WEEK 1

**Uzbekistan:**
*Tashkent, Samarqand, Nurata, Bukhara*

**Day 1- Friday, May 23rd**
Arrive in Tashkent at 6:30 am.

- Breakfast at Hotel
- Excursion in Tashkent with bus and guide (5-6 hours)

Accommodation at the **Shodlik Palace Hotel**

**Day 2- Saturday, May 24th**
- Breakfast at Hotel
- Lectures in conference hall

**Day 3- Sunday, May 25th**
- Breakfast at Hotel
- Transfer to Samarqand by bus
- Visit village deep in the hills

Accommodation at the **Royal Palace Hotel**

**Day 4- Monday, May 26th**
- Breakfast at Hotel
- Excursion with guide
Day 5 - Tuesday, May 27th

- Breakfast at Hotel
- Lectures in conference hall

Day 6 - Wednesday, May 28th

- Breakfast at Hotel
- Transfer to Nurata by bus
- Camel’s Trek to Aydarkul lake
- Picnic at lake
- Lively music around the fire

Accommodation at the Aydar Yurt camp

Day 7 - Thursday, May 29th

- Breakfast at Yurt
- Program around the lake
- Old villages, monuments

Day 8 - Friday, May 30th

- Breakfast at Hotel
- Transfer to Bukhara city
- Excursion in Bukhara with guide

Accommodation at the Farkhad & Maya Hotel
WEEK 2

Uzbekistan: Bukhara, Khiva, Tashkent

Day 9 - Saturday, May 31rd
- Breakfast at Hotel
- Guide in Bukhara

Day 10 - Sunday, June 1st
- Breakfast at Hotel
- Lectures in conference hall

Day 11 - Monday, June 2nd
- Breakfast at Hotel
- Transfer to Khiva by bus
Accommodation at the Islambek Hotel

Day 12 - Tuesday, June 3rd
- Breakfast at Hotel
- Guide in Khiva

Day 13 - Wednesday, June 4th
- Breakfast at Hotel
- Excursion around Khiva (old fortress)

Bukhara
- Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Nestorian Christianity were the main religions before Islamic conversion (also Bukharan Jews, who have been there since the Babylonian conquest of Israel)

Khiva
- Was founded in 5th or 4th century BC
- Earlier inhabitants were Iranian, until Turks became ruling class in 10th century
- Used to be slave trading post

Synopsis
- The problem is self-sufficiency.
- The solution is submission.
- The technique for achieving paradise is “performing the religion” through the practice of the five pillars.
- The exemplars who chart this path are Mohammad, saints, people who perform the hajj.

Questions

I. Muslim Expansion and Religious Rebellion
- What was the main reason for Muslim expansion? Was there any change from the early to the later periods?
- What played the most important role in the Muslim expansion?

II. Islam in Iran
- How did the Iranian world react to the Muslims? Why?
- What was the process of Islamization in Central Asia? What changes did the Muslims bring to the newly conquered regions?

III. Islam and Other Religions on the Silk Road
- What other religions were flourishing on the Silk Road of Central Asia during the Muslim expansion in the 7th-9th centuries?
- What influence did the other religions have on Islam?
- What was the relationship like between Muslims and other religious people?

IV. Islamization of Turk-Mongol
- What were the religions in the Tarim basin before the arrival of Islam?
- What is pax monglica? What position did Muslims take in this pact? Was there bloodshed and, if so, why?

IV. Islam in China
- Who were the Hui? How did they settle and live in China?
- How did China react to other cultures or religions, especially Islam, coming through the Silk Road?
CHRISTIANITY

Synopsis

• The problem is sin.
• The solution is salvation.
• The technique for achieving salvation is a combination of faith and good works.
• The exemplars who chart this path are the saints in Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy, and ordinary people of faith in Protestantism.

Questions

I. Christian Beliefs and Spread

• What were the main divergences in the interpretation of Christian theology?
• Describe the spread of Christianity in Asia. Who brought Christianity to China?

II. Christianity in Iran

• What was the Zoroastrian attitude towards Christians? Christian attitude towards Zoroastrians?
• What effect did the adoption of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire have on Iranian Christianity?
• What was it like for Iranian Christians under Muslim rule? Positive aspects? Negative?

III. Nestorian Christianity

• What did the Nestorian Christians believe? How did Nestorian Christianity spread along the Silk Road?
• How did the Turks view the first Nestorian Christians in their midst? How was Nestorian Christianity treated over the centuries by the Mongol empire?
• How did the Chinese view Nestorian concepts and values? What are some Nestorian monuments in China?

Day 14- Thursday, June 5th

• Breakfast at Hotel
• Transfer to Urgench Airport
• Flight to Tashkent

Accommodation at the Shodlik Palace Hotel

Day 15- Friday, June 6th

• Breakfast at Hotel
• Transfer to Fergana city
• Excursion in Fergana with guide

Day 16- Saturday, June 7th

• Breakfast at Hotel
• Excursion in Fergana valley

Day 17- Sunday, June 8th

• Breakfast at Hotel
• Excursion in Fergana valley
• Return to Tashkent

Accommodation at the Shodlik Palace Hotel

Day 18- Monday, June 9th

Transfer to airport.
WEEK 3

Istanbul, Turkey

♦ Founded around 660 BC as Byzantium, then became Constantinople in 330 AD
♦ Is Turkey’s economic, cultural, and historic heart
♦ Transcontinental city

Day 18- Monday, June 9th

Arrive in Istanbul at 6:30 am

• Meet tour guide at customs and baggage claim, transfer to the Old City
• Walking tour in Istanbul (Hippodrome Square, Underground Cistern, Archaeology Museum, optional Blue Mosque visit)

Accommodation at the Golden Horn Hotel

Day 19- Tuesday, June 10th

• Breakfast at Hotel
• Drive to Chora Church for morning, visit the Orthodox Patriarchate on the way
• Return to the Old City and visit the Hagia Sophia Church

Day 20- Wednesday, June 11th

• Breakfast at Hotel
• Walk to Eminonu to visit Spice Bazaar
• Private Boat Tour to visit European and Asian shores of Istanbul
• Beyoglu district: visit St. Antoine Church and Galata Tower

Synopsis

• The problem is exile (distance from God and what we ought to be).
• The solution is to return (back to God).
• The technique for achieving it is to tell the story and follow the law (remember and obey).
• The exemplars who chart this path are the rabbis.

Questions

I. Growth and Decline of Judaism
• What played an important role to bring many converts to Judaism in their early years?
• What is assumed was a factor of its decline?

II. The Encounter of Iranian and Judean Religion
• How did Iranian religions influence Judaism?
• What beliefs, concepts and ideas were part of that influence?

III. Judaism in East Asia
• How did Judaism relate to other religions and cultures in China?
• Was this interaction positive or negative, and in what ways?

IV. Jewish Traders in the Muslim World
• Who are the Radanites? What role did they have on the Silk Road?
• How did they survive in the Muslim world?
**Synopsis**

- The problem is suffering.
- The solution is nirvana.
- The technique for achieving nirvana is the Noble Eightfold Path, which includes practices such as chanting and meditation.
- The exemplars who chart this path are *arhats* (Theravada), *bodhisattvas* (Mahayana), or *lamas* (Tibetan).

**Questions**

I. **Doctrine**
- Do you think the teaching of Siddhartha Gautama is really universal? In what sense (as related to Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path)?
- Is Buddhism a religion? What are the major features of Buddhism and how do these compare with other religions?

II. **Buddhist Schools on the Silk Road**
- What is the main belief of the Great Vehicle? Do you think its belief impacts its survival on the Silk Road? Why?
- Why is the Great Vehicle called a “Pan-Buddhist Movement”?

III. **Cross-cultural Influence**
- What other Silk Road cultures impacted the Buddhist development of arts and literature?
- What impact did these cultures and their religions have on Buddhist stories?

IV. **Buddhism in China**
- Buddhism started in India, but it flourished in China.
- What is the major school of Buddhism in China and why do you think it did so well?

V. **Buddhist Pilgrims**
- Who is Xuanzang? What was his traveling route on the Silk Road?
- What influence did his journey have on the Silk Road and on Buddhism in China?

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**Day 21 - Thursday, June 12th**

- Breakfast at Hotel
- Depart at 10:30 am

Transfer to Istanbul Airport for TK 81 departing at 2:00pm

Return to Boston

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**Hagia Sophia**

- Built in 527 AD as an Eastern Orthodox cathedral
- Was a mosque from 1453 to 1931
- Now is a museum
- Is considered the epitome of Byzantine architecture

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**Om**
**CHINESE RELIGION: CONFUCIANISM**

**Synopsis**
- The problem is chaos.
- The solution is social order.
- The technique for achieving it are ethics and ritual learned through proper education, studying the ancient classics, emulating the sages.
- The exemplars who chart this path are junzi (profound person, noble man) whose influence and example have the power to improve society.

**Questions**

**I. Belief and Practice**
- In what ways is Confucianism a religion? A philosophy? A way of life?
- What requirements or preparations are necessary to become a junzi? What are some characteristics of a junzi?

**II. Confucianism in China**
- How did Confucianism impact daily life in China?
- How did Confucianism become a defining characteristic of Chinese identity?
**CHINESE RELIGION: DAOISM**

**Synopsis**
- The problem is we let life slip away.
- The solution is to live life to its fullest.
- The technique for achieving this are dietary regimes, breath control, various physical exercises to preserve and circulate our qi (life force) and balance our yin and yang.
- The exemplars who chart this path are spontaneous sages also known as ‘genuine persons’ who break free of social shackles and rely on intuitive wisdom.

**Questions**

**I. Belief and Practice**
- How does being one with the Tao differ from similar concepts in Hinduism or in theistic religions?
- What is Daoism’s attitude toward nature?

**II. Daoism and Other Religions**
- What aspects of Daoism were easily shared with other religions on the Silk Road?
- How did Daoism interact with Buddhism and Confucianism in Chinese society?

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**Tour Schedule**

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<tr>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
<th>SATURDAY</th>
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<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tashkent</td>
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<td>Breakfast at Hotel</td>
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<td>Excursion in Tashkent with bus and guide</td>
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<td>Samarkand/Nurata</td>
<td>Nurata</td>
<td>Nurata/Bukhara</td>
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<td>Breakfast at Hotel</td>
<td>Breakfast at Yurt camp</td>
<td>Breakfast at Yurt camp</td>
<td>Breakfast at Hotel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfer to Nurata by bus</td>
<td>Fried fish lunch at lake</td>
<td>Transfer to Bukhara city</td>
<td>Guide in Bukhara</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camel Trek to Aydarkul lake</td>
<td>Program around lake, old villages, monuments</td>
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<td>Lively music around the fire</td>
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## Calendar

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<td>1</td>
<td>Bukhara</td>
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<td>morning</td>
<td>Breakfast at Hotel</td>
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<td>Lectures</td>
<td>Transfer to Khiva by bus</td>
<td>Guide in Khiva</td>
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<td>June</td>
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<td>Fergana/Tashkent</td>
<td>Tashkent/Istanbul</td>
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<td>morning</td>
<td>Breakfast at Hotel</td>
<td>Transfer to airport, arrive in Istanbul at 6:30 am</td>
<td>Breakfast at Hotel, Chora Church, Patriarchate</td>
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<td>evening</td>
<td>Excursion in Fergana valley</td>
<td>Walking tour in Istanbul</td>
<td>Hagia Sophia</td>
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<td>Return to Tashkent</td>
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## Hinduism

### Synopsis

- The problem is \textit{samsara} (a vicious cycle of life, death and rebirth).
- The solution is \textit{moksha}.
- The technique(s) for achieving moksha are the disciplines of ritual action, wisdom, and devotion (to the god of your choosing).
- The exemplars who chart this path are \textit{priests, gurus} and \textit{sanyasins}.

### Questions

\textbf{I. Early Hindu Beliefs}
- What are vedas? What kinds of stories or lessons did they contain?
- What do vedas reveal about early Hindu values?

\textbf{II. Gods}
- What are some Hindu gods and their roles?
- How has the hierarchy of gods changed over the centuries?

\textbf{III. Other Religions}
- What are some influences on Hinduism from other religions?
- How does Hinduism relate to and react with other religions?
SHAMANISM

Synopsis

• The problem is angry spirits.
• The solution is appeasing these spirits.
• The technique for achieving this is contacting these spirits through a medium to find out what they require.
• The exemplars are the shamans who have the ability to communicate with the spirits.

Questions

I. Ancient Belief and Practice

• How did ancient Iranians believe the universe was created?
• What was their explanation for natural phenomena? And how did a dualistic struggle fit with this belief?

II. Shamanism and Other Religions

• What aspects of Shamanism influenced Zoroastrianism?
• How did ancient Shamanistic practices relate to early Hindu belief?
• What role did shamans have in relation to other religions on the Silk Road?

III. Nomads

• How did Shamanism impact the lives of nomads, especially the Mongols?

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<td>Khiva</td>
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<td>Excursion around Khiva (old fortress)</td>
<td>Transfer to Urgench Airport</td>
<td>Transfer to Fergana city</td>
<td>Excursion in Fergana valley</td>
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<td>Excursion in Fergana with guide</td>
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<td>Istanbul</td>
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<td>Breakfast at Hotel</td>
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<td>Private Boat Tour, Beyoglu district</td>
<td>Depart at 10:30 am</td>
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<td>St. Antoine Church, Galata Tower</td>
<td>Transfer to Istanbul Airport</td>
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<td>Flight TK 81 departs at 2:00 pm</td>
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**Zoroastrianism**

**Synopsis**
- The problem is two opposing Gods (good and evil).
- The solution is worshipping the one true good God.
- The technique for achieving this is living a good and upright life.
- The exemplars who chart this path are outstanding citizens in the Zoroastrian community.

**Questions**

**I. Belief of Zoroastrianism**
- What is the main feature of Zoroastrianism?
- What are some similarities and differences between Zoroastrianism and Judaism?

**II. Zoroastrianism and Iranian Religions**
- How did Zoroastrianism relate with other Iranian religions?
- Was anything adopted or abandoned?

**III. Zoroastrianism – Relationship with Buddhism**
- What was the relationship like between Zoroastrianism and Buddhism in Central Asia?
- What kind of influence was there? What interchanges took place between the two religions?

**IV. Zoroastrianism in Central Asia**
- Who played an important role in bringing Zoroastrianism to the Silk Road?
- Why did it move eastward into China? How did the Chinese react to Zoroastrianism?

**Manichaeism**

**Synopsis**
- The problem is the struggle between the spiritual world of light and the material world of darkness.
- The solution is releasing light in the present world.
- The technique for achieving this is to follow carefully proscribed rules that govern the light.
- The exemplars are the Elect, those who take vows to live in harmony with the light.

**Questions**

**I. Foundation of Manichaeism**
- What other religions influenced Mani as he founded Manichaeism?
- What aspects from these other religions became a part of Manichaeism?

**II. Teaching of Mani**
- In his universal teachings, how did Mani accept and synthesize other religions?
- What did Mani mean by his message, “to speak their language”?

**III. Relationship with Other Religions on the Silk Road**
- As it spread along the Silk Road, how did Manichaeism relate and react to other religions it encountered? In particular, Christianity and Buddhism?
- How did Manichaeist teachings function in the spread of the religion?

**IV. Manichaeism in China**
- What was the general reaction of China to other religions? How did the Chinese react to Manichaeism?
- How did Manichaeans seek favor from the Chinese?