Teaching Histories of Islamicate 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

- California Content Standards
- Recent Historiography
- Histories of Islamic Sciences
- Textbooks
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
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.
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.
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.
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