



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

From China to Sogdiana (4th-8th centuries CE): the "Silk Road" - 38962

Last update 09-10-2022

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Islamic & Middle East Stud.

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Michael Shenkar

Coordinator Email: michael.shenkar@gmail.com

Coordinator Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-13:30

Teaching Staff:

Prof Shenkar Michael

Course/Module description:

We shall learn about the network of economic and cultural contacts that developed between China and Central Asia in the 4th-8th centuries CE and is known as the "Silk Road". We shall discuss the culture of the Sogdians who managed this network. We shall also discuss the complex relations between the sedentary Sogdians and the nomadic Turkic tribes, and focus on 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, to the development and demise of the Sogdian trade network and cultural contacts between Central Asia and China.

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. To be acquainted with basic terms and processes related to the "Silk Road".

Attendance requirements(%):

80

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: The Lecturer's exposition of the subject followed by a discussion.

Course/Module Content:

1. Introduction: Geography and historical background.
2. "Masters of the Silk Road" – introducing the Sogdian culture.
3. Panjikent – urban space, art, and everyday life in the Sogdian city.
4. Paintings from the "Ambassadors Hall" in Samarkand and the worldview of the Sogdians.
5. Bukhara and the principality of Ustrushana.

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6. *On the way to China – City-states and cultures of the Tarim Basin.*
 7. *“Neither Silk, nor a Road” – the trade network between China and Central Asia.*
 8. *The creation of the Sogdian trade network.*
 9. *“Rulers of the Steppes” – the appearance of Turks and the “Turko-Sogdian symbiosis”.*
 10. *Sogdian settlements in China.*
 11. *The Sino-Sogdian art.*

Required Reading:

See syllabus on Moodle.

Additional Reading Material:

*Hansen, V. (2016), *The Silk Road: A New History with Documents*, Oxford.*

*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 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 20 %

Project work 80 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information: