HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF SOGDIAN SOCIETY: STRATA AND THEIR MUTUAL RELATIONS

Sattorov Eldor Bobir o‘g‘li
Silk Road Innovation University
Vice-Rector for Research
Associate Professor
sattoroveldor1992@gmail.com
+99890-193-72-82
https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21154934

Annotatsiya: Maqolada Sug‘d jamiyatining ijtimoiy tarkibi, asosiy tabaqalari va ularning o‘zaro munosabatlari tarixiy-madaniy nuqtai nazardan tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda hukmdorlar va zodagonlar, savdogar-aristokratiya, ruhoniylar, dehqonlar, hunarmandlar, xizmatkorlar, qullar hamda diaspora jamoalarining jamiyat ichidagi vazifalari yoritiladi. Sug‘d shahar-davlatlari, karvon savdosi, qarindoshlik tarmoqlari, diniy muhit va huquqiy-hujjatli munosabatlar asosida tabaqalar o‘rtasidagi iqtisodiy, siyosiy va ijtimoiy bog‘liqliklar ochib beriladi. Maqolada Sug‘d jamiyati qat’iy yopiq tuzilma emas, balki savdo, shahar madaniyati va mintaqaviy aloqalar ta'sirida harakatchan ijtimoiy tizim sifatida namoyon bo‘lgani asoslanadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Sug‘d jamiyati, ijtimoiy tabaqalar, zodagonlar, savdogarlar, ruhoniylar, dehqonlar, hunarmandlar, qullar, diaspora, Buyuk Ipak yo‘li.

Аннотация: В статье анализируются социальная структура согдийского общества, основные сословия и характер их взаимных отношений в историко-культурном аспекте. Особое внимание уделяется правителям и знати, торговой аристократии, жречеству, земледельцам, ремесленникам, служащим, рабам и диаспорным общинам. На основе материалов о согдийских городах-государствах, караванной торговле, родственных сетях, религиозной среде и документально-правовых отношениях раскрываются экономические, политические и социальные связи между различными слоями общества. Доказывается, что согдийское общество представляло собой не замкнутую и неподвижную систему, а динамичную социальную модель, сформированную под влиянием торговли, городской культуры и межрегиональных связей.

Ключевые слова: согдийское общество, социальные слои, знать, купцы, жречество, земледельцы, ремесленники, рабы, диаспора, Великий шелковый путь.

Abstract: This article analyzes the social structure of Sogdian society, its major strata and the character of their mutual relations from a historical and cultural perspective. Particular attention is paid to rulers and aristocrats, the merchant elite, priests, farmers, artisans, servants, slaves and diaspora communities. On the basis of Sogdian city-states, caravan trade, kinship networks, religious life and documentary-legal relations, the article reveals economic, political and social connections between different social groups. It is argued that Sogdian society was not a closed and static hierarchy, but a dynamic social system shaped by urban culture, long-distance commerce and interregional communication.

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

Keywords: Sogdian society, social strata, aristocracy, merchants, priesthood, farmers, artisans, slaves, diaspora, Silk Road.

The study of Sogdian society is important for understanding the social history of Central Asia and the wider Silk Road world. Sogdiana, with its main centers in the Zarafshan valley and in cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Panjikent and other oasis settlements, developed a distinctive social organization between late antiquity and the early Middle Ages. Its position between Iran, the steppe, India and China made Sogdian society highly urban, mobile and commercially oriented. Therefore, the social structure of the Sogdians cannot be interpreted only as a local hierarchy of rulers and subjects. It should be studied as a complex system in which city-state politics, landownership, caravan trade, religious institutions and diaspora communities interacted with one another [1, 15].

The relevance of the topic is determined by the fact that Sogdian society combined several social principles at the same time. On the one hand, it preserved traditional forms of aristocratic power, local rulership, landed prestige and kinship authority. On the other hand, it created a commercial elite whose influence grew through long-distance trade, multilingual communication and financial networks. Sogdian merchants were not simply economic actors; in many contexts they also acted as diplomats, translators, caravan leaders, patrons of religion and mediators between different political powers [2, 54]. Such a combination made the Sogdian social order more flexible than many agrarian hierarchies of the same period.

The aim of this article is to analyze the social composition of Sogdian society and to reveal the mechanisms of interaction among its major strata. The main objectives are to describe the political and aristocratic elite, examine the economic role of merchants and caravan leaders, define the place of priests and religious communities, analyze the rural and urban productive groups, and clarify the position of women, servants and dependent people. The article also seeks to show how these groups were connected through property, contracts, marriage, patronage, taxation, migration and religious patronage.

The methodological basis of the article is historical-comparative analysis. Written sources, archaeological data, wall paintings, inscriptions, Sogdian letters, Chinese chronicles and modern scholarship are treated as complementary materials. Since Sogdian society did not leave a single systematic social code, its structure must be reconstructed indirectly. This reconstruction requires attention not only to formal ranks but also to practical relations: who controlled land, who organized caravans, who mediated disputes, who transmitted literacy and who represented communities abroad. Such an approach makes it possible to understand the Sogdian social order as a network of functions rather than as a rigid pyramid.

In social history, the term social structure refers to the stable arrangement of groups, statuses and relations that organize communal life. In the case of Sogdiana, this arrangement included rulers, noble houses, merchants, priests, landholders, peasants, artisans, scribes, servants and slaves. However, the Sogdian example demonstrates that social hierarchy was not based only on birth or land. Wealth, mobility, literacy and access to international networks could also increase social prestige. This is why the merchant stratum occupies a central place in any analysis of Sogdian society [3, 89].

The Sogdian social order was closely connected with the city-state model. Unlike large centralized empires, Sogdiana consisted of several oasis polities that preserved a degree of local autonomy. Each city possessed its own ruling house, aristocratic families, temples, markets, agricultural hinterland and dependent villages. This political fragmentation did not weaken Sogdian society; rather, it created many centers of initiative. The elite of each city could participate in local politics while also maintaining long-distance relations with other Sogdian communities [4, 42].

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

Another methodological problem is the relation between native Sogdiana and Sogdian diaspora settlements. Sogdians lived not only in their homeland but also in the Gansu corridor, Turfan, Dunhuang, Chang'an, Mongolia and other regions. In diaspora contexts, social relations were partly transformed. Merchants, caravan chiefs and community elders gained special importance because they represented Sogdian interests before foreign authorities. Chinese sources used the title sabao for leaders connected with Sogdian or Central Asian communities, which shows that diaspora organization had both ethnic and administrative dimensions [2, 68].

The study of Sogdian society must also consider the difference between ideology and social practice. Ideologically, aristocratic origin and noble status remained significant. Practically, commerce and mobility created new forms of power. A wealthy merchant could control capital, credit, transport, foreign contacts and religious donations. A priest could influence ritual life and collective identity. A scribe could shape legal relations through contracts and letters. Thus, the Sogdian social system functioned through the cooperation of several groups rather than through the absolute dominance of one class.

Political elite and aristocracy

The upper stratum of Sogdian society consisted of rulers, local kings, noble families and landholding aristocrats. Sogdian cities were ruled by dynastic houses that represented political authority, military protection and ritual legitimacy. The rulers of Samarkand, Bukhara, Panjikent and other centers were not isolated monarchs; they depended on aristocratic support, urban wealth, agrarian resources and diplomatic relations with neighboring powers. Their authority was expressed through coinage, official titles, palatial architecture, court ceremonies and representation in art [5, 34].

The aristocracy controlled important resources: land, fortified residences, administrative offices and military forces. Wall paintings from aristocratic houses at Afrasiab and Panjikent suggest that noble identity was displayed through banquets, processions, hunting scenes, diplomatic receptions and heroic narratives. These artistic programs were not merely decorative. They communicated social rank, political memory and cultural values. The house of an aristocrat functioned as a space where family prestige, hospitality, patronage and political authority were visibly performed [6, 61].

A significant feature of Sogdian aristocracy was its connection with both land and trade. In many societies landowners and merchants belonged to separate social worlds, but in Sogdiana these spheres often overlapped. Noble families could invest in caravans, protect trade routes or use commercial profit to strengthen their political influence. This overlap explains why the merchant class in Sogdiana could acquire aristocratic features. Some scholars describe Sogdian civic society as a community in which landowners and merchants together formed the leading urban stratum [3, 94].

Relations between rulers and aristocrats were based on mutual dependence. The ruler needed noble families for military support, local administration and fiscal collection. The aristocrats needed the ruler for legitimacy, protection and access to external diplomacy. This balance was especially important because Sogdian polities were situated between powerful neighbors such as the Turks, the Sasanians, China and later the Arab Caliphate. In such a political environment, social hierarchy had to be flexible enough to respond to changing alliances [1, 124].

The merchant stratum was the most distinctive element of Sogdian society. From the fifth to the eighth century, Sogdians became the principal caravan merchants of Central Asia and created networks that reached China, Mongolia, India, Iran, Byzantium and Eastern Europe. Their commercial activity was based on linguistic competence, family connections, credit, trust and the ability to mediate between different political and cultural systems [2, 54]. In this sense, the merchant was not only a trader but also a cultural broker.

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

The Sogdian merchant elite had several internal levels. At the top were wealthy caravan owners, investors, community leaders and long-distance traders who could organize large commercial operations. Below them were traveling merchants, agents, interpreters, brokers, transport organizers and small peddlers. Commercial documents from Turfan and other Silk Road sites show that Sogdian merchants participated in transactions involving silk, precious metals, slaves, medicines, perfumes, horses and other goods [2, 80]. These transactions required cooperation between different social groups: merchants needed camel drivers, guards, scribes, translators, artisans and local officials.

One of the most important mechanisms of Sogdian commerce was trust. Long-distance trade was risky: caravans crossed deserts, mountains and politically unstable territories. Since modern banking and centralized legal enforcement did not exist, merchants relied on kinship, witness systems, guarantors, community reputation and written contracts. Such mechanisms connected economic relations with social hierarchy. A person from a respected family or a trusted community could more easily obtain credit and partners [7, 4].

The diaspora strengthened the social role of merchants. In foreign cities, Sogdian communities needed leaders who could negotiate with local authorities and maintain internal order. The sabao institution in China illustrates this process. It shows that merchant and community leadership could become recognized in official administration. Therefore, Sogdian merchants were able to transform economic influence into social and political authority. This is one reason why the merchant class in Sogdian society cannot be reduced to a middle stratum; it often stood close to the aristocracy [2, 68].

Relations between merchants and other strata were multidirectional. Merchants depended on peasants for food supplies, artisans for manufactured goods, rulers for protection, priests for ritual legitimacy and scribes for documentation. At the same time, these groups benefited from merchant wealth. Temples received donations, artisans received orders, cities received taxes and rulers gained diplomatic channels. Thus, trade was not an isolated economic activity; it was a social mechanism that linked the entire society.

Religion formed another important layer of Sogdian society. Sogdiana was characterized by religious diversity. Local forms of Zoroastrianism, the cult of Nana and other deities, Buddhism, Manichaeism and Christianity all existed in different contexts. This diversity was connected with the geographical position of Sogdiana and with the mobility of its merchants. Religious specialists, priests, monks and community leaders performed ritual functions, preserved sacred traditions and supported group identity [8, 96].

The priestly stratum had authority that differed from political and commercial power. Its influence was based on ritual knowledge, temple institutions, funerary practices, festivals and the interpretation of cosmic order. In a society where trade brought constant contact with foreign customs, religion helped preserve continuity. At the same time, Sogdian religious life was open to exchange. Merchants carried not only goods but also images, texts, beliefs and ritual practices. This made Sogdian society one of the channels through which religions moved along the Silk Road [9, 117].

Relations between priests and aristocrats were especially close. Noble houses patronized temples and religious ceremonies, while religious institutions strengthened aristocratic legitimacy. Wall paintings and funerary objects indicate that elite families used religious symbols to present themselves as morally and cosmically ordered. Priests also interacted with merchants. Caravan life required protection, oaths, blessings and ritual security. The patronage of religious communities by merchants was a means of gaining prestige and expressing collective solidarity [6, 87].

Religious specialists were also connected with literacy and education. Although not all priests were scribes and not all scribes were priests, religious institutions often supported textual culture. In Sogdian society, literacy had practical, commercial and sacred dimensions. Contracts, letters,

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

inscriptions and religious texts together formed a written environment. This environment helped regulate relations among strata and maintain memory across distance.

The prosperity of Sogdian cities depended on agriculture. The Zarafshan valley and other oasis zones were productive because of irrigation, village labor and carefully managed agricultural land. Farmers formed the demographic base of society. They produced grain, fruits, grapes, wine, fodder and other goods needed by cities and caravans. Without rural production, urban life and long-distance trade could not have functioned [4, 51].

The rural population was internally differentiated. Some people were free cultivators, some were dependent peasants, and others worked under the control of large landholders or noble estates. Landholding relations connected peasants with aristocrats and city authorities. Taxes, rents, obligations and seasonal labor linked rural communities to the political elite. At the same time, farmers were not socially invisible. Their labor supported temples, markets, military needs and urban consumption. The entire Sogdian economy rested on the balance between irrigated agriculture and trade [1, 47].

The relationship between farmers and merchants was indirect but significant. Caravan trade required food, animals, textiles, wine and other products from the countryside. Merchants brought external goods and silver, while farmers provided the material stability of the homeland. In this way, the social structure of Sogdiana joined two worlds: the settled agricultural oasis and the mobile caravan network. The aristocracy often mediated this relationship because it controlled land and could participate in commerce.

Rural communities also preserved local customs, kinship relations and religious practices. While merchants represented mobility, farmers represented continuity. The interaction between these two principles gave Sogdian society its distinctive form. It was not a purely mercantile society detached from land, nor was it a closed agrarian society. It was an oasis civilization whose social energy emerged from the combination of productive land and long-distance movement.

Sogdian cities were centers of craft production. Artisans produced textiles, metalwork, ceramics, woodwork, paintings, leather goods, weapons and luxury objects. Their work served local consumption, aristocratic display, religious practice and export. The high level of Sogdian art and material culture demonstrates the importance of skilled labor in urban society [6, 102].

Artisans occupied an intermediate social position. They were not usually part of the ruling elite, but their skills could bring economic stability and patronage. A master craftsman working for aristocratic houses or temples might enjoy higher status than ordinary laborers. Workshops depended on merchants for raw materials and markets. Merchants depended on artisans for goods that could be exchanged along the Silk Road. Thus, craft production was directly connected with the commercial character of Sogdian society.

Scribes and interpreters formed another professional group with special importance. In a multilingual trading environment, the ability to write contracts, letters and accounts was a source of power. Sogdian documents from distant locations show that writing linked homeland and diaspora. A scribe could make economic obligations visible, preserve agreements and help settle disputes. Therefore, literacy created a bridge between social groups and between regions [10, 31].

Urban labor also included transport workers, guards, servants, entertainers and market personnel. These groups are less visible in elite sources, but they were necessary for daily life. Caravans required animal handlers and guards; markets required sellers and porters; aristocratic houses required servants and performers. The social system depended on many people whose names rarely appear in historical narratives, yet their labor made the wealth of the upper strata possible.

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

Family and kinship were central to Sogdian social relations. The Ancient Letters show that commercial life was not only a male economic sphere but also affected women, children and families left in diaspora settlements. The famous letter of Miwnay, written from the Dunhuang region, reveals the vulnerability of a Sogdian woman abandoned by her husband and the importance of family support across distance [11, 45]. This document is valuable because it allows us to see social structure from below, through anxiety, dependence and the need for protection.

Women in Sogdian society could occupy different positions depending on class, family and context. Aristocratic women participated in elite representation through marriage alliances, household management and patronage. Merchant women could be connected with trade families and diaspora networks. Rural and urban working women contributed to household production and social reproduction. While patriarchal structures were strong, Sogdian evidence suggests that women were not completely absent from legal and social life [12, 73].

Marriage connected families and could serve economic or political purposes. For noble houses, marriage helped preserve status and alliances. For merchant families, it could strengthen trust and partnership across cities. For diaspora communities, kinship helped maintain identity in foreign environments. Therefore, family relations were not private matters only; they were part of the social infrastructure of Sogdian society.

The position of women also reveals the limits of social mobility. Wealth and family status could provide protection, while poverty or abandonment could produce dependence. The same society that created powerful merchant networks also produced vulnerable individuals when those networks failed. Thus, the study of family relations balances the image of Sogdian success by showing the social costs of mobility and migration.

The lower strata of Sogdian society included servants, debt dependents, laborers and slaves. Slavery existed in the Silk Road world, and Sogdian merchants traded in slaves as well as other commodities [2, 84]. The presence of slaves does not mean that the entire economy was slave-based, but it shows that inequality was a real part of Sogdian social life. Dependent people could work in households, agriculture, transport or service roles.

Servants and slaves were connected to elite households, temples, caravans and markets. Their status depended on legal, economic and personal conditions. Some were permanent slaves; others may have been temporary dependents or debt servants. Since sources are fragmentary, it is difficult to reconstruct all categories precisely. Nevertheless, the existence of dependent groups shows that Sogdian prosperity was not equally distributed. The wealth of merchants and nobles rested partly on the labor and vulnerability of lower groups.

Relations between upper and lower strata were mediated by obligation and protection. A servant depended on a household; a slave depended on an owner; a poor worker depended on wages or patronage. Such relations could be harsh, but they also formed part of the social order. In many ancient and medieval societies, dependence was not outside society; it was one of the ways society organized labor and hierarchy.

The analysis of dependent groups is important because it prevents an idealized image of the Sogdians as only successful merchants and cultural mediators. Sogdian society was creative and dynamic, but it was also hierarchical. Its achievements were produced by many strata, including those whose voices are mostly absent from written sources.

The relations among Sogdian social strata were shaped by several mechanisms. The first was economic exchange. Farmers supplied food and raw materials; artisans produced goods; merchants distributed them; rulers taxed them; priests received offerings; scribes recorded agreements. Each

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

group depended on the others. This interdependence made social structure functional, not merely hierarchical.

The second mechanism was patronage. Aristocrats patronized artisans, priests and dependents. Merchants patronized temples, community institutions and caravan personnel. Patronage created obligations and loyalty. It also converted wealth into honor. In Sogdian society, social prestige was not only inherited; it had to be displayed through generosity, protection and public participation [6, 115].

The third mechanism was documentation. Contracts, letters, inscriptions and official records regulated relations across distance. Written culture allowed people to fix debts, marriages, sales, partnerships and responsibilities. This was especially important for diaspora merchants whose business depended on trust across hundreds or thousands of kilometers. The Sogdian language and script thus became instruments of social organization [10, 54].

The fourth mechanism was religion. Rituals, temples and funerary practices connected families, communities and classes. Religion could legitimize rulers, strengthen group identity and provide a moral language for social order. At the same time, the religious pluralism of Sogdian society made it possible for different groups to participate in different cultural networks.

The fifth mechanism was mobility. Movement along the Silk Road transformed social relations. A person could leave the homeland, join a diaspora community, become a caravan agent or rise through trade. However, mobility also created risk, separation and dependence. Therefore, Sogdian social structure combined opportunity and vulnerability.

The first result of the study is that Sogdian society should be understood as a multilayered system in which political, economic, religious and kinship structures interacted. Rulers and aristocrats preserved formal authority, but merchants played an unusually strong role because trade was the main source of international influence. The merchant class did not simply stand below the aristocracy; in many cases it approached or merged with it.

The second result is that social relations in Sogdiana were based on interdependence. Agricultural producers, artisans, priests, scribes, merchants and rulers all contributed to the functioning of society. No stratum could exist independently. The city needed the village; the caravan needed the city; the merchant needed the scribe; the ruler needed the merchant; the temple needed donors; the diaspora needed family and community leadership.

The third result is that the Sogdian diaspora changed the meaning of social status. Outside the homeland, community leaders, caravan chiefs and multilingual merchants could acquire administrative and symbolic authority. The same person could be a trader, diplomat, interpreter, patron and representative of an ethnic community. This multiplicity of roles made Sogdian society flexible and adaptive.

The fourth result is that Sogdian social history must include both elite and non-elite groups. Aristocratic art, trade documents and Chinese chronicles often emphasize successful men, rulers and merchants. However, women, servants, slaves, peasants and laborers were also essential to the social system. Their inclusion makes the picture of Sogdian society more complete and more historically balanced.

The social structure of Sogdian society was formed at the intersection of oasis agriculture, urban culture and Silk Road commerce. Its main strata included rulers, aristocrats, merchants, priests, farmers, artisans, scribes, servants, slaves and diaspora communities. These groups were arranged hierarchically, but their relations were also dynamic and functional. The power of Sogdian society lay in its ability to connect different social roles through trade, kinship, writing, religion and patronage.

The aristocracy provided political authority and social prestige. The merchants created economic expansion and interregional communication. Priests and religious communities maintained ritual

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

identity and cultural continuity. Farmers and artisans sustained the material base of society. Scribes and interpreters organized communication and legal memory. Women and families preserved kinship networks, while dependent groups supplied labor under unequal conditions. Together these groups formed a social organism that was both hierarchical and mobile.

The study shows that Sogdian society cannot be reduced to the image of merchants alone, although merchants were its most famous representatives. It was a complex civilization whose success on the Silk Road depended on the cooperation of many strata. Its social order was neither completely closed nor completely egalitarian. It allowed mobility through trade and diaspora activity, but it also preserved inequalities of birth, wealth, gender and dependence.

Therefore, the social history of the Sogdians is important for the broader study of Central Asian civilization. It demonstrates how an oasis society could become a transregional force by combining agriculture, urban institutions, trade networks and cultural mediation. The Sogdian example shows that the Silk Road was not only a route of goods but also a system of social relations in which hierarchy, cooperation, mobility and identity were constantly renegotiated.

References

1. de la Vaissière, Étienne. Sogdian Traders: A History. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
2. de la Vaissière, Étienne. Sogdian Trade. Encyclopaedia Iranica. Published 2004, updated 2013.
3. Yoshida, Yutaka. The Sogdian Merchant Network. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History. Oxford University Press, 2021.
4. Marshak, B. I. Sogdiana. In History of Civilizations of Central Asia. Vol. III. Paris: UNESCO, 1996.
5. Livshits, Vladimir A. Sogdian Epigraphy of Central Asia and Semirech'e. London: SOAS, 2015.
6. Azarpay, Guitty. Sogdian Painting: The Pictorial Epic in Oriental Art. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.
7. Zhang, Y. A social-leverage mechanism on the Silk Road: the private emergence of institutions in Central Asia from the 7th to the 9th century. Journal of Institutional Economics, 2017.
8. Grenet, Frantz. Religions of Sogdiana. Encyclopaedia Iranica and related studies on Sogdian religion, 1984-2005.
9. Ashurov, Barakatullo. Religions and Religious Space in Sogdian Culture. Sino-Platonic Papers, no. 306, 2020.
10. Sims-Williams, Nicholas. The Sogdian Ancient Letters. In Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum and related publications. London, 1985-2001.
11. Henning, W. B. The Date of the Sogdian Ancient Letters. Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, 1948.
12. Lurje, Pavel. Personal Names in Sogdian Texts. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010.
13. Smithsonian Institution. The Sogdians: Influencers on the Silk Roads. Freer and Sackler Galleries, online exhibition.
14. Whitfield, Susan. Life along the Silk Road. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
15. Skaff, Jonathan Karam. Sui-Tang China and Its Turko-Mongol Neighbors. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.