASIA - 38257***

*Last update 01-09-2015*

HU Credits: 4

Responsible Department: islamic & middle east stud.

Academic year: 0

Semester: Yearly

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Michael Shenkar

Coordinator Email: [michael.shenkar@gmail.com](mailto:michael.shenkar@gmail.com)

Coordinator Office Hours: Sunday 14:00-15:00.

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Shenkar Michael

Course/Module description:

The course offers an introduction to the civilization of Iran and Central Asia from

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*the emergence of the Iranian tribes until the Muslim conquest. We shall focus on chosen topics in history, religion, and art of the pre-Islamic Iranian world and discuss its central place as a cross-cultural bridge between cultures and civilizations in Eurasia.*

**Course/Module aims:**

*General survey of cultures and principal historical events in the history of Pre-Islamic Iran and Central Asia.*

**Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:**

*Be acquainted with the basic historical narrative and the cultural processes of the pre-Islamic Iranian World.*

**Attendance requirements(%):**

*80%*

***Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Frontal instruction and discussion of the reading material.***

**Course/Module Content:**

- 1. What is the "Iranian World"?*
- 2. The autochthonous civilizations of Eastern Iran.*
- 3. The autochthonous civilizations of the Iranian Plateau.*
- 4. The origin and the spread of the speakers of Iranian languages.*
- 5. The rise of the Medians: the first Iranian Empire?*
- 6. About what spoke Zarathustra? The Zoroastrian religion.*
- 7. Iran conquers the World: The Teispid Dynasty.*
- 8. Darius the "Great" or Darius the "Liar"? The rise of the Achaemenians.*
- 9. "Pax Achaemenica": The Achaemenian Empire at its peak.*
- 10. The last Achaemenians.*

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11. *The Nomadic Iranian world: The Scythians and the Saka.*
  12. *Hellenism in Iran: The Macedonian conquest and the Seleucid Kingdom.*
  13. *Farther than Alexander: The Greeks in Bactria and India.*
  14. *The Nomads are coming. Yuezhi and Saka on the ruins of Hellenistic Bactria.*
  15. *The Parthians: The "Iranian Renaissance" in the West?*
  16. *The Parthian Empire.*
  17. *The Kushans: The "Iranian Renaissance" in the East?*
  18. *The Kushan Empire in Eastern Iran and India.*
  19. *The Return of the Persians: the rise of the Sasanians.*
  20. *The Early Sasanian Empire: Society, Religion and Art.*
  21. *The Late Sasanian Empire.*
  22. *Bactria between the Kushans and the Arab conquest.*
  23. *Chorasmia.*
  24. *The Rise and Fall of the Sogdian culture.*
  25. *The Arab conquest of the Iranian World.*
  26. *The Pre-Islamic Iranian World in World History.*

Required Reading:

1.  
Frye, R.N. (1963), *The Heritage of Persia*, New York, Part One.
- Frye, R.N. (1984), *The History of Ancient Iran*, München, pp. 6-21.
2.  
Lamberg-Karlovsky, C.C. (2013), *[The Oxus Civilization]*, CuPAUAM 39, pp. 21-63.

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Frachetti, M.D. and Rouse, L.M. (2012), *Central Asia, the Steppe and the Near East, 2500-1500 BC*, in D. Potts, (ed.), *Companion to the Archaeology of the Near East*, pp. 687-705.

3.

Frye, R.N. (1984), *The History of Ancient Iran*, München, pp. 46-54.

Potts, D. T. (2012), *The Elamites*, in Daryaee, T. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Iranian History*, Oxford, pp. 37-56.

Henkelman, W.F.M. (2008), *The Other Gods who are: Studies in Elamite-Iranian Acculturation Based on the Persepolis Fortification Texts*, Leiden, pp. 2-8, 41-49.

4.

Anthony, D.W. (2007), *The Horse, The Wheel and Language: How Bronze-Age Riders from Eurasian Steppe Shaped the Modern World*, Princeton – Oxford, pp. 3-21, 458-467.

Witzel, M. (2013), *Iranian Migration*, in Potts, D. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran*, Oxford, pp. 423-442.

5.

Liverani, M. (2003), *The Rise and Fall of Media*, in Lanfranchi, G.B., Roaff, M. and Rollinger, R. (eds.), *Continuity of Empire (?)*. Assyria, Media, Persia, Padova, 1-12.

Radner, K. (2013), *Assyria and the Medes*, in Potts, D. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran*, Oxford, pp. 442-457.

6.

Shaked, S. (2005), *Zoroastrian Origins: Indian and Iranian Connections*, in Arnason, J.P., Eisenstadt, S.N., and Wittrock, B. (eds.), *Axial Civilizations and World History*, Leiden, pp. 183-201.

Boyce, M. (1979), *Zoroastrians. Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, London, Chapter 2.

10-7

Waters, M. (2014), *Ancient Persia A Concise History of the Achaemenid Empire, 550–330 BCE*, Cambridge, pp. 35-54.

Kuhrt, A. (2001), *The Achaemenid Persian Empire (c. 550-c. 330 BCE): Continuities, Adaptations, Transformations*, in Alcock, S. et al., *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History*, Cambridge, 93-125.

Briant, P. (2002), *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, Winona Lake, pp. 873-877.

11.

Parzinger, H. (2008), *“The Scythians: Nomadic Horsemen of the Eurasian Steppe”*, *Preservation of the Frozen Tombs in the Mountains of Altai*, pp. 19-25.

Melyukova, A.I. (1994), *“The Scythians and Sarmatians”*, in Sinor, D. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, Cambridge, pp. 97-118.

12.

Kosmin, P. (2013), *“Alexander the Great and the Seleucids in Iran”*, in Potts, D. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran*, Oxford, pp. 671-690.

Olbrycht, M.J. (2013), *“Iranians in the Diadochi Period”*, in Alonso Troncoso, V. and Anson, V.M. (eds.), *After Alexander. The Time of the Diadochi (323-281 BC)*, Oxford, pp. 159-182.

Wiesehöfer, J. (2013), *“Fratarak” and the Seleucids*, in Potts, D. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran*, Oxford, pp. 718-728.

13.

Bernard, P. (1994), *“The Greek States in Central Asia”*, in Harmatta, J. (ed.), *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, vol. II, Paris, pp. 99-131.

Mairs, R. (2014), *The Hellenistic Far East. Archaeology, Language, and Identity in Greek Central Asia*, Oakland, Introduction.

14.

Mairs, R. (2014), *The Hellenistic Far East. Archaeology, Language, and Identity in Greek Central Asia*, Oakland, pp. 146-176.

16-15

Koshelenko, G.A. and Pilipko, V.N. (1994), *“Parthia”* in Harmatta, J. (ed.), *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, vol. II, Paris, pp. 131-151.

Wiesehöfer, J. (2001), *Ancient Persia, 550 BC to 650 AD*, London - New York, pp. 130-145.

Hauser, S.R. (2014), *“The Arsacids (Parthians)”*, in Potts, D. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran*, Oxford, pp. 728-751.

Invernizzi, A. (2007), *“The Culture of Parthian Nisa between Steppe and Empire”*, in Cribb, J. and Herrmann, G. (eds.), *After Alexander: Central Asia before Islam*, Oxford, pp. 163-177.

18-17

Frye, R.N. (1984), *The History of Ancient Iran*, München, pp. 250-271.

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Bivar, A.D.H. (2009), *[Kushan Dynasty i. Dynastic History]*, *Encyclopædia Iranica Online Edition*, July 15, 2009, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kushan-dynasty-i-history>

21-19

Wiesehöfer, J. (2001), *Ancient Persia, 550 BC to 650 AD*, London - New York, pp. 151-182.

Daryaee, T. (2012), *[The Sasanian Empire (224-651 CE)]*, in Daryaee, T. (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Iranian History*, Oxford, pp. 187-207.

Wiesehöfer, J. (2010), *[The Late Sasanian Near East]*, in Robinson, C.F. (ed.), *The New Cambridge History of Islam, Vol. 1: The Formation of the Islamic World Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*, Cambridge, pp. 107-133.

22.

Grenet, F. (2002), *[Regional Interaction in Central Asia and Northwest India in the Kidarite and Hephthalite periods]*, in Sims-Williams, N. (ed.), *Indo-Iranian Languages and People*, (PBA 116), pp. 203-224.

Sims-Williams, N. (2002), *[Ancient Afghanistan and Its Invaders: Linguistic Evidence From the Bactrian Documents and Inscriptions]*, in Sims-Williams, N. (ed.), *Indo-Iranian Languages and People*, (PBA 116), pp. 225-243.

23.

Nerazik, E.E. and Bulgakov, P.G. (1996), *[Khwarizm]*, in *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, vol. III, Paris, pp. 207-233.

Kidd, F., Negus Cleary, M. and Baker Brite, E. (2012), *[Public Vs Private: Perspectives on the Communication of Power in Ancient Chorasmia]*, in Hartley, Ch. W., Yazıcılu, G.B. and Smith, A.T. (eds.), *The Archaeology of Power and Politics in Central Asia: Regimes and Revolutions*, Cambridge, pp. 91-121.

24.

Marshak, B.I. and Negmatov, N.N. (1996), *[Sogdiana]*, in Litvinsky, B.A. (ed.), *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, vol. 3, Paris, 233-281.

Hansen, V. (2012), *The Silk Road. A New History*, Oxford, pp. 113-141.

25.

Morony, M.G. (2013), *[The Islamic Conquest of Sasanian Iran]*, in Potts, D. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran*, Oxford, pp. 975-987.

Additional Reading Material:

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1.  
Frye, R.N. (1996), *The Heritage of Central Asia*, Princeton, Chapters 1 and 2.
  3.  
Zadok, R. (2013), «Linguistic Groups in Iran», in Potts, D. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran*, Oxford, pp. 407-423.
  - Potts, D. (2004), *The Archaeology of Elam. Formation and Transformation of the Ancient Iranian State*, Cambridge, Chapters 1 and 9.
  4.  
Lamberg-Karlovsky, C.C. (2005), «Archaeology and Language: The Case of the Bronze Age Indo-Iranians», in Bryant, E.F. and Patton, L.L. (eds.), *The Indo-Aryan Controversy: Evidence and Inference in Indian History*, London - New York, pp. 142-179.
  5.  
Dandamayev, M. and Medvedskaya, I. (2006), «Media», *Encyclopædia Iranica Online Edition*, August 15, 2006, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/media>
  6.  
Skjærvø, P.O. (2011), «Zoroastrian Dualism», in Lange, A. (ed.) et al. *Light Against Darkness: Dualism in Ancient Mediterranean Religion and the Contemporary World*, Göttingen, pp. 55-76.
  - 10-7  
Henkelman, W. (2011), «Cyrus the Persian and Darius the Elamite: a Case of Mistaken Identity», in Rollinger, R., Truschegg, B. and Bichler, R. (eds.), *Herodot und das Persische Weltreich*, Weisbaden, pp. 577-635.
  - Van der Spek, R.J. (2014), «Cyrus the Great, Exiles and Foreign Gods A Comparison of Assyrian and Persian Policies on Subject Nations», in Henkelman, W. et al. (eds.), *Extraction and Control: Studies in Honor of Matthew W. Stolper*, Chicago, pp. 233-265.
  12.  
Olbrycht, M.J. (2010), «Macedonia and Persia», in Roisman, J. and Worthington, I. (eds.), *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, Blackwell Publishing, pp. 342-371.
  13.  
Martinez-Sáve, L. (2014), «The Spatial Organization of Ai Khanoum, a Greek City in Afghanistan», *American Journal of Archaeology* 118.2, pp. 267-283.
  14.  
Rapin, C. (2007), «Nomads and the Shaping of Central Asia: from the Early Iron Age to the Kushan period», in Cribb, J. and Herrmann, G. (eds.), *After Alexander: Central*

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*Asia before Islam, Oxford, pp. 29-72.*

**16-15**

Frye, R.N. (1984), *The History of Ancient Iran, Mānchen*, pp. 191-249.

**18-17**

Frye, R.N. (1996), *The Heritage of Central Asia, Princeton, Chapter 9.*

**21-19**

Shahbazi, A.Sh. (2005), **Sassanian Dynasty**, *Encyclopædia Iranica Online Edition*, July 20, 2005, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/sasanian-dynasty>

**22.**

Sims-Williams, N. (1997), *New Light on Ancient Afghanistan: the Decipherment of Bactrian, London.*

**24.**

de La Vaissière, L. (2011), **Sogdiana iii. History and Archaeology**, *Encyclopædia Iranica Online Edition*, March 4, 2011, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/sogdiana-iii-history-and-archeology>

**Course/Module evaluation:**

*End of year written/oral examination 90 %*

*Presentation 0 %*

*Participation in Tutorials 0 %*

*Project work 0 %*

*Assignments 0 %*

*Reports 0 %*

*Research project 0 %*

*Quizzes 10 %*

*Other 0 %*

**Additional information:**