

Teaching Histories of Islamic Science

Activity 1 - Braindrain

In the next five minutes, create a list of words that you associate with the subject:

History of Islamic Science

Activity 1 - Braindrain

Terms often associated:

Ibn Sina Al-Razi Al-Khawarizmi

Medicine Algebra Astronomy

Muslims Scientists Baghdad

House of Wisdom Knowledge Arabs

Activity 1 - Braindrain

Terms **not** often associated:

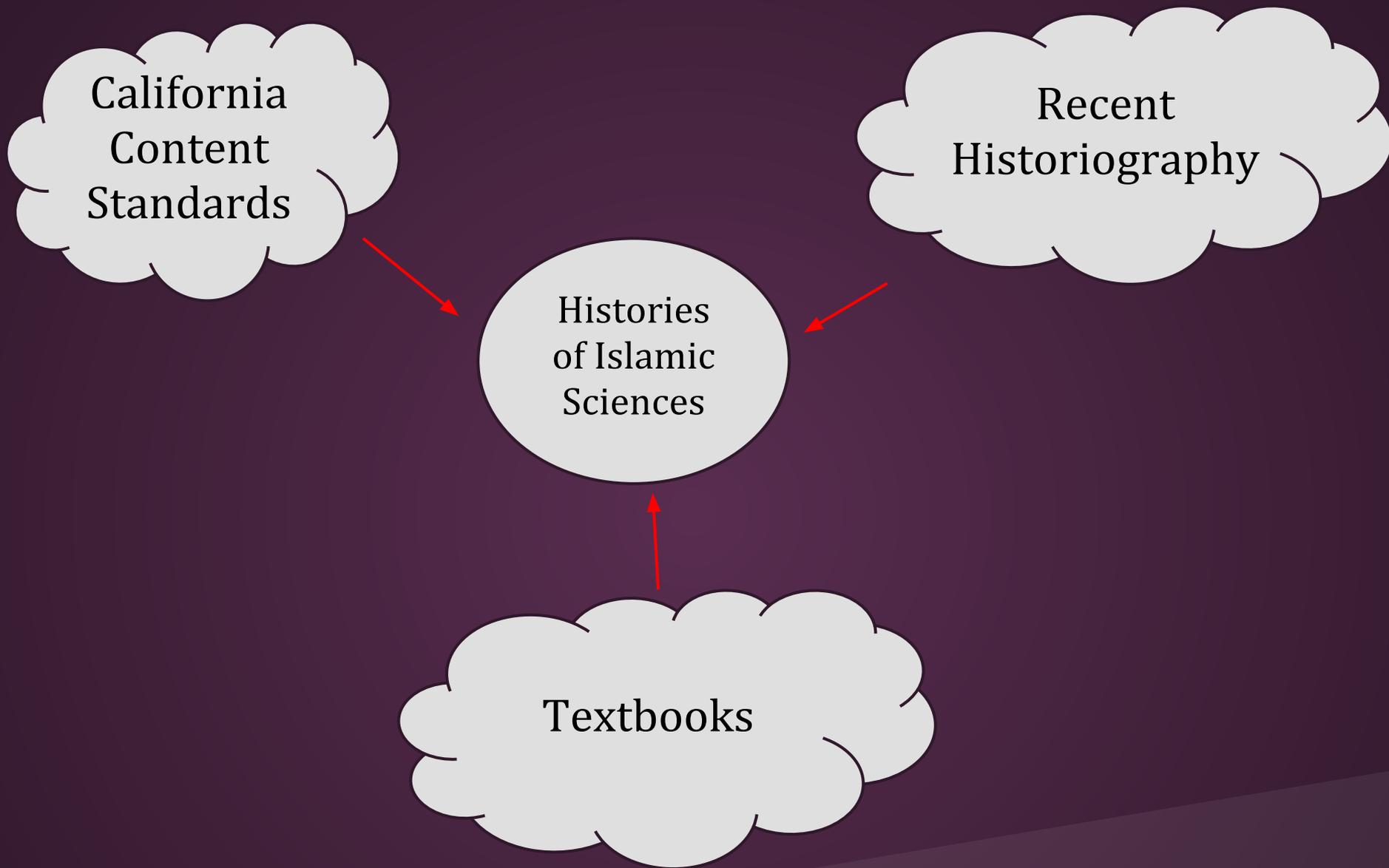
Jews Christians Interfaith Translation
Zoroastrians Indians Chinese
Merchants Commenda Travel
Transmission Exchange Connection

Purpose and Objective

to present on and examine how the history of Islamicate science is perceived and treated in current academic and educational materials as a global-historical phenomenon. I examine four bodies of literature throughout this work: (a) recent historiography, (b) Social Science and History Content Standards in the state of California, and, finally, (c) Upper Elementary and Middle School history/social science textbooks.

Questions

- Is the Islamicate world treated similarly in Upper Elementary and Middle school textbooks as well as in the recent historiography?
- Is the Islamicate world treated as a hemispheric phenomenon in California Content Standards?
- How have religious and ethnic minorities and influences been treated in textbooks, standards, and the historiography?
- Finally, according to the different bodies of literature, what factors are stressed as contributors to the rise of the Islamicate Age of Learning?
- Departure question: How can we better teach the histories of Islamic Science?



Discrepancy Analysis Between Various Domains

Domain A: (Old) Historiography

until recently, much of the historiography has failed in recognizing the connectedness of these medieval networks and, consequently, failed in realizing the potential for a connected history of the Islamicate Mediterranean.

Two camps and a major shift

Edward Theodore Withington

Donald Campbell

Manfred Ullmann

Domain A: (New) Historiography

Shifts in Optics: a focus on fluidity,
transmission and exchange

Connected Histories

Amar and Lev

Edmund Burke III

Martin Levey

George Saliba

Domain A: (New) Historiography

Why does the shift occur?

Maritime Optics

Connected and Crossed Histories

Commodity Circulation Chains

Discovery of the Cairo Genizah Archive

Domain A: (New) Historiography

Picture painted by the recent histories:

- global-hemispheric process
- process took place over a long duration
 - interethnic, interreligious
- cross-cultural, cross-disciplinary exchange
 - discourse polyvocal
 - movement multidirectional

Domain B: Content Standards

7.2 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the civilizations of Islam in the Middle Ages.

1. Identify the physical features and describe the climate of the Arabian peninsula, its relationship to surrounding bodies of land and water, and nomadic and sedentary ways of life.
2. Trace the origins of Islam and the life and teachings of Muhammad, including Islamic teachings on the connection with Judaism and Christianity.
3. Explain the significance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah as the primary sources of Islamic beliefs, practice, and law, and their influence in Muslims' daily life.
4. Discuss the expansion of Muslim rule through military conquests and treaties, emphasizing the cultural blending within Muslim civilization and the spread and acceptance of Islam and the Arabic language.
5. Describe the growth of cities and the establishment of trade routes among Asia, Africa, and Europe, the products and inventions that traveled along these routes (e.g., spices, textiles, paper, steel, new crops), and the role of merchants in Arab society.
6. Understand the intellectual exchanges among Muslim scholars of Eurasia and Africa and the contributions Muslim scholars made to later civilizations in the areas of science, geography, mathematics, philosophy, medicine, art, and literature.

Domain B: Content Standards

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Domain B: Content Standards

6. Understand the intellectual exchanges among Muslim scholars of Eurasia and Africa and the contributions Muslim scholars made to later civilizations in the areas of science, geography, mathematics, philosophy, medicine, art, and literature.

Domain C: Textbooks

How do textbooks present histories of
Islamicate Sciences?

Primary Conflicts:

1. An Empire of Arabs or Muslims?
2. Interreligious Diversity
3. An Imperial Age of Learning

Mapping Activity

- mapping the circulatory trajectories of spices
- mapping the academic trajectories of scientists
- mapping the trajectories of concepts and knowledge

Conclusions

- global (hemispheric) processes contributed to the rise of Islamicate medicine (and science)
- The manner in which we teach Islamicate science can be enriched through recent historiography