

Spring 2024 Arts of Asia Lecture Series
Echoes of the Past, Visions of the Future
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**Medieval Central Asia in Depth: Archaeological Explorations and Mapping of
Newly Discovered High Elevation Cities of the 6th-12th Centuries**

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TIMELINE:

Highlights of Turkic Historical/Political transitions (6th-12thc. CE):

Early Turkic Khaganate (Gokturks, Karluks, Kimeks, etc)

551: Turkic people led by Tumin/Bumin destroy the Juan-juan (Avars) and establish the Turkic Khaganate of Gokturk in Central Asia from the Black Sea to Mongolia

553: Tumin dies and the Turkic Khaganate splits into Western and Eastern Khanates

630: The eastern Turkic Khaganate is conquered by China

682: the eastern Turkic Khaganate regain independence from China under Kutluk

694: Tugluk's brother Khapghan extend the Turkic empire over Transoxania, thus unifying eastern and western Turks

Arab interregnum:

712: the Arabs, led by Kutayba ben Muslim, conquer Transoxania

932: the Turkic Qarakhanid dynasty is founded in Kashgar

962: the Ghaznavid kingdom is founded in Afghanistan (at Ghazni) by Alp-tegin, a Turkic slave soldier of the Samanids

985: the Turkic-speaking Seljuks (led by Seljuk) invade Transoxania (Ilkhan) and convert to sunnite Islam

995: Gurgandj (Kunya-Urgench, Turkmenistan) becomes the capital of the Khorezmshakh state

1038: the Seljuks, led by Toghrul Beg/ Tugrul Bey, defeat the Ghaznavids at Dandanaqan (near Merv)

1042: the Seljuks conquer Khorezm

1048: Turk nomads raid the Byzantine empire for the first time

1055: the Seljuks (sunni), led by Toghrul Beg, defeat the Buyids (shiite), invade Mesopotamia and install themselves in Baghdad under the suzerainty of the Abbasids

1064: the Seljuk king Alp Arslan moves the capital to Ray (Tehran)

1064: the Seljuks invade Armenia

1071: the Seljuqs led by sultan Alp Arslan defeat the Byzantine army at the battle of Malazgird/Manzikert, capture Jerusalem and establishing a sultanate in central Anatolia with capital in Iznik (Nicaea)

1072: the Seljuqs move the capital from Ray (Tehran) to Isfahan but Alp Arslan dies, succeeded by his son Malik Shah, who appoints Nizam al-Mulk as vizier

1073: the Seljuqs defeat the Qarakhanids, taking Bukhara and Samarkand

1076: the Seljuqs invade Syria and Palestine

1079: the Seljuqs take Damascus

1086: the Seljuqs take Antioch and Aleppo

1092: Nizam al-Mulk is assassinated by fanatic Shiites, the Assassins, and Malik Shah dies, two events that weaken the Seljuq sultanate

1096: the Pope launches the first Crusade to conquer Jerusalem

1097: the Crusaders under Godfrey of Bouillon capture Jerusalem

1097: the Seljuqs move their capital to Konya

1128: Imad ad-Din Zengi becomes emir of Aleppo and Mosul

1141: the Karakitai defeat the Seljuqs at the battle of Qatwan, thus destroying Seljuq power in Central Asia

1144: Imad ad-Din Zengi, emir of Aleppo and Mosul, recaptures Edessa, the first crusader state recaptured by the Muslims

1146: Imad ad-Din Zengi is assassinated by a slave and is succeeded by his son Nur al-Din as emir of Aleppo, who first massacres all the Christian males of Edessa

1153: the Khwarazmis (Turkish mercenaries) conquer Persia from the Seljuqs

1154: Nur al-Din conquers Damascus, uniting it with Aleppo

1157: Seljuq's sultan Sancar dies

1163: Shawar, supported by the Kurdish general Shirkuh Ayyubid sent by Nur ad-Din Zangi, ruler of the Zengids in Syria, becomes vizier of Fatimid Egypt

1169: Shirkuh kills Shawar and takes his place as vizier of Fatimid Egypt, but he dies two months later and is replaced by his nephew Saladin

1171: Saladin Ayubbid ends the Fatimid dynasty in Egypt and founds the Ayubbid dynasty

1174: Nur ad-Din Zangi, ruler of the Zengids in Syria, formerly Sadalin's superior, dies and his kingdom breaks up

1175: the Ghaznavid state is absorbed into the Ghurid empire, which is also Turkic-speaking

1176: Byzantium is defeated by the Turks of Rum at Myriokephalon

1176: Saladin marries Nur al-Din's widow

1171: The Fatimid sultan al-Adid dies

1174: Saladin takes Damascus from the Syrian ruler

1183: Saladin conquers Aleppo from Nur al-Din's son

1187: Saladin, who so far has only conquered Muslim kingdoms, retakes Palestine and Jerusalem from the Christians

1192: Saladin signs an armistice with King Richard I of England that grants the Christians a small kingdom outside Jerusalem

1193: Saladin's brother Malik Adil becomes sultan of Egypt and Syria

1194: the Seljuqs conquer Anatolia

1194: the last Persian Seljuq ruler dies and Seljuq power collapses in Iran

1200: Ali ad-Din Muhammad becomes shah of the Khwarizm/Khwarezmian empire that extends from Uzbekistan to Persia

1220: the Mongols invade Transoxania (Bukhara and Samarkand) and Iran/Persia

NOTES FROM LECTURE:

Afrasiab: Ancient City of Samarkand (present Day Uzbekistan) ca. 500 BC-1220, destroyed by Mongols

King Varkhuman, 7th c. Ruler of Samarkand

Inner Asian Mountain Corridor: Area of mountain foothills from northern Afghanistan to the Altai Mountains, including the western Tian Shan (Kyrgyzstan, Xinjiang); area of pronounced regional interaction from ca 3000 BC to historical times.

Mushiston: Bronze Age mine located in Pamir mountains (ca. 1800-1400 BC)

Xiongnu – Iron Age agro-pastoralists of Mongolia and the Altai regions of Eastern Eurasia.

Tang Dynasty: The Tang dynasty (/tɑːŋ/^[3] [tʰǎŋ]; Chinese: 唐朝^[a]), or **Tang Empire**, was an [imperial dynasty of China](#) that ruled from 618 to 907 AD, with an [interregnum](#) between 690 and 705. It was preceded by the [Sui dynasty](#) and followed by the [Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period](#).

Sogdia / Sogdian (person from): Sogdiana lay north of [Bactria](#), east of [Khwarezm](#), and southeast of [Kangju](#) between the Oxus ([Amu Darya](#)) and the Jaxartes ([Syr Darya](#)), including the fertile valley of the [Zeravshan](#) (called the Polytimetus by the [ancient Greeks](#)). Sogdian territory corresponds to the modern [regions of Samarkand](#) and [Bukhara](#) in modern Uzbekistan, as well as the [Sughd](#) region of modern Tajikistan. In the [High Middle Ages](#), Sogdian cities included sites stretching towards [Issyk Kul](#), such as that at the archeological site of [Suyab](#).

Myk: Medieval fortress in E. Uzbekistan, ca. 10-11th c. attributed to the Qarakhanid Dynasty. Excavated in the 1990s by Svetchko. Thought to be the ancient site of 'Mynk', from Arab sources.

Magnetometry: Field method that uses a magnetic signal, send underground to detect inversions in subterranean magnetic polarity.

Ground penetrating radar: Geophysical field method using a radar signal to detect subterrean features of different density. GPR uses high-frequency (usually polarized) radio waves, usually in the range 10 MHz to 2.6 GHz. A GPR transmitter and antenna emits electromagnetic energy into the ground. When the energy encounters a buried object or a boundary between materials having different [permittivities](#)

Seljuks: The **Great Seljuk Empire**^{[11][b]} or the **Seljuk Empire** was a [high medieval Turko-Persian](#)^[14] [Sunni Muslim](#) empire, founded and ruled by the [Qiniq](#) branch of [Oghuz Turks](#).^[15] At the time of its greatest extent, the Seljuk Empire controlled a vast area, stretching from western [Anatolia](#) and the [Levant](#) in the west to the [Hindu Kush](#) in the east, and from [Central Asia](#) in the north to the [Persian Gulf](#) in the south.

The Seljuk empire was founded in 1037 by [Tughril](#) (990–1063) and his brother [Chaghri](#) (989–1060). However, there are indications that Seljuq leadership was in fact a triumvirate, and also included Musa Yabghu, the uncle of the aforementioned two.^[16] From their homelands near the [Aral Sea](#), the Seljuks advanced first into [Khorasan](#) and then into mainland [Persia](#), before eventually conquering [Baghdad](#) and eastern Anatolia.

Qarakhanid Dynasty, also spelled **Karakhanid**, also called **Ilek Khanid**, Turkic [dynasty](#) (999–1211) that ruled in [Transoxania](#) in [Central Asia](#).

The Qarakhanids, who belonged to the Qarluq tribal confederation, became prominent during the 9th century. With the disintegration of the Iranian [Sāmānid dynasty](#), the Qarakhanids took over the Sāmānid territories in Transoxania. In 999 Hārūn (or Ḥasan) Bughra Khān, grandson of the paramount tribal chief of the [Qarluq confederation](#), occupied [Bukhara](#), the Sāmānid capital. The Sāmānid domains were split up between the Ghaznavids, who gained [Khorāsān](#) and [Afghanistan](#), and the Qarakhanids, who received Transoxania; the [Oxus River](#) thus became the boundary between the two rival empires. During this period the Qarakhanids were converted to [Islām](#).