

# Cultural History of the Eastern Silk Road

## 絲綢之路東段文化簡史

FH2CM03M

Briefing

13/3/ 2024

Dr. SHI Ying

# What is the subject about?

- key features of the cultural history of the **eastern portion of The Silk Road** across the **Han and Tang Dynasties**
- Explore the transformation the Silk Road throughout early and medieval China
- Culture life and cosmopolitanism in imperial China: history, religion, ritual, art, architecture, archaeology, music and dance
- Discover the relics of Han and Tang empire in Xi'an, by visiting the sites in person

# Overview

- 8 July- 19 July (12 days)
- Destination: Xi'an 西安, Shaanxi Province 陝西, China
- Partner University: Xi'an Jiaotong University 西安交通大學
- Hotel: 3 stars, near the campus of XJU
- Students: 30 PolyU, ≤30 XJU
- Group study with students in Xi'an
- Medium of instruction and assessment: **English**
  - 2 guest lectures , one in Chinese

# Course Outline

- The Silk Road since Han Dynasty: Interaction with the Hu and the states in the “Western Region”
- The Cosmopolitan Terminus of Silk Road: Historical Chang’an and Modern Xi’an
- The Silk Road and the influx of foreign religions
- The Time Capsule of Silk Road: Dunhuang Frescoes
- Dances and Music on the Silk Road
  
- 2 guest lectures: scholars in Xi’an
  - Dunhuang Academy China 敦煌研究院
  - Northwest University in Xi’an 西北大學

# Guest Lecturer

- 張元林 ZHANG Yuanlin
- Associate Head of Dunhuang Academy
- Research interest: visual art of Buddhism in Dunhuang, Buddhist History
- Topic: How to analysis the Buddhist murals in Dunhuang?



# Schedule

- Morning:  
Lectures ( Dr. Shi/ Guest lecturer)  
Tutorials after lectures
- Afternoon:  
Visit museums and historical sites in Xi'an
- Evening:  
dinner at local popular restaurants, free time

# Study tour: Terracotta Army in the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor (3rd century BC)



# Study tour: Tang West Market Museum & Giant Wild Goose Pagoda (7<sup>th</sup> century)





# Shaanxi History Museum

- one of the largest museums in China featured with relics of 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC-10<sup>th</sup> century AC China ( Han to Song Dynasty)



# Qian Ling 乾陵 (7th century)

- mausoleum of the first and only empress regnant WU Zetian 武則天 and her husband
- Stone statues of 61 Foreign Officials
- Wordless Stele of Wu Zetian



# Famen Temple 法門寺 (3<sup>rd</sup> century BC)

- Buddhist temple with 1000+ years of history
- Important royal temple in Tang Dynasty
- Śarīra 舍利子, Relics of the Buddha after cremation



# Assessment

- **Attendance 10%**
  - students should attend each lectures, tutorials and study tour
  - Absence and late without requesting leave in advance will result in point deductions
  
- **Oral group presentation 30%**
  - no script allowed
  - 3 or 4 students/group
  - present on the last day of the trip
  - 20 minutes/ group (5-6 minutes/person)

# Assessment

- **Final quiz 20%**
  - Open book
  - closed & open questions
- **Individual Final Term Paper 40%**
  - deadline: 1 week after the trip
  - 1500-2000 words