

# The Link

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"History? Yukk!" is the attitude of many American students. But history encompasses the whole realm of mankind—our belief systems, the construction of culture, how we identify ourselves and relate to others, how we have affected our environment, and how we have explored

the world. Now is a time of ferment as teachers are working together on new national standards to ensure that these subjects are well presented and that students will emerge from our schools with the grounding in world history and cultures they will need to make intelligent choices for their families and communities. Over 35 educational organizations have worked together for five years to propose these standards for elementary social studies and for 5-12 grade world history and U.S. history. This issue of *The Link*, which discusses and lists educational resources of proven merit, is dedicated to those educators who are struggling to improve education in the U.S. about the Middle East.

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## At the Secondary Level

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Since 1990, the Middle East Studies Association and the Middle East Outreach Council have published evaluations of how

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# Teaching about the Middle East

By Elizabeth Barlow

An Arab proverb says, "Early education is like carving in stone." An early introduction to other cultures would have a lasting impact, but in many school districts the non-Western world is not discussed until the sixth or seventh grades. This is unfortunate because it suggests that the rest of the world is peripheral to life in the United States

and that one can successfully compartmentalize world areas. Even more important, attitudes toward other peoples are set in the younger grades. Without some information, even if in simplified form, children are prey to gross stereotypes and hostile images.

One of the most useful resources for teaching at the elementary level is the new *Arab World Mosaic*, written by Lars Rodseth, Sally Howell and Andrew Shryock, and published in 1995 by the ACCESS Cultural Arts Program.

This user-friendly curriculum supplement, designed with teacher consultation, is organized into chapters covering topics that are taught at the elementary level ("me"; the family; home/neighborhood/community; plants and animals; holidays and celebrations; and folktales and stories).

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## At the Elementary Level

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Students learn about life in families and

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## About This Issue

Teachers, libraries and students comprise about 25 percent of our readership. AMEU also is listed in various educational directories that offer teachers free and inexpensive curricular materials. And teachers *do* write to us.

What we never could send them, though—because as far as we know it didn't exist—was a concise, up-to-date survey of the best resources available for teaching about the culture, history and current events in the Middle East.

Now we can, thanks to the author of this issue of *The Link*, Elizabeth Barlow.

Mrs. Barlow is Outreach Director of the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies at the University of Michigan. Her distinguished career in the field began as a secondary school teacher in Lebanon at the National College of Chouiefat. She is a past president of the Middle East Outreach Council (MEOC) and currently serves the organization as publications chairperson. She has been project coordinator for three editions of the "Evaluation of Secondary-Level Text Books for Coverage of the Middle East and North Africa," a joint effort of MEOC and the Middle East Studies Association.



Elizabeth Barlow

Many of the books and videos that Mrs. Barlow recommends are included in our catalog on pages 14-16. We hope that the other 75 percent of our readers will equally enjoy the feast that is set before them. Indeed, among these classroom resources are wonderfully illustrated books that make great holiday gifts for children of all ages.

We will be pleased to mail a copy of this issue to teachers whose names and addresses are sent to us.

**John F. Mahoney**  
Executive Director

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secondary-level textbooks cover the Middle East and North Africa. While noting very substantial improvement in some texts, reviewers have found persistent distortions or one-sided coverage. I will focus in this article on topics that text evaluators agree have not been well covered to show how supplementary resources could provide greater balance and a livelier learning experience for students.

### Muslims and Islam

The beliefs of Muslims—and Islam will soon be the second largest religion in the U.S.—often have been distorted. Accurate presentations should include suras from the Qur'an which require respect for other peoples of the Book (Christians and Jews), the roles of women

and family relations, and ethical behavior. Books giving an overview of Islam include Ismail al-Faruqi's *Islam and Understanding Islam and the Muslims*, available from the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Washington, D.C.; and Ira Zepp, Jr.'s, *A Muslim Primer: Beginner's Guide to Islam*. [These three books and others cited by the author in this Link are available through AMEU and listed on pages 14-16.—Ed.]

Additional information on the tenets of Islam and Islamic peoples are the unit *Islam*, which includes *An Introduction*, available from the Islamic Affairs Programs, Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C., and *Islam*, written by Matthew Gordon and part of the World Religions series published by Facts on File, Inc. Antony Kamm's *The Story of Islam*

(Cambridge, England, University Press, 1976) covers at a junior high level the life of Muhammad, the tenets of the faith, the Qur'an, the spread of the faith, the Crusades, art, architecture, music and science.

A two-hour video which portrays the life of Muhammad and the early Muslim community is *The Message*, produced and directed by Moustapha Akkad, and available from Trancas Films. While suitable for senior high and older, a briefer introduction is preferable for younger students. The second part (15

minutes) of AMIDEAST's *Introduction to the Arab World* contains an overview of Islam.

### Golden Age of Culture

Most traditional world history courses leave the Middle East after a brief stop in Sumer, Babylon, and Pharaonic Egypt, and do not return until the time of the Crusades and 19th century civilization. The great Omayyad and Abbasid Empires and Muslim Spain are omitted, regrettable because the story of very significant cultural diffusion is embedded in this period. The Arab empires kept Greek learning alive, imported cultural ideas and added their own, and then transmitted this ferment to Europe, where it triggered the Renaissance.

An excellent resource for this period for sixth grade students and above is *The Arabs in the Golden Age* by Mokhtar Moktefi and Veronique Ageorges, part of the *Peoples of the Past* series. Nadia Abbott's book *Two Queens of Baghdad* (London: Al-Saqi, 1986) relates the power and privileges of Harun ar-Rashid's mother and wife.

Culture in the Muslim World is explored in a book designed for middle school or junior high level titled *The World of Islam Up to 1500's* by Fiona Macdonald, part of the Collins *Living History Series*. Life in Damascus and Baghdad and the arts and sciences are described. The book contains appropriate questions for classroom discussion and activities. A resource for students is *The Contributions of Arab Civilization to Mathematics and Science*, by Julie Petet, published by Georgetown's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies. An excellent resource for high school research papers is *The Genius of Arab Civilization* by John R. Hayes. *The Torchbearers*, one of 14 films in the Encyclopedia Britannica series, is a half-hour video telling how the Arabs kept the learning from ancient Greece alive and passed it on to Europe.

### The Crusades

The proposed standards for world history call for consideration of multiple perspectives and the comparison of competing historical narratives. A study of the Crusades offers the opportunity to look at the same event from several perspectives. Most U.S. history texts give the Western view. But there were Arab historians at the time of the Crusades who wrote their accounts. Among the most useful books featuring English translations of Arab accounts are Francesco

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## Teaching about the Middle East at the Secondary Level



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Gabrieli's *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984) and Amin Maalouf's *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* (New York: Schocken Books, 1984). Philip K. Hitti's translation of the memoirs of Usama Ibn Munqidh, *An Arab-Syrian Gentleman* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) also is excellent.

In the Gabrieli book one can compare what happened to the civilian population of Jerusalem when the Christians conquered it in 1099—Muslims were put to the sword and Jews who had sought refuge in a synagogue were burned alive—with the treatment received at Saladin's hands in 1189. Incredulous passages from Arab writers describing the Frankish system of justice illustrate their different perspectives. In a trial by water, the Europeans hold the accused under water. If he drowns, he was innocent. If he does not drown, he is deemed to have been guilty and is put to death. The Arab writers wonder what such practices have to do with justice. They prefer to judge by what those who best know the accused say about his character and reputation.

The BBC has just produced a four-part video on the Crusades and a book (*The Crusades*). Some viewers may be offended at occasional flippant remarks. (The narrator is a member of the Monty Python Flying Circus team.) But both the video and the book are more successful in portraying multiple perspectives than the average U.S. textbook.

One of the videos in the series, *Newsclashes from the Past*, features the Second Crusade and has been popular with students. In this series, interviews are held with participants in events in various parts of the world. Students learn different perspectives on an event, such as the Crusades, and are told what is occurring at the same time elsewhere in the world. Fabricated historical advertisements for 1144 A.D. capture the viewer's attention, particularly the promotion of pepper, a new spice from the West. The series does present as contemporaneous, events which in fact

may be 40 years apart. While this may be bothersome to some teachers, it is possible to make a game of identifying the variance. Perhaps one of the best uses of the video is to inspire the class to write their own script for interviews at approximately the same time period with people from different world areas on what is important in their region, or to interview them on their perceptions of the same event. Students might enjoy being a 12th or 13th century Phil Donohue or David Letterman. Teams could write the script for each world area, with a special team (probably the most sought-after assignment) chosen to read the commercials.

### Muslim Spain

A serious effort is now underway to incorporate back into European history the story of al-Andalus (Muslim Spain) often omitted in Western history books. This period is important for understanding the continuity of history because Muslim Spain for many years was a major conduit for the transmission of the learning of the Muslim East to the rather backward Christian West. Audrey Shabbas has produced *A Medieval Banquet in Muslim Spain*, which brings together 26 historical figures from around the world for a banquet at the Alhambra—a role for each student, each of whom has the chance to develop his or her own character. Costumes, food, music, poetry, and games are all part of the program. The unit is available from AWAIR.

A recent book written by Catherine Jones, published by MEOC and the Harvard Middle East Center and available either from Harvard or from the University of Texas Middle East Center, is *Islamic Spain and Our Heritage: Al-Andalus 711-1492 A.D.* The emphasis is on the cultural heritage which has been passed on to us.

*Leo Africanus* is the life story of a man born in al-Andalus shortly before 1492 and known in the West as Leo the African. After the capture of Granada by the Christians he traveled to Morocco and lived in Fez, then visited Timbuctu, traveled to Cairo and Constantinople, and

was later captured at sea by Christian pirates. He became the servant of Pope Leo X, who asked him to write the story of his life. Amin Maalouf based his story on the original narrative, and it is now available from New Amsterdam books in New York. Advanced students might read the whole book; others will enjoy a chapter or two.

The Jewish experience is related in *Spain and the Jews: The Sephardic Experience 1492 and After*, edited by Elie Kedourie. The early chapters describe life in the century preceding expulsion, and the latter chapters follow the Sephardim to the Ottoman Empire, the Netherlands and England.

Students will enjoy issues of the *Aramco World* which tell the story of Muslim Spain. The September-October 1992 issue contains an article on "The Art of Islamic Spain," and the January-February 1993 issue focuses on the "Legacy of Islamic Spain."

### Ottoman Empire

Because the traditional Western history texts only mention the Ottoman Empire in the late 19th and early 20th century as it neared its demise, students never get a sense of the political and cultural dynamism at its zenith, under the rule of Suleiman the Magnificent (or Suleiman the Lawgiver, as he is known to the Turkish-speaking world). Students will be interested in the millet system, under which ethnic minorities could maintain their own traditions in limited spheres. Pictures of life at court and cultural contributions are contained in Esin Atil's book *Suleymanname*, designed to accompany an exhibit which opened at the National Gallery in Washington a few years ago. The video which accompanied the exhibit (*The Arts of Suleiman the Magnificent*) is also available.

Fiona Macdonald has produced another excellent resource in *A 16th Century Mosque*, part of the *Inside Story Series* (New York: Peter Bedrick Books, 1994). The focus is the building of the Suleymaniye mosque by Sinan 1550-57,

but there are sections on workers' lives, people of the mosque, schools and colleges, medicine and charity, and mosques around the world. The book should have something for sixth grade classes and above.

A fine book for a discussion of Islamic city planning is *Umm al Madayan* (the Mother of Cities): *An Islamic City Through the Ages* by Abderrahman Ayoub, Jamila Binous, Abderrazak Gragueg, Ali Mimet, and Hedi Slim. In 14 chapters a typical North African city is pictured from the hunter-gatherer culture of the mid to late Paleolithic Age through the Phoenician, Punic, Roman, late Christian, Arab, Ottoman, 19th century, and late 20th century eras. Diagrams show the changes through time.

The University of Texas has an excellent slide and activity packet for *Middle Eastern Villages and Middle Eastern Cities*. The latter resource includes pictures and information about both ancient and modern cities.

### Colonial Era

The colonial era is usually presented in U.S. textbooks exclusively or mainly from the Western colonial point of view. Although there has been a tendency recently to incorporate the perspectives of the colonized, teachers often must deal with texts that retain a pro-Western bias.

A curricular unit which can be used is AMIDEAST's *Colonialism in the Arab World*, which includes a background essay and descriptions from different perspectives of the outbreak of the Algerian War of Independence in 1954 from articles in the French paper *Le Monde*, the Egyptian paper *Al-Ahram*, and the U.S. *The New York Times*.

The University of Michigan has published *Egypt in the Nineteenth Century: The Impact of Europe Upon a Non-Western Society*, designed by Darrell I. Dykstra for high school students, which presents three cross-cultural experiences and invites evaluation. To get a better sense of life before, during and after the colonial era, teachers might use some of the short descriptions of 25 lives contained in Edmund Burke III's *Struggle and Survival in the Middle East* (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1993). An account of the East-West encounter from a Moroccan perspective is contained in *Disorienting Encounters: Travels of a Moroccan Scholar in France in 1845-1846* (The Voyage of Muhammad as-Saffar), translated and edited by Susan Gilson Miller (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1992). The Moroccan visitor gives his impressions of the city of Paris and French manners.

Videos have been successful in giving students some feeling for the clashes of culture. *Battle of Algiers*, a two-hour

video still available in most video stores, portrays the violence in the French attempt to retain Algeria as a colony.

A period in the long Italian attempt to subdue Libya is portrayed in *Lion of the Desert*, the story of the Umar al-Mukhtar, the leader of the Libyan resistance. The video successfully portrays the Italian desire to regain prestige in Europe by reclaiming their Roman "heritage" of colonies in Africa, but also enables the viewer to see the colonization through the eyes of Libyans. The contest began in 1911 and in 1930 Mussolini escalated the onslaught—poisoning wells and imprisoning the civilian population in concentration camps with inadequate food and unsanitary conditions. Death rates were extremely high. This story challenges our assumptions of who are the civilized and who are the terrorists. The film, available from Trancas International Films, is long, just over 2 1/2 hours, but well worth the effort.

### Modern Period

There are several resources for classroom use for the modern period which provide a general introduction to the region. AWAIR is publishing a new edition of the *Arab World Notebook*, which provides information on many topics, including religious minorities, family life and women's roles, education, food, literature

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## To Keep Informed on the Middle East . . .

**ARAMCO WORLD Magazine**  
Box 469008  
Escondido, California 92046-9008

**ARAB STUDIES QUARTERLY**  
Department of Political Science  
Illinois State University  
Normal, IL 61761

**BEIRUT TIMES**  
PO Box 93475  
Los Angeles, CA 90093

**MERIP REPORTS**  
1800 Mass Ave. NW, Suite 119  
Washington, D.C. 20005

**MIDDLE EAST INTERNATIONAL**  
c/o Al Staats and Associates  
2000 Florida Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20009

**MIDDLE EAST POLICY**  
Middle East Policy Council  
1730 M Street, NW, Suite 512  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**JOURNAL OF PALESTINE STUDIES**  
University of California Press  
2120 Berkeley Way  
Berkeley, California 94720

**JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR ARMENIAN STUDIES**  
500 Kent Hall  
Columbia University  
New York, NY 10027

**THE MIDDLE EAST JOURNAL**  
Middle East Institute  
1761 N Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036-2882

**UPDATE**  
Geography Education Program  
PO Box 37138  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7138

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MIDDLE EAST STUDIES**  
Cambridge University Press  
40 West 20th Street  
New York, NY 10011

**THE IRANIAN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**  
IJA Subscription Department  
Publishing House  
PO Box 15875/6353  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**BILADI THE JERUSALEM TIMES**  
1908 Harbour Landing  
Roswell, GA 30076

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and folk tales, music, oil, and Arabs in America.

The University of Chicago has prepared an excellent overview with *The Middle East and the Islamic World*, an activity unit with a slide set. The University of California at Berkeley has produced a series of units, most with a set of 20 slides, on such topics as modern Israel, Iran, Turkey, North Africa, the family in the Arab World, oil and water and Naguib Mahfouz, the Nobel-prize winning author. Units on Sudan and Central Asia include a video.

The University of Pennsylvania's Middle East Center has produced a slide unit on *Past and Present in Modern Iraq*, and The Georgetown Center has created four- to six-page teaching modules, including *Women in the Arab World*, *The Arabic Language* and *The Contributions of Arab Civilization to Mathematics and Science*.

AMIDEAST publishes a map of the Middle East and North Africa and *The Almanac*, a collection of teacher-designed units on the Arab Middle East. In addition to the segment on Islam mentioned earlier, its video/guide book, *Introduction to the Arab World*, has an introductory overview to the region and a third part on the Arab World today. The guide book offers activities and discussion questions based on the video. Consult their catalog for more items.

The Council on Islamic Education has several useful books for educators. Particularly helpful is *Strategies and Structures for Presenting World History, with Islam and Muslim History as a Case Study*, by Susan Douglass. Teachers can use the book to modify and supplement existing curricula and textbook presentations.

An excellent resource for the classroom is the bimonthly *Aramco World* magazine. Subscriptions are free, and some teachers ask for one for themselves for their permanent collection and one for the classroom, available for class reading and picture clipping.

*Iran: A Pre-collegiate Handbook* is available from The Foundation for Iranian Studies in Maryland. The handbook includes a set of slides and units on geography, history, language and literature, art and architecture, Islam, Zoroastrianism, food, holidays, people and music.

Three handbooks are available on Turkey, all with slide sets. The University of Texas produced a curriculum containing information on modern Turkey, Atatürk, and some excerpts of modern literature. The Turkish Studies Association also prepared a unit with some of the above information, plus units on urban and rural life, folklore, and international relations. The unit prepared by The American Forum, *Spotlight on Turkey*, includes a section on "Who are the Turks?", but focuses on art and literature.

Available from The National Geographic is a unit on *The Middle East* which provides six videotapes covering geography, nationalism, creation of independent states, and religions.

### Political Issues

AMIDEAST's unit on *The Arab World in the World Wars* contains an essay on the Arab role in the world wars, maps of the Middle East before and after World War I, excerpts from a Tunisian high school textbook describing events in the two wars, and some primary documents.

Coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict has been extensive, but often not well informed. A unit which seeks to explain the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from both perspectives is Ron Stockton's *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, part of Michigan's *Roots of Violence in the Middle East Series*. It presents the colonial background, Jewish and Palestinian perspectives and follows the developing conflict. Students are invited to analyze and discuss the options for the future.

A book for classroom use which covers the conflict but also the life of people living there is *Israel in Pictures*, part of Lerner's *Visual Geography Series*.

Books that offer multiple perspectives on a single issue are Greenhaven Press's series *Israel: Opposing Viewpoints* (San Diego: Greenhaven, 1994) and *The Middle East* (1992). Exercises in the books help students develop critical thinking skills.

Another way to develop analytical skills is to take two books, *Myths and Facts*, published annually by the Near East Report, and Congressman Paul Findley's *Deliberate Deceptions: Facing the Facts about the U.S.-Israeli Relationship*, and compare any topic. Students may discuss the degree of disparity and how to check the assertions in each book for accuracy.

*Israel's Shattered Dreams* (in video stores) reflects the sadness of the Israeli filmmakers about the inability to find peace and acceptance. This is a very long film and teachers might best choose a segment for class viewing.

*Children of Fire* made by Mai Masri, a native of Nablus, describes the lives of children growing up in Nablus during the occupation. It is available from Third World Newsreel, 212-947-9277.

The Israeli government made the video *The Wonder of Israel* for the U.S. market. While parts of it are useful, it fails overall. In the video and the accompanying map, the Golan, Gaza and the West Bank—even Jericho—are shown as part of Israel. Yet in the population figures, Jews who live on the West Bank and in Gaza are apparently counted, but not the Palestinians, who seem to have dropped into a black hole.

Whatever one's hopes for the final shape of a peace settlement, it is very hard to see how it helps schoolchildren to be misinformed about the existence of close to two million people and the legal status of their contested land. There are, of course, maps of the region made in Arab countries which fail to show Israel. An advanced class might use both the Israeli and Arab maps together to study advocacy through map-making.

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# A Directory of Resources ...

*Note: Most Outreach Centers will offer teacher workshops, newsletters and lending libraries of videos and educational materials.*

## **Columbia University**

Middle East Institute  
420 W. 118th Street, 11th Floor  
New York, NY 10027  
Reeva Simon  
Phone: (212) 854-3525

## **Georgetown University**

Center for Contemporary Arab Studies  
ICC 241  
Washington, DC 20057  
Phone: (202) 687-5793

## **Harvard University**

Center for Middle East Studies  
1737 Cambridge Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
Carol Shedd  
Phone: (617) 495-4078

## **Ohio State University**

Middle East Studies Center  
322 Oxley Hall, 1712 Neil Avenue  
Columbus, Ohio 43210-1219  
Frank Spaulding  
Phone: (614) 422-9660

## **Princeton University**

Program in Near Eastern Studies  
Jones Hall  
Princeton, NJ 08544  
Judy Gross  
Phone: (609) 258-5487

## **New York University**

Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies  
50 Washington Square South  
New York, NY 10012  
Judy Malnig  
Phone: (212) 998-8872

## **University of Arizona**

Center for Middle Eastern Studies  
Franklin Building, Room 204  
Tucson, AZ 85721  
Amy Newhall  
Phone: (602) 621-5456

## **University of California at Berkeley**

Center for Middle Eastern Studies  
372 Stephens Hall  
Berkeley, CA 94720  
Laurence Michalak  
Phone: (510) 643-8198

## **University of California at Los Angeles**

G.E. von Grunebaum Center for Near East Studies  
405 Hilgard Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90024-1480  
Jonathan Friedlander  
Phone (310) 206-8631

## **University of Chicago**

Center for Middle Eastern Studies  
5801 S. Ellis Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60637  
Sandra Batmanglich  
Phone: (312) 702-8297

## **University of Michigan**

Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies  
144 Lane Hall, 204 S. State Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48108-1290  
Elizabeth Barlow  
Phone: (313) 747-4142

## **University of Pennsylvania**

Middle East Center  
839 Williams Hall, 36th and Spruce St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
Mary Martin  
Phone: (215) 898-6335

## **University of Texas at Austin**

Center for Middle Eastern Studies  
Austin, TX 78712-1193  
Deborah Littrell  
Phone: (512) 471-3881

## **University of Utah**

Middle East Language and Area Studies Center  
153 Orson Spencer Hall  
Salt Lake City, UT 84112  
L. Kent Kimball  
Phone: (801) 581-6181

## **University of Washington**

Middle East Center  
Room 225 Thomson Hall  
Seattle, WA 98195  
Charlotte Albright  
Phone: (206) 543-4227

## **Portland State University**

Middle East Studies Center  
PO Box 751  
Portland, OR 97207-0751  
Marta Colburn  
Phone: (503) 725-4074

## **Other Sources of Materials**

### **American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)**

4201 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20008  
Phone: (202) 244-2990

### **AMIDEAST**

1730 M St. NW, Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: (202) 776-9600

### **Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS)**

Cultural Arts Department  
2651 Saulino Court  
Dearborn, MI 48120

### **AWAIR**

1400 Shattuck Ave., Suite 9  
Berkeley, CA 94709  
Phone: (510) 704-0517

### **Council on Islamic Education**

PO Box 20186  
Fountain Valley, CA 92728  
Phone: (714) 839-2929

### **Greenhavan Press, Inc**

P.O. Box 289009  
San Diego, CA 92198-9009

### **International Book Center**

PO Box 295  
Troy, MI 49098  
Phone: (810) 879-8436

### **Middle East Institute**

1761 N Street NW  
Washington, DC 20036-2882

### **Middle East Outreach Council**

c/o Deborah Littrell, President  
Center for Middle Eastern Studies  
University of Texas  
Austin, TX 78712-1193  
Phone: (512) 471-3881  
Fax: (512) 471-7834

### **Nick of Time**

2063 Main Street, #420  
Oakley, CA 94561  
Phone: (707) 785-8467

### **Trancas International Films**

1875 Century Park East, Suite 1145  
Los Angeles, CA 90067  
Phone: (310) 553 5599

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### Gender Issues

In U.S. pop culture, the supposed mistreatment of women in the Middle East is used as a justification for the denigration of Muslims and people of the Middle East. Since much passion is generated around this issue, educators should be aware of the arguments:

- Islam brought more rights to women than they had in pre-Islamic times. (The injunction not to kill or abandon female babies, rights of inheritance, and protection for widows and orphans, for instance.) Until the 18th or 19th century, Muslim females had rights of inheritance which were not available in Britain. In theory at least, Muslim women had a greater freedom to dissent from an unwanted marriage than female wards in Britain. The dress prescribed for female Muslims does not differ significantly from that worn today by orthodox Jewish women and many women in Catholic orders.
- Muslim women throughout the world differ in their dress, customs, education, livelihoods and aspirations. It is important to portray the wide variety of situations within Islam.
- Many Muslim women, like Muslim men, are interested in political change which will lead to a better life for them and their children. Some favor Western ways, but many are concerned that families in the West are disintegrating. They also are concerned that in the West there is sexual pressure on women and that women are frequently abandoned by their husbands and forced to bring up their children without adequate financial support.
- Muslim attitudes can be regarded more as pro-child and pro-family than anti-feminine. To Muslims, children represent the future. Emphasis is placed on ensuring that children are born only into families ready to support them, and that

marriages are undertaken only if they are likely to survive. Some Muslims are also interested in increasing self-fulfillment for both partners, but not at a risk to children. How to accomplish these goals is a challenge to Muslims and other societies.

Georgetown's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies has produced a six-page background piece for the classroom on *Women in the Arab World*, written by Professor Judith Tucker. Topics include family law, education and work, and political life. An AMIDEAST unit on *Women and the Family in the Arab World* covers marriage and family law.

The University of Michigan's Center has produced a unit of excerpts from Arabic, Hebrew, Persian and Turkish literature called *Women in the Middle East: A Handbook for Secondary Schools*. Chapters cover growing up female in the Middle East, marriage, motherhood, women and work, war and revolution, and a chapter of poetry. Each chapter includes discussion questions.

Elizabeth Fernea has produced two films on gender issues. *The Price of Change* shows changes in the life of several Egyptian families when women took jobs outside the home. *Veiled Revolution* interviews women returning to the wearing of veils in order to ascertain the meaning of these changes.

Several books are useful in understanding women's roles in Iran. Sattareh Farman Farmaian's *Daughter of Persia: A Woman's Journey from Her Father's Harem Through the Islamic Revolution* (New York: Crown, 1992) tells the story of the changes in her life from the privilege of her father's home in the 1920's through the fall of Reza Shah, her student days at the University of Southern California, founding of the Teheran School of Social Work, and her arrest by Khomeini's forces in 1979. Lives of village women are explored in *Women of Deh Koh: Lives in an Iranian Village* by Erika Friedl (New York: Penguin, 1991). Mahnaz Afkhami and Erika Friedl provide a comprehensive introduction into the contemporary

The tragedy of the civil war in Lebanon is explored in Jean Chamoun and Mai Masri's *War Generation: Beirut* (available from the Cinema Guild, 1-800-723-5522), in which young children, many of them orphans, are seen growing up in gangs, paid to attack others no older than themselves. The same team after the end of the conflict produced *Suspended Dreams*, which describes the rebuilding and healing process through the eyes of two former enemies now working together, a woman searching for her missing husband, and a playwright. The continued violence related to the occupation of Lebanon by Israeli-trained and supported forces is explored in *Hostage of Time*, also by Chamoun and Masri. The attempt to produce a "security zone" for Israel is seen as creating a zone of maximum insecurity for its Lebanese inhabitants.

Reasons for the Gulf War are presented in *The Road to War in the Persian Gulf* (25 minutes). PBS Frontline presented a special (Oct. 29, 1991), *The War We Left Behind*, which documents post-war conditions in Iraq.

*Greetings from Iraq*, made in 1994, looks at the current situation in Iraq and asks if the blockade is really meeting U.S. objectives. President Bush is shown saying that the quarrel is with Saddam Hussein, not the Iraqi people. However, mid-summer 1995 Hussein remains in power and hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children have perished. This is an excellent film for provoking discussion about the effectiveness of U.S. policies in meeting U.S. stated goals. The MERIP pamphlet, "Why War?", by Joe Stork and Ann M. Lesch, will stimulate students to useful analysis.

Two packages of three one-hour films each have been produced for Pacifica Television by Jo Franklin-Trout. One is on the creation of Saudi Arabia and the development of its oil industry, the other is on the oil-producing countries of the Gulf region.



Iranian scene in the recent book *In the Eye of the Storm: Women in Post-revolutionary Iran* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994). Shusha Guppy's *Blind Horse* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1988) shows the impact of Western ideas of education. *Suri and Co.: Tales of a Persian Teenage Girl* by Mashid Amirshahi (Austin: U of Texas Press, 1995) gives a sense of one woman's experience growing up in Iran.

Turkish women were granted more rights than obtained in most of the Middle East when the Turkish Republic was established under Atatürk. Lately, however, debates have arisen about women and family roles. A good description of the current situation is contained in Deniz Kandiyoti's essay "End of Empire: Islam, Nationalism and Women in Turkey," contained in a book she edited, *Women, Islam and the State* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991). The book contains chapters on life in Iran, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, and Yemen.

### **Democratization**

AMIDEAST's *Government and Democracy in the Arab World* presents some of the democratic traditions practiced by bedouin Arabs and by early Muslims. It also explains how European colonialism created conditions that made democratic development more difficult, while giving examples of democratic reforms instituted by some Arab governments.

*Human Rights and Democratization in the Middle East*, a unit in the University of Michigan's series on *Roots of Violence*, begins with the U.N. human rights convention and asks whether it is culturally biased. The major activity of the unit is a role play of the recent Kuwaiti elections.

### **Religious Issues**

How have the three major monotheistic faiths related to each other in the Middle East? If Western textbooks had elected to

cover the Middle East since the emergence of the three faiths, long periods of cultural pluralism would have been observed. By focusing almost exclusively on the 20th century, we see little more than the enormous bitterness over Palestine between Jews on the one hand and Muslims and Christians of the Middle East on the other.

The Westerner comes away with the impression that Middle Easterners are violent, whereas we in the West are not. A little more study would suggest that Western violence (the pogroms and the holocaust) made it impossible for many Jews to wish to live as a minority ever again; Western violence toward Muslims during the colonial era and the unfulfilled promise of Arab independence set the stage for the enduring Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The concept that history's victims may become the next generation's victimizers is an idea that students should study in other times and places. One can hope the concept will underline the importance of preventing the victimization of any religious or ethnic group.

Students who have examined the interrelations of the three faiths since their emergence may have noted that Islam offered greater toleration to Jews and Christians than was offered to either Muslims or Jews under Christian rule until at least the 18th or 19th centuries. Hopefully, students will question the assertions made in the pop culture that there is something uniquely intolerant or violent in Islam. All monotheistic faiths have shown intolerance toward those viewed as pagans, and all faiths have within their ranks persons who have acted in ways contrary to the teachings of their faith. The experiences of people in different faiths can help yield an understanding of their current perspectives.

Jews experienced ugly episodes of violence in Europe since the time of the Crusades to the pogroms in the late 19th and early 20th century Russia, the

*(Continued on page 10)*

## **Getting to the Truth in Textbooks**

Writing or publishing a textbook is not for the faint of heart. To be competitive, a text must appeal to markets nationwide, addressing the changing needs of myriads of educational systems, particularly in the 17 states where texts are centrally adopted.

Because of the major investment in preparing a text, publishers and authors are often anxious to avoid controversies which could impact sales. On sensitive issues textbooks may try to duck trouble by reducing explanation to a minimum—e.g., "After the conflicts of 1947-48, 85 percent of the Palestinian population found itself outside the borders of Israel and the proposed Palestinian state," or "In 1967, war broke out between Israel and its neighbors."

Right-wing Jewish and Christian groups have on occasion objected to sections in books dealing with Islam and the achievements of Muslim civilization during the Abbasid Empire. And pro-Israel groups have had some past success in substituting their analyses of the Arab-Israeli conflict for the authors'. However, in the past year or two, educators have rejected the demands of special interests to dictate content and it appears that publishers and authors are no longer so easily intimidated.

Despite these difficulties, good textbooks are available. My favorite world history text (for 10th to 12th grades) is *World History: The Human Experience*, by Mounir Farah and Andrea Karls (1994, Glencoe). I like it because it includes examples of art and literature, providing students a flavor of the civilizations being studied.

For world cultures texts I recommend both *World Cultures: A Global Mosaic*, by Ahmad, Brodsky, Crofts and Ellis (1995, Prentice-Hall), and *Global Insights, Peoples and Cultures*, by Mounir Farah, Flickema, et al., (1994, Glencoe).—Elizabeth Barthow

(Continued from page 9)

unfairness of the Dreyfus Affair in France, and the Nazi holocaust, which has clearly shaped their reluctance to trust others with their security.

Muslims have historically experienced injustice and violence at the hands of the Christians during the Crusades and the Reconquista in Spain, and during the colonial period, when Muslim subjects were denied privileges granted to Christian and Jewish subjects. After World War I, Muslims felt that Christian Europe tried to dominate their lands and resources to their disadvantage. Analysts should note that Shia Muslims in southern Lebanon had not formed armed groups to attack Israel until the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon in 1978 and 1982, an on-going occupation which continues to provide new injustices and drive fresh recruits to the resistance movement.

Muslims may also look at the situation in Bosnia, and wonder why, when Europe said "never again," are they permitting mass rape, torture and genocide once again. Is it because the victims are Muslims?

One can find parallels in the growth of groups within Christianity and Judaism that are becoming more intolerant of dissent and less respectful of other groups. Much has been written in the U.S. about the Christian Right. There have been comparable analyses of intolerant and violent Jewish groups. Robert I. Friedman's *Zealots for Zion: Inside Israel's West Bank Settlement Movement* (New York: Random House, 1992) offers a chilling look at the activities of some of these groups. Ian Lustick's *For the Land and the Lord* also tells the story. *Inside God's Bunker*, a video about the Hebron settlers before and after one of that group perpetrated the mass murder of Muslims at prayer in the mosque in Hebron, gives greater insight into what it might be like to have to live near such ideologues, and how their actions—admittedly rooted in Christian injustice against them 50 years ago in Europe—might trigger more violence from the Muslim community. This powerful video (available through

AMEU) should be shown only to advanced classes, and only after a preview by the teacher. Students should be reminded that not all Jews feel as do the settlers featured in this production. Indeed, it was an Israeli Jewish team that produced this video.

These reflections could lead to a discussion of whether there is something intrinsic in Islam that leads to intolerance and violence, as alleged, or whether each group's experience affects its perspectives.

The Center of Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Michigan has available a curriculum unit for eleventh and twelfth graders on *Religious Tensions in the Middle East*, which examines how religious tensions interact with political issues to make them more intractable.

The relationship between the three major monotheistic faiths in the Middle East is explored in *Holy Land*, one of 14 films about the Middle East produced by Richard Bulliet of Columbia University and distributed by Encyclopedia Britannica films. F. E. Peters's article, "The Contested Inheritance: A Primer on the Shared Patrimony and Development of Judaism, Christianity and Islam," provides an overview of the relationships in just 14 pages. The primer, published in 1989 by the Joint Center for Near Eastern Studies of New York University and Princeton University, is still available.

"Islamic extremism" has been labeled a major danger in the Middle East. To what extent is this fear justified? Books which shed some light on the subject are Thomas Lippman's *Islam: Politics and Religion in the Muslim World* (part of the Foreign Policy Association's *Headline Series*), which could be used by students; John Esposito's *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*; and Yvonne Haddad's *Contemporary Islam and the Challenge of History*.

### U.S. History

The Near Eastern Center at UCLA, in cooperation with teachers from around the country, is producing units on *Middle*

*Eastern and American Intersections: Critical Perspectives on Teaching U.S. History*. Designed for use in U.S. history classes at the secondary level, the units provide flexibility in exploring aspects of U.S. history related to the Middle East.

The six units now available are: (1) Islam in America, which focuses on Malcolm X; (2) a foreign-policy unit on the Barbary pirates; (3) Lebanese poddlers at the turn of the century (middle school); (4) a case study of Middle East oil for twelfth grade economics classes; (5) Kahlil Gibran and Arab-American contributions to American literature and the arts; (6) foreign policy centering on the Iranian Revolution, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Gulf War. Other units will be available in 1996 and beyond. For purchase, contact the G.E. von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies, UCLA.

Recent books have added coverage of immigrant groups. Alixa Naff's *The Arab Americans* (Chelsea Press) addresses the pre-World War II waves of immigration. Yvonne Haddad has written a 32-page introduction to *Islam in America*, now available from the Middle East Institute in Washington, D.C., which is appropriate for students.

There are several documentaries about Muslim communities in North America. *Islam in America*, available through AMIDEAST, describes several Muslim communities in the United States. In 50 minutes it gives an excellent introduction to Islam as well as to the perceptions and problems of Muslim-Americans from a variety of backgrounds. *The Tale of Two Mosques* portrays the Muslim community in Edmonton, Canada, trying to keep their heritage alive. Some methods, such as raising money for the mosque through Bingo games, are adapted from the host culture.

In addition to accurately portraying immigrant groups to the U.S., it also is important to deal with the hostile images which presently attach to groups from the Middle East, particularly Muslims, but also national or linguistic groups such as Arabs, Turks and Iranians. Thea, a 7th

grade teacher in central Michigan, came to our center in great despair one afternoon. Her class was making racist comments about Arabs. "I'm revolted," she exploded. "What is even worse is that they think because I am Jewish, I will actually like to hear what they are saying!" "What about a minicourse in stereotyping?" I asked. "We just did that two months ago," she said. "I spent two weeks on stereotypes, particularly of Blacks. They just don't connect that unit with the concept that they shouldn't stereotype Arabs or any other group."

Units on racism and stereotypes need to be taught frequently throughout the school years, and the message reinforced that no group should be subjected to stereotyping or discrimination. However, it is not productive to use this occasion as a time to lay blame on students. We all form images of the unknown based on limited experience, and adjust our images as we gain more experience. It is dangerous when a false image in our minds gains such power that when confronted with reality, we do not adjust our image but instead dismiss reality. Students usually are interested in psychological theories of the stereotyping process. Karl Jung, for instance, argues that we project onto others that which we dislike in ourselves. A Chinese proverb says "We don't see with our eyes, we see what is behind our eyes."

One of the most useful books to describe the creation of hostile images is Sam Keen's *Faces of the Enemy* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985). (There is a PBS film of the same title, but it is quite different, and not as useful as the book.) Cartoons used to describe the enemy and enemy cartoons of "our side" illustrate how what is unknown is turned into something vile and dirty, something to be feared, something that may be after "our" women or attempting to undermine "our" culture, and, finally, something that God requires us to destroy. Ideally, this topic should be covered at several grade levels. Examples of loaded language or cartoons can be discussed by the class to help members improve their skills in recognizing bias and stereotyping. What is the purpose of the creation of hostile

images? When class members understand that this form of image-making enables them to be manipulated by the image maker, they often are motivated to resist. One way of bringing home the pain and the power of stereotyping is to create images about the students themselves. "All 8th graders are \_\_\_\_\_" or "All students in X Junior High are \_\_\_\_\_."

We might ask ourselves why anyone would want to demonize Muslims or Arabs. Some believe that to justify continued U.S. military spending after the demise of the Soviet Union, a new "enemy" has to be created. Some people look at Israeli-funded films which portray Arabs and Muslims as evil and assume that the government of Israel has an interest in dehumanizing Muslims and Arabs, possibly to justify the billions in foreign and military aid given annually by the United States to Israel. They believe American taxpayers seeing domestic programs cut would not subsidize Israel unless they were sufficiently persuaded that a common enemy exists. While there may be some Israelis who do want to insure perpetual funding, we need to acknowledge that the denigration of Muslims and Arabs started long ago, and appeared in Western Christianity at least by the time of the Crusades. The Christian West, which centuries ago created hostile images of Jews, also did the same for Muslims, which are now simply being adapted for modern use. Teachers who are interested in the long-term persistent falsification of Islam would profit from reading Norman Daniel's *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Chatham, NY: Oneworld, 1993), which traces the errors of portrayal, often made by people who knew better but chose instead to please their patrons. The book is too long and complex for student reading.

To help students understand the long-term mutual misunderstanding between Western Christianity and Islam, it may help to refer to the Cold War between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Although the Cold War lasted only about 45 years, it produced all sorts of distortions in

understanding between the two peoples. How much greater was the distortion between the West and the Muslim world after the long series of hot and cold wars with the Crusades, al-Andalus, the Ottoman Empire in Eastern Europe, and the colonial conflicts in North Africa and Southwest Asia!

Books related to the false images of Muslim and Arabs, so prevalent in American pop culture, include Jack Shaheen's *The TV Arab* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1984) and Laurence O Michalak's *Cruel and Unusual and The Arab Image in American Film and Television* (the latter a supplement to Vol. 17, no. 1 of the magazine *Cineaste*).

Allowing the denigration of Arabs and Muslims to go unchallenged leads to bad public policy, hardship and potential danger for Arab-Americans and Muslim-Americans, and unnecessary divisiveness in our schools and communities. The process is also self-deluding. If we persuade ourselves that violence, for example, is the exclusive characteristic of "other" people, we are blind to the level of violence in our own society and incapable of prescribing remedies.

The new national standards call for a more thorough understanding of the U.S. role in world affairs. Coverage of U.S. foreign policy has improved in recent years, but a tendency remains in some books to serve as cheerleader for "our side." Care is taken to identify "friends" of America and a less than objective portrayal is accorded these nations. Since textbooks may linger in some schools for eight or ten years this may be a problem in long term credibility since U.S. friends change over time. Our young people would be better served by a more straight-forward presentation of the various perspectives on an issue, rather than being given an official line.

In many current U.S. history textbooks, the story of U.S. interventions in the Middle East is not well told. Some of the worst textbook inaccuracies concerning Middle East affairs are found in the U.S.

# Elementary Education Resources

(Continued from page 1)

communities, ecology (the use of all parts of an olive tree or a date palm), animals, agriculture, a mythical account of the change from a hunter/gatherer society to sedentary agriculture, culturally-based math games, and celebrations of holidays in Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. The *Arab World Mosaic* includes dozens of original stories and activities and provides innovative lesson plans. It also contains activities for use with other books, including:

*Nadia the Willful*, by Sue Alexander; *Sitti's Secrets*, by Naomi Nye; *The Day of Ahmad's Secret and Sami and the Time of Troubles*, both by Florence Parry Heide and Judith Heide Gilliland; *Amina and Mohammad's Special Visitor*, by Diane Turnage Burgoyne; and *Sitti and the Cats*, by Sally Bahaar

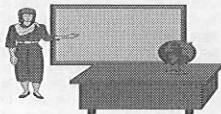
The *Arab World Mosaic* (AWM) and the five books mentioned above are sold as a package by AMEU at a special discount (see book list on page 15).

Other books recommended for the elementary level include a series on families in the Middle East, published by A.C. Black in London, and a series on *Children of the World*, published by Lerner and available from AMIDEAST. Teachers should be cautioned that both series present an almost exclusively traditional lifestyle. Butterfly Books (Librairie du Liban) has published a series of stories for elementary school (including the well-known tale *Khaled and Aida*) and books on topics of interest to younger children, such as *Arab Horses, Camels, The Arabian Desert, Mesopotamia, and Handicrafts of the Arab World*. Butterfly Books are available from the International Book Center.

Readers should avoid the *New True*

*Book Series*, which seems to be carelessly written by people who know very little about the area. The book on Egypt by Karen Jacobsen is particularly poor—it locates Palestine "on the Sinai Peninsula," for example.

*Oil in Oman* presents the uses of petroleum and how it is found and extracted. *The Arabs: an Activity Book*, published by the British Museum, contains activities related to maps, families, food and hospitality, lifestyles, oil, writing, art, games and music. *Sahara: Vanishing Cultures* by Jan Reynolds is a fully illustrated book about the life of the Tuareg people.



Although only a very small percentage of North Africans live in the desert, most children find these stories fascinating because desert lifestyles seem so different.

Another excellent resource for teaching about the Arab World is *The Arabs: Activities for the Elementary School Level* by Audrey Shabbas, Carol El-Shaieb and Ahlam Nabulsi. Published by AWAIR in 1991, the unit was designed for grade levels K-7 and includes 25 activities (macrame, weaving, songs, dances, stories, and games) which put a human face on the peoples of the area.

Juanita Soghikian's *Lands, Peoples and Communities of the Middle East* also carries an activity book and is highly recommended. A revised edition is expected in early 1996. The story book *Ibrahim* was so popular it is hard to see

how it has been allowed to go out of print. If you can find it in your library, use it.

Two Iranian fairy tales with morals have been popular at the elementary level: Diane Stanley's *Fortune* and M. and N. Batmanglij's *The Wonderful Story of Zaal*.

Several Middle Eastern story books are now available from AMIDEAST. One is *Tales from Ancient Egypt* by George Hart. Both *Folk Tales of Egypt* and *Goha* are edited and translated by Denys Johnson-Davies. *Goha* is The Wise Fool who is known variously as Juha, Hodja, or Nasreddin throughout the Middle East. These books are well illustrated and the stories are short enough to be used as rewards for completing tasks on time or good behavior. Children will probably enjoy discussing the moral of the *Goha* stories, acting them out, or drawing pictures illustrating the action. Consult the AMIDEAST catalog for additional books.

Teachers at the elementary level often have used proverbs or poems as a window into another culture. There are many books of Middle Eastern proverbs. Among my favorites are *As the Arabs Say*, volumes 1 and 2, written by Isa Khalil Sabbagh. Another collection in two volumes with illustrations is *The Son of a Duck Is a Floater and Apricots Tomorrow*, both compiled by Primrose Arnanter and Ashkham Skipwith and published by Stacey International, London. Children may enjoy writing a short story which illustrates the proverb, acting it out, or drawing a picture of the action. They also may enjoy finding English equivalents of Arab proverbs, such as "As-sadiq liwaqt ad-diq." ("A friend in need is a friend indeed."), or English opposites of Arab proverbs. Compare the proverb found in Ben Franklin's

(Continued on page 13)

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Poor Richard's Almanac, "God helps him who helps himself," with the Arabic proverb "God helps those who help each other," which emphasizes the importance of community over the individual. One second-grade teacher illustrated this proverb with a dramatization of the story "How the Fox Got Back His Tail" from Inea Bushnaq's *Arab Folktales*. The story illustrates a chain of cooperation and interdependence. A dramatized version of this tale also is included in the *Arab World Mosaic*.

Art offers another window into other cultures. Drawings of humans or animals are not found in mosques, lest those at prayer be tempted to worship images instead of God. Abstract geo-

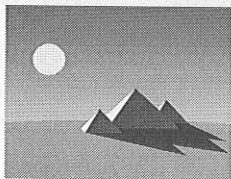
metric designs were used and their popularity was transferred outside the mosque setting. Other designs popular in Islamic art are derived from plant life or from Arabic letters (calligraphy).

Children may wish to write their names in a Middle Eastern language, and to make a design from the letters. (One could try to make designs with English letters, but it is harder!) Those who wish to explore geometric designs will find the book *Introduction to Tessellations* by Dale Seymour and Jill Britton invaluable (Palo Alto, CA: Dale Seymour Publications, 1989). A tessellation is a pattern made up of one or more shapes, completely covering a surface. With minimum effort, exotic images emerge. This book can

be used with junior and senior high students as well.

Videos which will be popular and easily understood by elementary students are Sesame Street equivalents *Iftah yah Sumsum* (Arabic) and *Shalom Semsame* (Hebrew). *The Travels of Benjamin of Tudela* presents the life of a medieval traveler in cartoon form.

Inclusion of reference to Middle Eastern cultures in the regular elementary curriculum provides a natural introduction to Middle Eastern peoples which can support the more structured secondary-level study of history and geography. ■



## Secondary Level Resources

Continued from Page 11

history field. Very likely the writers of these texts feel that since the Middle East is such a small component in their work, it does not deserve an exacting professional review. But from the point of view of Middle Eastern scholarship, these texts reach readers who may never take other courses with other viewpoints.

As an example, treatment of modern Iran usually does not give the student enough information to understand Iran's hostility to the United States. It is well known in the Middle East that the CIA, working in concert with Britain in 1951-53, conspired during the Cold War to overthrow Mossadegh, the duly elected prime

minister of Iran, and then brought back the unpopular Shah. With Russia bordering Iran, the U.S. was concerned about establishing a "buttress" against communism and placing a friend as head of this important country to insure that Iran remained anti-Soviet and anti-communist, and that oil would flow steadily to the West. However, to keep the unpopular Shah in power, we had to subvert the democratic processes of another country. The cruelty of the U.S.-trained and supplied SAVAK (secret service) toward the Iranian people is well known throughout the world, even if less well reported in the U.S. Our disregard for Iran's democratic rights fostered the rise of extremist Islamic forces, which in turn disregarded democratic rights.

The whole episode could lead to thoughtful classroom discussion. Is it fair to say that for a short term benefit of having a friend in power at a difficult time, the U.S. took action whose path led to disaster in the long term? Do students have another analysis?

In describing Lebanon, texts often are not very helpful, some alleging that despite the good efforts of the U.S. in 1982 to bring peace to the area, the local population rebuffed our help. Rarely is

there any explanation that the U.S. came as neutral peacemakers, but ended up by taking sides with one faction in a civil war. The U.S. then bombed villages in the Chouf Mountains, which precipitated suicide bombings of our embassy and our troops. This story could lead to a discussion of the proper role for the U.S. When should we be neutral, and when should we take sides?

In the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the U.S. is often portrayed as the patient, well-meaning "honest broker," valiantly trying to bring peace to unwilling parties. Yet in its framework for peace, the U.S. turns its back on applicable international law and relevant U.N. resolutions, vetoes U.N. resolutions which attempt to hold Israel accountable for breaches of human rights and international law, and annually bestows on Israel \$6-billion in aid, some of which goes for illegal settlements characterized by our State Department as "obstacles to peace." Can we be both the honest broker and maintain our special relationship with one party to the conflict? Such discussions should sharpen students' critical skills for examining future domestic or foreign issues, skills required for effective participatory democracy. ■

*This Issue's Book Selections Include Publications  
Recommended by Elizabeth Barlow*



*Check boxes for book purchases and enclose with order form on Page 16.*

		List	AMEU Incl. Postage
<input type="checkbox"/>	Afkhami, M. & Friedl, E.	IN THE EYE OF THE STORM (1994, paper, 226 pp)	\$17.95 \$15.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Alexander, S.	NADIA THE WILLFUL (1992, paper, illustrated)	\$ 5.00 \$ 5.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Al-Faruqi, I.	ISLAM (1984, paper, 83 pp)	\$ 5.00 \$ 3.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Armstrong, K.	MUHAMMAD: A BIOGRAPHY (1992, paper, 290 pp)	\$15.00 \$11.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ashrawi, H.	THIS SIDE OF PEACE (1995, hdbk., 318 pp)	\$25.00 \$21.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Badran & Cooke	OPENING THE GATES (1990, paper, 412 pp)	\$18.95 \$16.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bahous, S.	SITTI AND THE CATS: A TALE OF FRIENDSHIP (1993)	\$13.95 \$12.25
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bowen & Early, eds.	EVERDAY LIFE IN THE MUSLIM MIDDLE EAST (1993, paper, 327 pp)	\$18.95 \$12.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bushnaq, I.	ARAB FOLKTALES (1986, paper, 386 pp)	\$16.00 \$14.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chacour, E.	BLOOD BROTHERS (1994, paper, 223 pp)	\$ 7.95 \$ 7.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chapman, C.	WHOSE PROMISED LAND, ISRAEL OR PALESTINE? (1992, PAPER, 286 pp)	\$10.95 \$ 5.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Corey, H.	FOOD FROM BIBLICAL LANDS: A CULINARY TRIP TO THE LAND OF BIBLE HISTORY (1989, 10"x8" paper, illust., 154 pp)	\$16.95 \$13.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cragg, K.	THE ARAB CHRISTIAN: A HISTORY IN THE MIDDLE EAST (1991, hdbk., 336 pp)	\$29.95 \$23.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	David, R.	ARAB & ISRAEL FOR BEGINNERS (1993, paper, 218 pp)	\$ 9.95 \$ 8.95
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dwyer, K.	ARAB VOICES & THE HUMAN RIGHTS DEBATE IN THE MIDDLE EAST (1991, paper)	\$15.95 \$14.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Embassy of Saudi Arabia	UNDERSTANDING ISLAM AND THE MUSLIMS (1989, paper, illust., 34 pp)	N/A \$ 3.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Esposito, J.	THE ISLAMIC THREAT: MYTH OR REALITY? (1991, paper, 247 pp)	\$ 9.95 \$ 8.95
<input type="checkbox"/>	Farmaian, S.	DAUGHTERS OF PERSIA (1992, hdbk., 416 pp)	\$22.00 \$17.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fernea & Bezirgon, eds.	MIDDLE EAST MUSLIM WOMEN SPEAK (1984, paper, 452 pp)	\$16.95 \$14.50
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