

Medieval Iran (600-1250 CE) History 70E



Professor: Dr. Touraj Daryaei

Class time and location: TuTh 2:00- 3:20p at MSTB 118

Office: Krieger Hall 274

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Required Readings:

J.P. Berkey, *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600-1800*, Cambridge, 2003.

M. Gronke, *Iran: A Short History from Islamization to Present*, Princeton, 2008.

R.P. Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in Early Islamic History*, London, 2001.

Course description:

This course is a survey of Iranian history in the context of Late Antique and Medieval Islamic History. We will begin with the rise of Khusro II (Parviz) in 590 CE to the Mongol conquest in 1254 CE. During this time period Iran went through much political and religious upheaval and changes which is usually studied in the context of Medieval Islamic history. The aim of this course is to focus on Sasanian Iran and then the Perso-Islamicate realm of the Medieval world which includes the modern countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus, as well as Iraq.

*There are NO MAKEUP EXAMS.

Grade breakdown:
2 Exams (50 points each)

Schedule:

Week 1: Sasanian Iran (500-650CE) APRIL 1, 3

READINGS: Gronke Introduction / Berkey Part I

Lecture and Reading Topics: Khusro I and reforms in the Sasanian empire; Kings and queens; administration and economy of the empire; society; Communal religions: Jews, Christians, Manichaeans and Zoroastrians.

Week 2: The Arab Muslim Conquest (600-700CE) APRIL 8, 10

READINGS: Gronke pp. 1-9 / Berkey Part II

Lecture and Reading Topics: Internal divisions and dynastic wars; Yazdgerd III: the last Sasanian king; Arab Muslim Conquest; amsar and camps: Kufa and Basra

Week 3: The Rashidun Caliphs, Ummayyads and the Iranian Plateau (632-750CE) 15, 17

READINGS: Gronke pp. 9-24 / Berkey Part II

Ruling over Iran from Damascus; Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians under Muslim Rule; Shi'ism and Sunni Islam; Jizya and poll-tax; To be or not to be a Muslim.

Week 4: The Abbasid Revolution and the Caliphate at Baghdad (750-800CE) 22, 24

READINGS: Berkey Part III

Abu Muslim and the Iranian Revolutionaries; The world of Baghdad; Persian and Arab worlds together; The revival of Sasanians in Islamic garb.

Week 5: The Caliphate and Religious Movements (800-900CE) APRIL 29, MAY 1

READINGS: Berkey Part III

Religious movement of Behafarid, Moghana' and Babak Khorramdin; sects and heresies; Ma'mun and his rise to power; the Shi'a on the Iranian Plateau; From Apocalypse to History: Middle Persian texts

Midterm (MAY 6)

Week 6: Independent Dynasties on the Iranian Plateau (800-999CE) MAY 8, 13

READINGS: Gronke pp. 24-30 / Berkey Part III

Saffarids; Samanids; Buyids and Ghaznavids

Week 7: Rise of the Persian Language and Literature MAY 15, 20

READINGS: Gronke pp. 33-37

Middle Persian, Persian, Sogdian and Arabic; The rise of Persian languages; Persian literature and poetry; the Shahnameh of Ferdowsi (Book of Kings).

Week 8: Turkish migration and Local Dynasties (1000-1200CE) MAY 22, 27

READINGS: Gronke pp. 37-48 / Berkey Part IV

Central Asia in Late Antiquity and the Medieval period; The Turkish Patronage of Persian Literature; The Ghaznavids and the Seljuks

Week 9: Medieval Persian art, Science and Culture

MAY 29, JUNE 3

READINGS: Berkey Part IV

Persian paintings and art; Khawrizmi; Razi; Biruni; Ibn Sina; Persian food; Games: Polo, Chess, Backgammon and jousting; poetry and music.

Week 10: The Mongol Invasion (1200s) JUNE 5, 10

READINGS: Gronke pp. 51-64 / Berkey Part IV

Kharazmshahs and the Mongols; the Mongol invasion and its aftermath.

Final EXAM II: Thu, Jun 12, 1:30-3:30pm

