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L22 History 5431
Core Seminar in Comparative and World History
Pre-Industrial Societies of the Medieval and Early Modern Eras

FALL 2008
Tuesday 1:00-4:00pm
Eliot 200F

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Wednesdays 11-12am

DESCRIPTION

The first industrial societies appeared in Western Europe during the nineteenth century, but cities, states, and agrarian civilizations existed for about five thousand years before then. Pre-industrial societies operated under shared constraints, and these constraints generated uniformities in socio-economic organization, state structure, politics, culture, social life and religion. This seminar examines shared constraints and uniformities of pre-industrial societies during the last millennium before the Industrial Revolution (roughly 700 to 1700 CE) in a comparative and global perspective. Close reading of prominent case studies - all selected from my own area of expertise which is Islamic History - will lead to a critical engagement with theoretical perspectives on pre-industrial societies. The course will close with an overview of modernity in order to underscore its contrasts with the pre-industrial era from the perspective of “big history.” This seminar will be of interest to students of all historical fields as well as students of the medieval and early modern eras in other disciplines.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Michael David Bonner. *Jihad in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Richard W. Bulliet. *Islam: The View from the Edge*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
- David Christian. *Maps of Time*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- Patricia Crone. *Pre-Industrial Societies*. Oxford: Oneworld Press, 2003 [1989].
- Dimitri Gutas. *Greek Thought, Arab Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early Abbasid Society (2nd-4th and 8th-10th C.)*. London: Routledge, 1998.

SCHEDULE

<p>September 2 <i>Pre-Industrial Societies</i>, Chapter 1 <i>When Baghdad Ruled</i>, Chapters 1-6</p>
<p>September 9 <i>Pre-Industrial Societies</i>, Chapters 3&4 <i>When Baghdad Ruled</i>, Chapters 7-10</p>
<p>September 16 <i>Greek Thought, Arab Culture</i>, Part I</p>
<p>September 23 <i>Greek Thought, Arab Culture</i>, Part II & Epilogue <i>Pre-Industrial Societies</i>, Chapter 5</p>
<p>September 30 <i>Muhammad's Grave</i>, Introduction & Chapters 1-4</p>
<p>October 7 <i>Muhammad's Grave</i>, Chapters 5-7 & Epilogue <i>Pre-Industrial Societies</i>, Chapter 7</p>
<p>October 14 <i>Loyalty and Leadership</i>, Chapters 1&2</p>
<p>October 21 <i>Loyalty and Leadership</i>, Chapters 3&4 <i>Pre-Industrial Societies</i>, Chapter 6</p>
<p>October 28 <i>Islam: The View from the Edge</i>, Introduction & Chapters 1-5</p>
<p>November 4 <i>Islam: The View from the Edge</i>, Chapters 6-11 <i>Pre-Industrial Societies</i>, Chapter 2</p>
<p>November 11 <i>Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo</i>, all.</p>

November 18 <i>Jihad in Islamic History</i> , all.
November 25 <i>Maps of Time</i> , Part IV (Optional: Parts II & III)
December 2 <i>Maps of Time</i> , Part V <i>Pre-Industrial Societies</i> , Chapters 8&9