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(T. Khalidi)

History 201
Time: 3 hours Final Exam

February 5, 1996

Instructions: Answer TWO of the following. Write clearly; be self critical; think of things like argument, structure and relevance.

1. "History does not repeat itself; historians do." Discuss.
2. Consider a historian of ancient or medieval history. He/she is working on a period where there are very few sources and where the over-all picture is full of gaps in knowledge. He/she has, in many cases, to reconstruct or imagine what might have happened. Would a film-maker be of any help to the historian in this respect?
3. Is "civilization" useful as a unit of historical analysis? and if so, how? For instance, is it more (or less) useful than other equivalent units such as "people", "nation", "state", "dynasty" and so forth?
4. We know quite a bit about how and why revolutions begin and how they proceed. We know less about how they end. Can you suggest ways or patterns in which revolutions end?
5. Can Ibn Khaldun's concept of 'asabiyya be applied to the understanding of modern history?
6. "People more closely resemble their own times than they do the times of their ancestors". Discuss Ibn Khaldun's emphasis on contemporaneity and its implications (positive or negative) for historical understanding.
7. "Most 'great' men in history were evil". Discuss.

