

## *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

### *Syllabus*

## *Masters of the "Silk Road" – the Rise and Fall of the Sogdian Culture - 38476*

*Last update 01-09-2015*

*HU Credits:* 4

*Degree/Cycle:* 1st degree (Bachelor)

*Responsible Department:* islamic & middle east stud.

*Academic year:* 2016

*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.

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Teaching Staff:

Dr. Shenkar Michael

Course/Module description:

The seminar will focus on the unique Sogdian culture that existed in Central Asia (modern Uzbekistan and Tajikistan) between the fourth century CE and the Muslim conquest of the area in the eighth century. We shall discuss the written and material sources for the Sogdian civilization and treat important milestones of Sogdian history. Special emphasis will be placed on the wall paintings, which are the primary source for the Sogdian culture and religion. We shall deal with the Sogdian trading network, with the complex relations between the sedentary Sogdians and the nomadic Turkic tribes, with the Sogdian colonies in China and the phenomenon of Sino-Sogdian art.

Course/Module aims:

The goal of this class is to introduce students to the Sogdian civilization, its rise and decline in the eighth century following the Arab conquest.

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

To be able to analyze the main features of the Sogdian culture, its principal sites and historical events.

Attendance requirements(%):

80

*Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: The Lecturer's exposition followed by discussion, plus, presentations of the participants.*

Course/Module Content:

- 1) Sogdiana: the Geography and the name.
- 2) Historical background.
- 3) Written sources in Sogdian language.
- 4) Samarkand.
- 5) Panjikent.

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- 6) Bukhara.
  - 7) Bunjikat (Ustrushana)
  - 8) The Sogdian religion.
  - 9) Burial customs and ossuaries.
  - 10) The Sogdian trade network.
  - 11) The "symbiosis" with the Turks.
  - 12) Sogdian colonies in China and the "Sino-Sogdian art".
  - 13) The Arab conquest of Sogdiana.

Required Reading:

- 1)  
Barthold, W. (1968), *Turkestan down to the Mongol invasion*, London, Chapter I.
- 2)  
de La Vaissière, É. (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>  
  
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.
- 3)  
Sims-Williams, N. (1989), "Sogdian", in Schmitt, R. (ed.), *Compendium Linguarum Iranicarum*, Wiesbaden, pp. 173-192.  
  
Grenet, F. and de la Vaissière, É. (2002), "The Last Days of Panjikent," *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 8, pp. 155-196.
- 4)  
Marshak, B.I. (2006), "Remarks on the Murals of the Ambassadors Hall," in *Royal Nawrūz in Samarkand: Acts of the Conference held in Venice on the Pre-Islamic Afrāsyāb Painting*, ed. M. Compareti and E. de La Vaissière, Rome, pp. 75-85.  
  
Compareti, M. (2008), "AFRĀSIĀB ii. Wall Paintings", *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/afraziab-ii-wall-paintings-2>

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Grenet, F. (2006), "What was the Afrasyab Painting About?" in *Royal Nawrūz in Samarkand: Acts of the Conference held in Venice on the Pre-Islamic Afrāsyāb Painting*, ed. M. Compareti and E. de La Vaissière, Rome, 2006, pp. 43-58.

Azarpay, G. (2014), "The Afrasiab Murals: a Pictorial Narrative Reconsidered", *The Silk Road* 12, pp. 49-57.

5)  
Marshak, B. (2002), "Panjikent", *Encyclopædia Iranica Online Edition*, available at: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/panjikant>

Marshak, B. (2002), *Legends, Tales and Fables in the Art of Sogdiana*, New York, pp. 1-25.

6)  
Frye, Richard N. "BUKHARA i. In Pre-Islamic Times". *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. IV, Fasc. 5. pp. 511-513.  
<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bukhara-i>

Naymark, A.I. (2003), "Returning to Varakhsha", *The Silk Road*, vol 1/2.

7)  
Marshak, B.I. and Negmatov, N.N. (1996), "Sogdiana", in Litvinsky, B.A. (ed.), *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, vol. 3, Paris, pp. 233-281.

8)  
Grenet, F. (2006/2010), "Iranian Gods in Hindu Garb. The Zoroastrian Pantheon of the Bactrians and Sogdians, Second—Eighth Centuries", *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 20, pp. 87-101.

Shkoda, V. G. (1996), "The Sogdian Temple: Structure and Rituals", *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 10, pp. 195-206.

9)  
Grenet, F. (2013), "Zoroastrian Funerary Practices", in Stewart, S. (ed.), *The Everlasting Flame: Zoroastrianism in History and Imagination*, London, pp. 18-28.

Shenkar, M. (2014), *Intangible spirits and Graven Images: The Iconography of Deities in the Pre-Islamic Iranian World*, Leiden-Boston, pp. 170-174.

10)  
de La Vaissière, É. (2004), "Sogdian Trade", *Encyclopædia Iranica Online Edition*, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/sogdian-trade>

Sims-Williams, N. (1996), "The Sogdian Merchants in China and India," in A. Cadonna and L. Lanciotti, eds., *Cina e Iran da Alessandro Magno alla Dinastia Tang*,

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Firenze, pp. 45-67.

Hansen, V. (2012), *The Silk Road. A New History*, Oxford, pp. 3-24.

11)

Stark, S. (2007), "Mercenaries and City Rulers: Early Turks in Pre-Muslim Mawarannahr", In Popova, L., Hartley, Ch. and Smith, A.T. (eds.), *Social Orders and Social Landscapes: Proceedings of the 2005 University of Chicago Conference on Eurasian Archaeology*, Newcastle, pp. 307-334.

12)

Marshak, B. (2004), "The Miho Couch and the Other Sino-Sogdian Works of Art of the Second Half of the 6th Century", *Miho Museum*, 16-31.

Lerner, J. (2005), "Aspects of Assimilation: The Funerary Practices and Furnishings of Central Asians in China", *Sino-Platonic Papers* 168, pp. 1-50.

Additional Reading Material:

Azarpay, G. (1981), *Sogdian Painting: The Pictorial Epic in Oriental Art*, Berkeley.

Marshak, B. (2002), *Legends, Tales and Fables in the Art of Sogdiana*, New York.

de La Vaissière, É. (2005), *Sogdian Traders*, Leiden.

*Encyclopædia Iranica Online Edition available at: <http://www.iranicaonline.org>*

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 20 %

Participation in Tutorials 0 %

Project work 80 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information: