

Document Study on Turco-Muslim Encounters in Central Asia, 600CE-1450CE

AP World History Curriculum Framework Connection:

Period 3: Regional and
Transregional
Interactions, c. 600
C.E. to c. 1450
Key Concepts 3.1-3.3

(see appendix for an
expanded list of
alignments to the AP
World History
Curriculum
Framework)

Unit Goal & Summary:

Students will understand the major historical themes of the arrival of Islam to the Turkic peoples in Central Asia.

- The geography of Central Asia affected the development of Islam amongst the Turkic peoples of Central Asia. (WHAP Course Theme 1)
- The spread of Islam in Central Asia was influenced by the pattern of interaction between pastoral nomads and sedentary societies. (WHAP Course Themes 2 & 5)
- The Turco-Muslim encounter in Central Asia under the political systems of the Abbasid state differed from the Turco-Muslim encounter under the Mongol empire. (WHAP Course Theme 3)
- The “Silk Road” is a general metaphor that simplifies the much more complicated trade network that existed in Central Asia. (WHAP Course Theme 4)

Estimated Duration:

Six class periods (approx. 60 minutes each)

Commentary: This unit is designed to follow prior units on Eurasian social hierarchies in the Classical Era, the early Islamic world, and the Mongol Empire. This unit utilizes the document collection Silk Road Seattle:
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/>

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Pre-Assessment:

Students write answers to the following short answer questions:

1. *Where did the Turkic peoples (the Turks) originate?*
2. *When did Islam arrive to Central Asia?(Answer in relation to other events that occurred before, during or after.)*
3. *Describe the political situation of Central Asia at the time Muslim Arabs arrived there.*
4. *After the arrival of Islam into the region, where was Central Asia governed from?*
5. *Who were the Mongols and when did they come to power?*
6. *What was the Silk Road?*

Students receive Document A (Title of Doc), Document B (Title of Doc), and Document C (Title of Doc). They should read the documents and write a paragraph to answer the following question:

Using the information in the documents to support your answer, what were the major themes of the arrival of Islam to the Turkic peoples of Central Asia?

Scoring Guidelines:

At the outset of this unit, students should have a command of the basic historical definitions elicited by the short answer questions.

1. Turks originated in the steppes north of China.
2. Islam arrived to Central Asia after the Arabs conquered Iran (Sasanian Empire) and just before the Abbasids overthrew the Umayyads. (Also acceptable: during the Tang dynasty in China.)
3. The political situation was very fragmented, with many different sedentary and pastoral nomadic societies each with their own culture. There were major cities like Samarqand and Bukhara.
4. The Abbasids governed Central Asia from their capital in Baghdad, the center of the Islamic World.

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5. The Mongols were pastoral nomads from the steppes north of China. Led by Chinggis Khan, they came to power in the early 1200s.
6. The Silk Road is the name for the trade network that went through Central Asia. Goods were exchanged amongst the regions but there was not one single road that continued through from China to the Mediterranean.

The student's written paragraph about the major historical themes should include some mention of each of the following:

- Pastoral nomadic culture
- Muslim geography, especially the concept of the "Islamic World" or "Dar-al-Islam"
- Trans-regional trade and cultural exchange
- Islamic beliefs and practices

Informal Assessments:

Student writing from each lesson can be collected and read for ongoing informal assessment.

Post-Assessment:

Students will complete a the following question as a Document Based Question (DBQ), using the document resources on Silk Road Seattle (<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad>)

Analyze the responses to the spread of Islam in Central Asia. (600-1450 CE).

Scoring Guidelines:

1. Follow the scoring guidelines for AP Exam DBQs.
2. Thesis statement should incorporate at least one goal of the unit.
3. Explanation and analysis of the documents should demonstrate understanding of all goals of the unit.

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Lesson Plan Outline:

Teacher must preview the historical texts at Silk Road Seattle and select appropriate texts for each lesson.

Lesson 1: Pastoral Nomadism

Objective:

- Students will understand that the pastoral nomadic way of life provided the basis for how the Turks would adopt Islam.

Lesson 2: Central Asia Trading Networks

Objective:

- Students will understand that the “Silk Road” was actually a non-contiguous network of routes.

Lesson 3: The Spread of Islam

Objective:

- Students will understand that the spread of Islam in Central Asia was influenced by the pattern of interaction between pastoral nomads and sedentary societies.

Lesson 4: Travel Literature

Objective:

- Students will practice sourcing, corroborating, and contextualizing documents in the genre of travel literature.

Lesson 5: Muslim Scholars and the Abbasid State

Objective:

- Students will understand that interregional contact in Central Asia encouraged technological, scientific, and cultural transfers between the Muslims of the Abbasid state and Turks in surrounding areas.

Lesson 6: The Mongol Empire

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Objective:

- Students will understand that the Turco-Muslim encounter in Central Asia under the political systems of the Abbasid state differed from the Turco-Muslim encounter under the Mongol empire.

Differentiated Instructional Support

Documents on Silk Road Seattle can be further excerpted or number of documents can be reduced.

Extension

Students can repeat the document analysis process for more documents on Silk Road Seattle.

Homework Options and Home Connections

The documents for each lesson should be read and annotated by the student before class begins.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Materials in this lesson can be integrated with algebra courses and English courses that include an emphasis on analytical reading.

Materials and Resources:

For teachers & students Access to Silk Road Seattle
(<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts>)

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Technology Connections

Students access documents from the era at the following website:

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts>

Research Connections

Readings from the NEH Institute on Central Asia in World History