

HIST 3638 / Technology from Antiquity to the Middle Ages
Response No. 1

Due in class on October 29, 2018 (Monday)

Response No. 1 is mainly concerned with two readings:

- **Ovitt's "The Cultural Context of Western Technology"** and
- **Burke's "Islam at the Center."**

It should be about 4 pages in length. You need to do the following for the written response:

Part 1: Summarize the basic argument given by Ovitt. Provide at least one concrete example that Ovitt uses to support his argument. (approx. 1 page)

Part 2: Given Ovitt's principal thesis, how would you explain Christian attitudes towards manual labor and craftsmanship during the first millennium of Christianity (roughly, during the fall of Rome and into the early Middle Ages)? What changed, according to Ovitt? (approx. 1 page)

Part 3: In his essay, Ovitt makes some comparisons between the state of technological development in Europe and China in the Middle Ages. Given what you have read in the earlier essay by Burke, would you say that Ovitt's argument holds up? Begin this part by writing a brief synopsis of attitudes towards science and technology in Christian Europe, China, and Islamic Civilization in the Middle Ages. Then, justify whether Ovitt's argument holds up or not. In this part, you need to compare Ovitt and Burke's arguments. (This part, total 2 pages)

Your response should be typed, double-spaced, and in 12-point Times Roman font. When you refer to the Ovitt and/or Burke sources in your paper, you may simply use in-text citations, such as (Ovitt, 23). You are free to cite other sources (besides Ovitt and Burke) in your paper but you will not be penalized for not referring to other sources.

Also, feel free to quote from both the Ovitt and Burke sources but do not have too many, and make sure they are not too long, i.e., no more than 2-3 sentences at a time.