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CHAPTER 23

Chapter 1 : Medieval World Ch.3 Study Guide

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The worst textbook ever when it comes to teaching about Islam. For this purpose, the California State Board of Education has recommended the use of, among others, a world history textbook entitled History Alive! A review of the edition of this book first published in provides a dismaying example of what has been, and in some states continues to be, wrong with public school teaching about Islam. Not to put too fine a point on it, in these pages the history and beliefs of Islam receive special treatment accorded no other religion. This curious emphasis and flattery deserve scrutiny at a time when the three states that dominate the textbook market—California, Texas, and Florida—are officially in the process of reviewing learning standards and content for new textbooks, to be printed in California, however, has suspended its review process for lack of funds, which means that the standards used in producing this volume remain in force, and the textbook remains authorized for public schools. Today, given the challenge of radical Islam to the American system of liberties and the persistent conflicts involving Israel in the Middle East, what American youths are taught about Islam, and about relations between Muslims, Christians, and Jews, is of singular importance. The Medieval World and Beyond has already elicited harsh comments from textbook critics. Bennetta, editor of the Textbook Letter and president of the Textbook League, is an energetic monitor of falsifications and distortions in authorized teaching materials. His work has been praised by education expert Diane Ravitch. Bennetta has called the volume under review "corrupt" and "pseudohistorical," warning that it imparts a "vividly sectarian, vividly promotional" attitude toward Islam amounting to "illegal religious indoctrination. But before proceeding to document that, we should note that the volume also exemplifies the current view of education and textbooks as "edutainment," framed to compete with popular culture for the attention of students. Edutainment products are like movies: When their messages are not straightforward, the underlying biases, distortions, errors, and gaps must be understood by inference. Quite properly, the book gives most space to Western history and culture as the principal source of American civilization. Fourteen of its 35 chapters address the legacy of Rome, European feudalism, the growth of towns, the Byzantine Empire, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the age of exploration, and the scientific revolution. Other units treat the culture and kingdoms of West Africa 4 chapters , imperial China 4 chapters , medieval Japan 3 chapters , and the pre-Columbian civilizations of the Americas 5 chapters. What will detain us here, however, is the unit on "The Rise of Islam," noteworthy because it provides several varieties of detail no other strand of world history receives. Remarkably for a book of medieval history, these pages include seven photographs of Muslims engaged in religious observance today, strongly hinting at its real agenda: A preface to the unit on Islam entitled "Setting the Stage" concedes that "today Arabs are a small minority of Muslims worldwide. Arab Christianity is absent, even though ancient Christian communities existed throughout the period under study and survive to this day in Arab lands including Egypt, Lebanon, and Iraq. While the Persians and the Turks, the Indians and the Southeast Asians, receive passing mentions, none of these Islamic civilizations rates a chapter or even a subhead. All this reinforces the sense that Islam is "the Arab religion. Neither Cordoba nor Cairo nor Baghdad in its period of greatest power and influence was ever politically subordinate to Arabia. The chapter summary repeats the aggrandizement of Arabia in world history, stating, "Arabia and nearby lands are at the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and Europe. More remarkable than the singling out of the Arabian Peninsula for this exceptional treatment is the similar honor accorded one individual: The Prophet Muhammad is the only person whose life and influence merit a full chapter in this book. Indeed, Muhammad is the only individual so much as named in a chapter title. More to the point, perhaps, it contains no chapter—no paragraph even—on the life of Jesus, although the founder of Christianity is at least as consequential a figure in world history as the founder of Islam—far more so for American civilization—and his life falls within the

scope of the introductory chapter on the legacy of Rome. The student is never informed that for Muslims the portrayal of Muhammad is a component of faith rather than contemporaneously attested fact. Again the contrast with the treatment of Christianity is sharp: The sole sentence on the life of Jesus reads, "Christians are followers of Jesus, who, according to Christian Scripture, was put to death on a Roman cross in the first century c. There is one reference to a Muslim raid on a caravan, but this hint of military activities by the early Muslims is followed by the benign comment, "Muhammad convinced other tribes to join the Muslim community. Under his leadership, Muslims completed the unification of Arabia. Then they began to carry the teachings of Islam beyond the Arabian Peninsula. After Abu Bakr died in c. In addition to spreading the faith of Islam, conquest allowed Muslims to gain new lands, resources, and goods. And the Arabocentrism continues: Muslims introduced the Arabic language. Along with Islam, acceptance of Arabic helped unite the diverse people of the empire. The pupil would scarcely divine that the Islamization of Persiaâ€”once a leading ancient empireâ€”did not result in the Arabization of its extensive and expansive culture. Rather, it fostered the emergence of a distinctive Islamic tradition, one of several. The Persian language became a medium for Muslim religious scholarship equal in status to Arabic. Islamic consolidation did not survive the divisions and rivalries within the Muslim dominions beginning with the death of Caliph Ali. These elements of discord and competition are no less important than those represented by the split between Rome and Byzantium described in an earlier chapter, but the authors of this textbook do not give them an equally full discussion. Islamic history is controversial not only among critics of the faith and of religion in general, but also among Muslims. This seemingly bland but intellectually distorted presentation is epitomized in the chapter summary, which states that Muhammad "taught equality. He told his followers to share their wealth and to care for the less fortunate in society. He preached tolerance for Christians and Jews as fellow worshipers of the one true God. The textbook also removes from consideration the reality that, notwithstanding the principles of Islam, Muslim societies have been and continue to be known for social inequality, neglect of the poor, and intolerance. Much more objectionable material is on display in the chapter entitled "The Teachings of Islam. Five times a day, you would hear a call to prayer throughout the city. While some people hurry to houses of worship, called mosques, others simply remain where they are to pray, even in the street. You would see people dressed modestly, and many women wearing a head scarf. You would find that Muslims do not drink alcohol or eat pork. You might learn how Muslims give money to support their houses of worship and many charitable works. Soon you would come to understand that Islam is practiced as a complete way of life. In many Muslim-majority cities in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, the Balkans, Turkey, Central Asia, Russia, the Indian subcontinent, and Southeast Asia, among other countries and regions, the call to prayer is frequently ignored, people seldom, if ever, pray in the street, women wear Western-style dress, and numerous Muslims drink alcohol. Consumption of pork is generally unknown because of limits on farming of pigs and sale of their meat, which are easier to enforce than regulations against alcohol. Mosques today are more often supported by state financing than, as in the past, by charitable donations. Above all, the repeated claim that "Islam is practiced as a complete way of life" is a declaration of radical Islam, not a description of reality. Islam, like other world religions, includes wide variations in attitude and practice. Millions of Muslims who are largely indifferent to the observance of religious rituals are still considered believers by traditional Islamic authorities. The chapter goes on to introduce the Five Pillars of Islamâ€”the declaration of faith, prayer, charity, fasting, and the pilgrimage to Mecca. A large eight-pointed diagram on the first page of the chapter shows the Five Pillars joined to jihad, sharia, and the Koran and the Sunnah. The message is obvious: Jihad and sharia are equal in standing to the Five Pillars and the Koran and Sunnah as essential components of Islam. This projection conflicts with the reality of Islam today but faithfully reproduces the arguments of Islamist ideology. Each of these points of doctrine or practice then receives a detailed exposition, always in tune with Islamist indoctrination. We read, for instance, "The Koran holds a central position for Muslims everywhere, guiding them in all aspects of their lives. Many Muslims in many countries treat Islam as a personal spiritual matter and are guided in other aspects of their lives by secular law and local custom. Koranic

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totalism about daily life is a marker of fundamentalism, not Islam in general. The doctrine that Islam dictates every aspect of experience sets the Muslim against the world in which he lives and puts him directly on the road to radicalism. Similarly, students read that "fasting teaches Muslims self-control and makes them realize what it would be like to be poor and hungry. The section on jihad is predictably one of the worst in History Alive! The Medieval World and Beyond. The fastidious use of language continues: Early Muslims considered their efforts to protect their territory and extend their rule over other regions to be a form of jihad. Of immediate relevance to American students is the fact that Muslim radicals today, like those who flew planes into the World Trade Center, justify terrorist acts as jihad. Yet the textbook insists on an ameliorative treatment of this important and contentious topic. It states on the same page that Muslims who are engaged in jihad "might work to become better people, reform society, or correct injustice. Muslims should fulfill jihad with the heart, tongue, and hand. Muslims use the heart in their struggle to resist evil. The tongue may convince others to take up worthy causes, such as funding medical research. Hands may perform good works and correct wrongs. Today, Muslim extremists claim to reform society, correct injustice, resist evil, and correct wrongs by unrestrained violence including terrorism targeting civilians, both Muslim and non-Muslim alike. The section on Islamic law similarly adopts a sanitized vocabulary. In the matter of clothing, students are informed that "Muslim women usually wear different forms of modest dress. Most women cover their arms and legs. Many also wear scarves over the hair. That Muslim women in full face or body coverings are a minority within the religion goes unmentioned. That sharia interpretations in Saudi Arabia and Iran mandate punishment for women who do not obey fundamentalist dress codes is also ignored. To the extent that contemporary customs have any place at all in a textbook of medieval history, these are issues in the lives of Muslim women about which American students need to be informed. Before leaving the subject of Islamic teachings, I must stress that no other religion receives anything like equal time in this book. The two chapters on the Reformation are somewhat more informative about Christian teachings. Yet the contents of the Bible, Jewish and Christian, are never described. The studentâ€”having studied each of the Five Pillars of Islam in detail and learned how the angel Gabriel revealed messages to Muhammad over the course of 22 years that were "imprinted on his mind and heart" and memorized by his followers and eventually collected into the Koranâ€”is left in pristine ignorance of what the Bible is and contains. The lone mention of the "gospels that tell of the life and teachings of Jesus" comes in the chapter on the teachings of Islam. Some Muslim rulers allowed the destruction of important Christian churches.

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The Medieval World and Beyond: Europe During Medieval Times Biography: The Byzantine Empire Primary Source: Medieval Fairs and Markets. This is an account of the Great Fair at Thessalonica, in Greece, as it was in the mid-th century. Life in Medieval Towns Literature: The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer c. During the Middle Ages, religious faith led many people to make a pilgrimage, or journey to a holy site. This work by English writer Geoffrey Chaucer is a book of verse about a group of fictional pilgrims. The Rise of Islam Biography: The Ottoman Empire reached its peak in the 16th century under Suleyman I. He expanded the empire and was a great supporter of the arts. Travels in Asia and Africa by Ibn Battutah c. Ibn Battutah was a Muslim with an incredible passion for travel. His book taught many people about the Muslim world. Contributions of Muslims to World Civilization Literature: Shahnama Epic of Kings by Ferdowsi c. This epic history of Persia, written by poet Ferdowsi, is part legend and part history. Khayyam, a Sufi mystic, is credited with writing and compiling this collection of poetic verses. The Rubaiyat is one of the most widely translated pieces of literature in the world. Contributions of Muslims to World Civilization Unit 3: Toure was the ruler of the Songhai empire at its height. Al-Bakri was a Muslim geographer who wrote about Ghana. West African Oral Story. Oral stories can be very entertaining. They are also used to pass along history and to teach young people morals and values. This one is about a hyena. Empress Wu Chao “ The first woman to rule as emperor in Chinese history, Wu Chao made many contributions to the Tang dynasty and is known for her ruthless political tactics. Italian merchant and adventurer Marco Polo was one of the most famous travelers to China. He claimed to have served Kublai Khan, the ruler of the Mongol Empire. Poetry from the Tang Dynasty. This explores a poem by Wang Wei, one of the most famous poets of the Tang dynasty. Japan During Medieval Times Biography: Lady Murasaki Shikibu c. Shikibu is the author of The Tale of Genji, often called the first novel ever written. This piece explores a Japanese haiku and an excerpt from Beowulf, an English epic poem. Civilizations of the Americas Biography: Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui “ This Inca ruler expanded the empire, built roads, and made many reforms. The Incas Primary Source: Excerpt from Popul Vuh. This Mayan document is part mythology and part history and includes a Mayan creation story. Poem by Nezahualcoytl “ , an Aztec leader and poet. Daily Life in Tenochtitlan Unit 7: Leading Figures of the Renaissance Literature: Don Quixote by Miguel Cervantes “ Cervantes is best known for this comic novel. Leading Figures of the Renaissance Unit 8: Freedom of Thought and Religion by Baruch Spinoza “ Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe c. This story of a shipwrecked sailor was published in The Medieval World and Beyond. Red words are key concepts in the chapter introductions. Barbarian a person belonging to a tribe or group that is considered uncivilized barge a long boat with a flat bottom barometer an instrument used for measuring changes in the pressure of the atmosphere barter to buy and sell by trading goods or services rather than money bill of rights a list of basic human rights that a government must protect Page blasphemy an act of disrespect toward God bookmaking the process and art of making books boycott a refusal to do business with an organization or group bubonic plague a deadly contagious disease caused by bacteria and spread by fleas; also called the Black Death bureaucracy a highly organized body of workers with many levels of authority Byzantine Empire a great empire that straddled two continents, Europe and Asia, and lasted from about 330 to 1453. The word Torah is often used to mean to the first five books of the Bible, traditionally said to have been written by Moses.

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History Alive: The Medieval World and Beyond Unit 6: Civilizations of the Americas Chapter 23 Study Guide: The Maya

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(pg.) *The Olmec and the Maya lived in.*

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Each of the video lessons is about five minutes long and is sequenced to align with the chapters in the History Alive The Medieval World and Beyond textbook.

Chapter 6 : History Alive! The Medieval World and Beyond - Wikipedia

Text: HISTORY ALIVE! The Medieval World Introduction In this chapter, you will learn about some of the most important achievements of the Mayan civilization. This civilization lasted 3, years, from about B.C.E. to C.E. At its peak, it included present-day southern Mexico and large portions of Central America.

Chapter 7 : Reading Notes 30 History Alive, Chapter 10 History Alive Reading Notes: - www.nxgvision.com

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The 7th grade title is "The Medieval World and Beyond." RMS does not own enough copies of this text to send one home with each student, however audio recordings for all the chapters are available on this site as well as pdf versions by chapter. Access the audio by chapter at this link. To view and read the chapters click on the links below.

Chapter 9 : The Medieval World And Beyond World History - www.nxgvision.com

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