1: Vocabulary Lesson for Cities of Light

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Overview and Purpose of the Lesson:

The video *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain* contains a large number of possibly unfamiliar vocabulary terms that might interfere with students' understanding of the film. This set of lessons is intended to be used prior to viewing each segment of the video to help students learn or review such terms in advance. In each section, students work alone or in a small group to determine the meaning of vocabulary terms by using context clues found in actual quotes from the video. This strategy serves two purposes. First, it familiarizes students with difficult terms before they hear them in the video, aiding comprehension. Second, it exposes students to some of the film's key concepts in advance, making the film's presentation their second exposure, again aiding comprehension.

Objectives:

- Define important terms found in the video, *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain*.
- Articulate key concepts from the video.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of "Islamic Spain Preview Vocabulary" – One per student
- Class set of "Islamic Spain – Quotes From the Video" -- One per student or small group

Time: About 10-15 minutes prior to the viewing of each segment

Procedure:

1. Before showing the first segment of the video, give each student a copy of "Islamic Spain Preview Vocabulary." Also give each student or small group of students a copy of "Islamic Spain – Quotes From the Video."
2. Review, if necessary, the reading strategy of using context clues to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Perhaps model the strategy by doing a "think aloud" using a term from the first segment.
3. Have students use the quotes to complete the matching for the first section. [*NOTE: The numbers to the left of the quotes refer to timing cues in the film.*]
4. Go over the answers. Discuss the terms as well as the quotes in which they were found. Ask students to make predictions about the segment they are about to view based on what they have learned.
5. Show the first segment of the video. Discuss afterwards.
6. Repeat the above procedure for each segment that you choose to show.
7. Collect the class set of quotes at the end of the class period.

Assessment (optional): Include a vocabulary quiz as part of the overall assessment for the unit or give two or more smaller quizzes as warm-up or closure activities if the film is being used across more than one class period.

Student Handout 1a: Cities of Light -- Preview Vocabulary

The video *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain* contains a number of terms that may be unfamiliar to you. One way to deal with such terms is to use context clues to figure out their meaning. This can be difficult when the term is being used in a video rather than in a reading since you can't easily go back and review what was said. In this set of activities you will be provided with a printed set of actual quotes from the video that you can use to find the context clues and determine the meaning of terms in advance. For each chapter of the video use the clues to match each term with its meaning.

Chapter 1: Migration

_____ 1.	the acceptance of the differing views of other people and fairness toward them	A. vulnerable
_____ 2.	moving from one place to another	B. migration
_____ 3.	powerless; considered unimportant	C. marginalized
_____ 4.	to treat badly or unfairly	D. persecute
_____ 5.	to proclaim officially	E. tolerance
_____ 6.	people, animals, or plants that are native to an area	F. indigenous
_____ 7.	open to attack	G. promulgate

Chapter 2: Foundation

_____ 1.	a group of people within a larger group that sometimes disagrees with or fights with other members of the larger group	A. beleaguered
_____ 2.	harassed; under severe pressure or hemmed in	B. integrated
_____ 3.	someone who disagrees with the government	C. faction
_____ 4.	to be flexible and allow others to fit in	D. accommodating
_____ 5.	people of the highest social class	E. aristocracy
_____ 6.	a line of rulers from the same family	F. dynasty
_____ 7.	made up of different groups of people that	G. dissident

cooperate and work well together

Chapter 3: Unity

_____ 1. a population composed of many different groups
_____ 2. bringing water to an area that does not have enough
_____ 3. to make something easier to do
_____ 4. long, bitter, and violent conflict
_____ 5. an ambassador or representative sent on a specific mission

A. diverse
B. emissary
C. facilitate
D. irrigation
E. strife

Chapter 4: Division

_____ 1. a situation that seems unlikely, but is actually true
_____ 2. to become fully developed, reaching a highest point
_____ 3. one of many small kingdoms that made up Medieval Spain
_____ 4. involving people of different religious faiths
_____ 5. a high ranking government official

A. taifa
B. efflorescence
C. interfaith
D. paradox
E. vizier

Chapter 5: Purification

_____ 1. somebody who practices the same religion as another person
_____ 2. merging together into a single group
_____ 3. to gradually intrude and take away somebody's property
_____ 4. to cause to become productive or fruitful
_____ 5. getting rid of something harmful or unwanted
_____ 6. communication and cooperation between two or more groups of people
_____ 7. shocked by something awful

A. interaction
B. coalescing
C. fructify
D. coreligionist
E. purification
F. encroach
G. appalled

Chapter 6: Crossroads

_____ 1.	Spain and Portugal	A. ironic
_____ 2.	something that makes a change happen or brings about an event	B. Iberia C. controversial
_____ 3.	causing strong disagreement or disapproval	D. catalyst
_____ 4.	something that happens that is not what one would expect and may have a funny twist	

Chapter 7: Survival

_____ 1.	someone who is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about something	A. Mudejar B. aficionado
_____ 2.	living together in the same place	C. cohabitation
_____ 3.	the front face of a building	D. puritanical
_____ 4.	a small remaining part of something that has largely disappeared	E. vestige F. façade
_____ 5.	A Muslim who lived under Christian rule	
_____ 6.	believing in very strict religious rules and principles	

Chapter 8: Loss

_____ 1.	an investigation that is harsh or unfair	A. succumb
_____ 2.	a Muslim who converted or pretended to convert to Christianity	B. Inquisition C. Morisco
_____ 3.	no longer committed to something	D. renege
_____ 4.	to give in to something powerful; collapse	E. lapsed
_____ 5.	to go back on a promise or commitment	

Student Handout 1b: "Cities of Light" Vocabulary Quotes

Migrate/Migration:

2:42 They [the barbarian tribes] migrate across Europe searching the Roman provinces for a land of their own.

3:10 The migrations bring a great movement and mixture of cultures into the remains of the broken Empire.

9:12 So in that sense, we should think of the Muslims, in some way, as a migratory wave just like the Visigoths, except 200 years later.

Iberia:

3:20 In 476 the Visigoth tribes reach westward to the isolated Roman peninsula of Iberia, what we now call Spain and Portugal.

10:27 The bulk of the people who invaded Iberia, which is Portugal and Spain, were Berbers, or Imazighen.

10:37 (continued from above) A young, newly converted Berber warrior named Tariq ibn Ziyad leads 7,000 men in an invasion of the Iberian Peninsula.

1:18:31 It was not only the Christians in Iberia that were fighting the Almohads. It was some sort of Crusade. People had come from France, from Germany. All the crusaders came to defeat the Muslims, especially after the Crusades failed in the East.

Marginalized:

5:18 For the first hundred years of Visigoth rule, the Jews enjoy relative freedom, but are never in a position of power. …They were a marginalized minority within a culture which didn't necessarily understand the Jewish practices or Jewish religion.

Persecute/persecution:

5:57 In the late 6th century, this growing religious tension erupts in violence as the Visigoths convert to Catholicism and begin to actively persecute the Jews of Spain.

6:22 Jews have this very long history in Spain, but are always a tiny minority and are, at the worst of times, very badly persecuted.

13:33 The Muslim armies find allies among the persecuted Jews in the conquered cities of Spain.

15:32 Jews and Christians may worship freely without fear of persecution, but they must submit to Islamic authority and pay a tax in exchange for this protection.

47:44 The Muslim Ibn Hazm is rewarded not with trust, but with persecution, in the taifa kingdom of Seville.

1:02:43 Under the North African Almohads, many Jews and Christians are forced to flee Al-Andalus. Entire families must abandon their ancestral homes, or face humiliating persecution.

1:50:29 When the Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492 they already had a hundred years of intensive persecution behind them.

Promulgated:

6:05 Most of the evidence that we have comes from a series of law codes which were promulgated by Visigothic kings and which typically restricted the actions of Jews, forced them to convert, and ultimately enslaved them.

Indigenous:

10:34 In North Africa, the growing Islamic Empire gathers strength, converting large numbers of indigenous tribesmen called Imazighen, or as the Greeks named them, Berbers.

Vulnerable (and taifa):

11:12 The Berber warriors prove useful in Islam's expansion as Arab leaders set their sights on the now vulnerable Visigoth kingdom of Spain.

54:11 So in some ways these taifa kingdoms were very interesting places in the sense that because they were vulnerable, they opened a new phase in interaction between Christians and Muslims.

Faction(s) (and coreligionist):

15:05 Once the dynasty had arrived and conquered the Christian enemy, it quickly began to splinter, and there were Arab factions, and there were Berber North African factions.

17:16 The Muslim society he [Abd al-Rahman] found in Al-Andalus was also highly conflicted. And I don't mean between Muslims and Christians. I mean between rival Muslim factions.

17:36 As the son of a Berber and an Arab he [Abd al-Rahman] is able to quell the tensions between these Muslim factions.

47:56 One of the aspects of the taifa kingdoms at this point in time was that along with each political faction, you often get different, divergent, religious beliefs.

54:36 In Granada a Muslim religious leader, Abu Ishaq, mobilizes a faction of Muslims against the city's Jewish community, preaching that a Jew or a Christian should not have authority over a Muslim.

1:00:03 The North African factions are appalled to see that their coreligionists appear to be drinking alcohol.

Beleaguered:

17:25 But Abd al-Rahman finds support among the beleaguered townsfolk longing for a strong leader.

Dissidents:

17:40 Abd al-Rahman is able to pull together dissidents and take control of Muslim Spain.

Accommodating:

21:52 Because the political elite in Al-Andalus did not feel threatened by their minorities – they didn't feel threatened by the Christians – they didn't feel threatened by the Jews – they were accommodating.

Aristocracy:

15:17 The Berbers, long treated as lower-class citizens, begin to revolt against the Arab aristocracy.

23:16 He (Ziryab) revolutionized cooking, he revolutionized hairstyles, music, the way the aristocracy acted.

Dynasty/Consolidated:

20:59 Abd al-Rahman's reign begins a new dynasty that will forever shape the future of Al-Andalus. His dynasty brings to Spain a consolidated (single) rule that lasts for centuries.

Integrated:

21:35 Over the next century, Cordoba's own glory continues to grow, as not only Muslims but also Christians and Jews begin to develop an integrated culture that is unique to Al-Andalus.

21:59 The Jews and Christians, especially the Jews, are pretty well integrated into the economic life and the social life. They do business with Muslims. They interact with Muslims. So space is made for them.

Tolerance/Intolerance (and purification):

22:55 But this world too quickly vanished. Greed, fear, and intolerance swept it away. Puritanical judgments and absolutism snuffed out the light of learning. Within a few centuries the fragile union of these peoples dissipated like smoke. The time of tolerance was lost forever.

25:30 So the background to this cultural sharing, this cultural creation, is a lot of tension… this leads to a series of civil wars which drag out through the 800's. These civil

wars divide the communities of Al-Anadlus threatening to tip the fragile balance between tolerance and violence. (Foundation segment)

1:03:02 The Almohads certainly represent an authoritarian, an absolutist perspective. They came and swept away the tolerant traditions of the caliphate. Judaism and Christianity were simply outlawed.

1:05:19 In a frenzy of purification and intolerance, the Christian crusaders intend to cleanse the Holy Land of Muslims.

1:49:04 After 1492 tolerance has disappeared. That's gone. That official doctrine of tolerance is gone. You do find people being forced to convert…

Diverse/Diversity:

25:21 By 900, the Islamic Empire has taken root in Spain. But the dynasty of Prince Abd al-Rahman still struggles for peace and unity among the diverse peoples of Al-Andalus. (Unity segment)

29:42 If we look at the court of Abd al-Rahman the third, it reflects in many ways all of these trends of diversity that had been developing in Al-Andalus up to that time.

47:32 Granada is a kingdom, which has a large percentage of Jews in its population, and is also characterized by a diverse Muslim population. So it was really a complex situation, much like the Caliphate had been.

1:01:41 The North Africans see the root of this failing state in the unfamiliar, open, and diverse society of Islamic Spain.

1:03:48 Over the next century, these North African armies flood into Al-Andalus. First the Almoravids, then a new, more puritanical Muslim group, the Almohads, seeking to transform the diverse kingdom into a purely Muslim state.

1:03:50 In the dust of the refugees, the light of Al-Andalus, the land once known for its diversity, prosperity and scholarship, is lost.

1:39:33 Granada was a really diverse community. They were eating the same food. They were wearing the same kind of clothes. They were probably singing the same songs – speaking the same languages. It's really one culture.

1:53:31 When there is diversity there is, by definition, friction. But of course if you eliminate diversity, everyone would be the same and there would be no friction, but there would be no creativity that results from that tension.

Green Revolution:

37:32 With this new knowledge, agriculture booms. Cordoba blossoms like never before during what's called the Green Revolution.

Irrigation:

37:53 Using the existing Roman aqueducts, the Muslims develop advanced techniques such as the water wheel to bring water from the mountains into the cities and growing

fields. Sophisticated irrigation has practical uses in Al-Andalus, but it also allows the fostering of exquisite gardens.

Facilitate:

33:03 There is this text of our Caliph Abd al-Rahman the third who had contacts with the Byzantine Emperor in Byzantium who sent him a lot of books and a lot of people to translate them who knew Arabic. It is the Jewish scholar Ibn Shaprut who facilitates the translations of these great classical works of science brought to Abd al-Rahman III's court from the Christian Byzantines.

1:54:00 Cultural transmission in Islamic Spain was facilitated by the fact that Islam did not erect barriers to knowledge. In other words, there was no knowledge that was considered sacrilegious – that was wrong. All knowledge was all right.

Paradox/Paradoxically:

44:45 But paradoxically, this is also the period of time which offers perhaps some of the greatest cultural splendor. And the reason for this is that each one of these petty kings wanted to have the most brilliant court possible. (Division segment)

Strife (and vulnerable):

43:07 This was a time of great upheaval when native Spanish Muslims turned against Berbers, when Jews and Christians became more vulnerable. It was – and really the best expression for this is an Arabic one – it was the time of fitna – of strife. (end of Unity segment)

1:06:21 Appeals to absolutes on both sides led to hardening of positions – led to great strife within those governments and then you see kind of a downward slide.

1:46:16 By 1487 internal strife in Granada's royal family allows the Christian armies to conquer the final Muslim cities surrounding Granada, leaving the capital city itself vulnerable to attack.

Efflorescence

40:53 By the beginning of the 11th Century, the unified Al-Andalus has enjoyed a cultural efflorescence. (Division segment, beginning)

Taifa (and dynasty, vulnerable):

41:00 But without the authority of its great leader, Caliph Abd al-Rahman III, Al-Andalus now begins to break apart, dividing into separate, smaller kingdoms called taifas.

44:28 With the fall of Cordoba and the rise of the many smaller taifa kingdoms, each local ruler must compete for power, setting the Muslim leaders at odds with each other.

47:18 As the years pass, word of the Jewish scholar ha-Nagid's reputation for scholarship spreads and soon he is invited to serve in the court of one of the most powerful taifa kingdoms, Granada.

51:39 Indeed, with no central authority in Cordoba to unite its people, the rise of the taifa kingdoms turns Muslim against Muslim, beginning a period of division and war. As the powerful taifa kingdoms of Seville and Granada compete with each other for supremacy, they turn on the more vulnerable taifa kingdoms to the north.

53:23 The rise of the taifa kingdoms forever changes Al-Andalus, shifting the landscape of Muslim power in Spain. (End of Division segment)

Emissary, **tribute/tributary and taifa**:

29:57 In 955, he [Abd al-Rahman III] sends his secretary, the Christian Recemund of Granada, as his diplomatic emissary to Otto the first, the king of Germany.

31:36 Also in Abd al-Rahman III's court is the Jewish scholar and poet Hasdai ibn Shaprut, who acts as a diplomatic emissary as well, and is the Caliph's personal physician.

52:02 In a bid for survival, these northern Muslim kingdoms send emissaries to the Christian kings with an appeal for help. In exchange for a payment of tribute – a financial payment – the Christian monarch would offer a modicum of protection against enemies.

1:40:00 Christian monarchs over the decades left Granada as a tributary that would pay a certain amount of money, but would never be invaded. And from 1250 or so all the way to 1492 there's this prolonged twilight of Muslim rule in Spain, no longer a meaningful threat.

Coalescing and encroachment:

59:21 One of the first great advances of these now coalescing Christian kingdoms – one of their first great advances or encroachments into Muslim territory – is the taking of Toledo, one of the great cultural cities of the Islamic part of Spain.

59:31 Threatened by the encroaching Christian forces, the Muslim ruler of Seville enlists armies from North Africa to help defend his kingdom with disastrous results.

1:23:35 Because Granada successfully maintains its independence under the surrounding Christian encroachments it provides a safe refuge for Muslims who must flee their homes and search for a new life.

Fructify:

1:03:57 The Jews who find new homes in the Christian North, carry with them not only their ancient Jewish traditions, but also the knowledge fostered in Al-Andalus. They planted…the products of Arabic and Islamic scholarship in Christian territories and really helped to fructify these European territories.

Interfaith:

49:50 His [ibn Hazm's] religious work [comparing religions] establishes no interfaith dialogue, no sympathy, only criticism of Christianity and Judaism.

1:13:49 So we have these wonderful little laboratories that are interfaith experiments in a sense. And to me one of the important lessons they give us is that in the end the society is richest when each individual civilization and culture is bringing something to the table as opposed to thinking 'my society, my culture, my religion alone knows everything worth knowing.' (Crossroads segment)

Aficionado, **Diversity and Cohabitation**:
1:32:11 Alfonso the Tenth, because he was an aficionado of Arabic culture and Islamic culture, he translated books on chess and other games that had come from the Islamic world – on falconry, so he's very visible as a figure of cultural diversity and cohabitation.

Interaction:
1:37:54 And I believe that Alhambra the Kingdom of Granada at that time reflected Islam when it was open – open to influences, open to interactions with other cultures, whether it is Christian, Jewish, or whatever…before Islam basically fell back on itself and closed doors and said we don't want to deal with the rest of the world. So Alhambra is a very good example of what happens when people open up.

Façade:
1:39:12 On the façade as you enter into the Alcazar of Seville, you see sort of polylobed arches and inscriptions that are both Latin and also Arabic. And also one sees in the small detail one sees shields – the shields of Castile.

Multiculturalism:
1:38:51 It [the Sinagoga del Transito] roughly dates from the same time as the Alcazar of Seville, and you have the same kind of multiculturalism going on there in a very overt way. If you look at the walls, you can see Arabic and Hebrew inscriptions and you can see the shield of Castile. This is one culture that has different languages, different religious practices.

Catalyst:
1:16:40 To the Christians this Muslim victory (at Alarcos in 1195) is devastating and serves as a catalyst to unite the Christian kingdoms in one cause.

Inquisition:
1:43:01 With a strong Catholic monarchy ruling over Christian Spain, the Pope authorizes the Spanish Inquisition – a bloody investigation into the private religious lives of their people.

1:44:29 The Inquisition is often held up as the single greatest sign of the horrors of this Christian society that emerged in medieval and early modern Spain.

1:45:00 (continued from above) The Spanish Inquisition is one of the last tragic chapters in the history of Al-Andalus. Soon, Isabel and Ferdinand's dream of a unified Christian Spain becomes a reality.

Vestige/Vestigial and Moriscos:

1:39:13 The kingdom of Granada enjoys relative peace and prosperity even after the plague subsides in Europe. In that last vestige of Al-Andalus, Muslims and Jews live together and thrive.

1:52:01 In the centuries following the fall of Grenada, Muslims were given the same choice as Jews in 1492 – convert to Christianity or leave Spain. Some converted Muslims, called Moriscos, continue to worship in secret, trying desperately to hold on to their traditions. During the 16th century there were Muslims in Spain, kind of cut off from the rest of the Islamic world and leading a vestigial Islamic life.

Mudejar:

1:30:24 Muslims living under Christian rule in Medieval Spain were called in Arabic *Mudajjan*, or in English, Mudejars. These are Muslims who lived under Christian rule and who were basically artists, laborers, builders.

Appalled:

1:00:09 The North African factions are appalled to see that their **coreligionists** appear to be drinking alcohol. They're appalled to see that their fellow Muslims are mingling with Christians and Jews so readily because they are people who have a much stricter, much more by-the-book, much more rigid concept of how Muslims should live and work."

Vizier:

45:36 Samuel ibn Negrala is asked to compose letters on behalf of the Berber vizier, or prime minister of Grenada, who finds the scholar's work so impressive that he is eventually promoted into the court of the king himself.

54:49 It [an attack on the Jews of Granada] was instigated by a Muslim preacher who was also a poet. And he wrote a very scurrilous (nasty) poem in which he attacked the ruler, Badis, for having a Jewish Vizier.

1:36:00 …the poets who wrote those poems (on the walls of the Alhambra) were the viziers of the ruler.

Lapsed:

1:43:20 Originally the Inquisition was meant to deal with Christians who were lapsed – not with Jews or with Muslims. But over time, it began to concern itself with converted Jews who lapsed back to Judaism. And then of course once we have masses of Muslims who have converted to Christianity, it began to concern itself with converted Muslims, we call them Moriscos, who had lapsed back into Islam.

Purify/Purification/Puritanical:

53:36 By 1060, the Muslim-Christian alliances may have granted the smaller Muslim taifa kingdoms a temporary reprieve from the aggression of the larger taifas, but they also contribute to a growing demand among many Muslim and Christian leaders for a purification of their religion and of their land.

53:59 In Rome, Pope Alexander II sees the intimate relationships between Christians and Muslims as immoral and he seeks to purify Spain of all Muslims.

56:55 In northern Spain Christian armies begin their form of purification as well, marching against Muslim cities taking them by force, one by one in their reconquista, or reconquest of Spain.

1:05:56 So the Crusades bring, for example, a harshening of the rhetoric on the Christian side and conversely, on the Muslim side we're getting these more puritanical dynasties from North Africa launching Jihads into southern Spain to kind of shore up their beleaguered coreligionists.

1:32:04 Almost half the population of Europe succumbs to the disease [the plague]. The countless deaths only feed the puritanical fervor in Christian territories. Hatred and violence erupts as Jews become the first scapegoats.

Expert quotes: Ending Summary Quotes on Muslim Spain:

Expert 1: "The reconquest of Spain by the Catholics – by the Christians – created very much a sense of loss. And even until today Muslims who visit Andalusia, who visit Cordoba and Granada and Seville, feel this nostalgia – feel this sense of loss."

Expert 2: "When there is diversity there is, by definition, friction. But of course if you eliminate diversity, everyone would be the same and there would be no friction, but there would be no creativity that results from that tension."

Expert 3: "Just think of what Medieval Spain gave to Europe. We have this technology for making paper. We have this irrigation technology." (Paper technology has not been mentioned previously, irrigation only briefly.)

Expert 4: "Cultural transmission in Islamic Spain was facilitated by the fact that Islam did not erect barriers to knowledge. In other words, there was no knowledge that was considered sacrilegious – that was wrong. All knowledge was all right. So that's right there a form of cultural diversity, that they are consuming with no barriers to knowledge."

Expert 5: "So, kind of a rough and ready togetherness came about. Not an ideological tolerance, but a practical kind of tolerance."

Expert 4: "I think that we're fascinated by Islamic Spain because we project into it our own desires for a world where Jews, Christians, and Muslims all kind of got along – I mean more or less got along. And I think we look at that and wish – it's wishful thinking – wish that in the modern world relationships were easier."

Expert 3: "And we see that to a greater or lesser extent people have to find a way to live together – find a way forward despite some of the contradictions they feel. Despite the fact that you know, 'your belief is heretical in my eyes but we're still here together in this city and we may have shared values and we're going to find a way to make this work for the good of our own children and families.'"

Narrator: “The history of Muslim Spain reveals the immense potential that lies in our shared values. Its triumph and tragedy compels us to embrace again a culture of tolerance and to heed the wisdom most sacred to all Christians, Muslims, and Jews – to love God above all things and to love your neighbor as yourself.”

2: Viewer's Guide for Cities of Light

Author: Eileen Wood

NOTE: Lesson 5 suggests discussion questions on the content of the documentary for post-viewing.

Segment 1: Migration

In the late 5th century, the once mighty and extensive Roman Empire is undergoing its final stages of collapse. Spain, once a Roman province, becomes the new home for the migrating Germanic Visigoths. They find that Spain is already a diverse mixture of cultures, including a long-established Jewish community. At first, the Visigoths are relatively tolerant of their Jewish subjects. But when the Visigoths are converted from Arian to Roman Catholic Christianity, they begin to harshly persecute the Jews. Meanwhile, in early 7th century Arabia, the new religion of Islam is born. Islam unites the formerly fragmented tribes of Arabia resulting in a wave of conquest and migration across the Middle East and North Africa. Berbers of North Africa are among the converts to the new religion. It is they who cross the Strait of Gibraltar in 711 CE and defeat the Visigoth king of Spain.

Segment 2: Foundation

The Jews of Spain, persecuted by the Visigoths, welcome Muslim leaders and help them in their conquest of the peninsula. By 732 CE, most of Iberia is in Muslim hands. They call their newly conquered territory al-Andalus. In keeping with Islamic law, Christians and Jews are considered *dhimmis*, or protected people, and are allowed to practice their religion so long as they submit to Muslim authority and pay a head tax in exchange for protection. Tensions arise between Muslim factions, which soon lead to turmoil as Berbers revolt against Arab leaders. The conflict is brought to an end and al-Andalus is united by Abd al-Rahman, an Umayyad prince who has escaped the massacre of his family by the Abbasids, who overthrew the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus. Abd al-Rahman establishes his capital at Cordoba and begins a consolidated rule that lasts for centuries. A culture unique to al-Andalus emerges as Christians, Jews, and Muslims form an integrated, open society. The musician Ziryab migrates from Syria to Al-Andalus bringing many elements of sophisticated culture from the heart of the Islamic Empire to Spain. In spite of the prosperity and progress made in al-Andalus, some northern converts to Islam are upset by the fact that conversion to Islam has not resulted in the privileged status they expected. They rebel, forcing leaders in Cordoba to form an army. This leads to a series of civil wars that drag on through much of the 9th century.

Segment 3: Unity

In 912 CE, Abd al-Rahman III manages to subdue rival forces and unite all of Al-Andalus, ushering in a new age of peace and prosperity. He makes the bold move of declaring himself Caliph – the rightful successor to the prophet Muhammad – in 926 CE. A tremendous economic and cultural expansion begins. Architectural wonders, such as the palace at Madinat al-Zahra, and a major library are constructed. Agriculture booms as a result of advanced irrigation technology. Knowledge from many civilizations is gathered, absorbed and added to in Al-Andalus. The Hebrew Golden Age begins under the patronage of the Jewish doctor, scientist, diplomat, and close advisor to the Caliph, Hasdai ibn Shaprut. Unfortunately, the death of Abd al-Rahman's son Hakim sparks a civil war beginning in 976 CE. The Berbers rebel and take Cordoba in 1013 CE, destroying much of its glory, including Madinat al-Zahra and the great library. This period of great upheaval is known as the time of *fitna*, or strife. Jews and Christians are more vulnerable during this violent time.

Segment 4: Division

The upheavals of the time of *fitna* result in the break-up of al-Andalus into many small, independent kingdoms called *taifas*. The glory of Cordoba is gone and many of its large number of scholars become refugees. The Taifa kingdoms are rivals and are almost constantly at war with one another and with Christian kingdoms in the north. Paradoxically, the Taifa kingdoms foster a great deal of cultural advancement and splendor in an effort to outshine their rivals. The Jewish scholar Ibn Nagrela and the Muslim scholar Ibn Hazm are two examples of refugee scholars during this period. Ibn Nagrela is highly successful and becomes a high-ranking official in Granada. Ibn Hazm, on the other hand, is less fortunate and ends up being persecuted by rival Muslim factions for his political beliefs and support for a new caliphate. After undergoing many hardships, he eventually devotes his life to the comparative study of religions. But near the end of his life he is bitter and his writings turn to a criticism of Christianity and Judaism as a defense of Islam. Meanwhile, the fragmented Taifa kingdoms are politically weak and must often seek the protection of other kingdoms through alliances. It is not uncommon during this period for northern Taifa kingdoms to make alliances with Christian kingdoms in order to defend themselves from other, more powerful Taifa kingdoms.

Segment 5: Purification

Pope Alexander II sees the collaborative relationships between Christians and Muslims as immoral and seeks to end such relationships and eventually purify Spain of all Muslims. Meanwhile, religious tensions flare in Granada where a Muslim religious leader, Abu Ishaq, incites a mob to attack that massacres a large number of the city's Jews. Christian kingdoms in the north begin offensives against neighboring Taifa kingdoms and in 1085 CE King Alfonso VI conquers Toledo. Alfonso, however, understands and appreciates the achievements of Andalusian culture and so preserves the knowledge he finds in Toledo's libraries. Toledo then becomes a transmitter of Islamic learning to Christendom through a translation effort spearheaded at Toledo. But Alfonso's conquest of Toledo convinces other Taifa kingdoms that they may soon suffer a similar fate. In desperation, they plead for help to the North African Berber Almoravid dynasty, with disastrous results. The Almoravid dynasty has been founded on a more rigid interpretation of Islam, so they are appalled by the more liberal lavish lifestyle they find in al-Andalus. They conclude that the decline of the once-powerful Al-Andalus is a result of corruption by Muslim Spain's tolerant diverse society. Taifa leaders are soon replaced with far less tolerant Berber regimes. Books are burned as the Berbers strive to reform Andalusian society. The Almoravids are replaced by the even more puritanical Almohads who seek to make al-Andalus a purely Muslim state. Facing severe persecution, many Christians and Jews flee to Christian lands. They take with them a great deal of knowledge and expertise, which further helps plant the seeds of Europe's Renaissance. Around the same time, the Pope launches the first of the Crusades, which leads to a hardening of positions on both sides and makes differences over religion the focus of conflict.

Segment 6: Crossroads

Refugees flee the Almohads. One of the refugees is Moses Maimonides, a great Jewish philosopher. He studies Aristotle and is able to reconcile Aristotle's philosophy with religion. At the same time, a Muslim scholar in Cordoba, Ibn Rushd (or Averroes), is able to do the same thing for Islam. Both of these scholars greatly influence later thinking in Christendom, including the work of Thomas Aquinas. With an influx of refugees, Toledo continues its role as the transfer point between Islamic and Christian civilizations. Interfaith teams of scholars work to translate important works and make them available to scholars from all over Europe. Meanwhile, war rages all over the peninsula as Christian kingdoms continue their expansion. In 1207 CE, the Pope declares Spain a crusading zone and armies from across Europe join forces to fight the Almohads. Finally, in 1212 CE Christian forces defeat an Almohad army at the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. The Almohads then abandon

Spain, leaving the weakened Taifa kingdoms to fend for themselves. Christian armies take one Muslim city after the other in quick succession. In 1236 CE, Cordoba, once the capital of al-Andalus, falls.

Segment 7: Survival

Soon after the fall of Cordoba in 1236 CE, the rest of the peninsula comes under Christian rule, except the very southern tip where the Taifa kingdom of Granada survives under the Nasrid dynasty. Granada not only survives for another 200 years, it thrives as a diverse commercial center with an economy based on silk production and textiles. Christian rulers work to restructure and organize their newly conquered lands. Alfonso X, king of Castile and Leon, attempts to straddle the two conflicting worlds he rules. The master code of laws he establishes for his diverse population imposes strict rules with harsh penalties for Jews and Muslims. At the same time, there are laws that offer them some protections and privileges. Alfonso is also a lover of Arabic poetry and culture and promotes the understanding of Islamic knowledge in his kingdom. The Black Death plague strikes Spain in 1348 CE, bringing to a sudden halt any further Christian conquests. As in other areas of Europe, Jews become scapegoats and are mercilessly persecuted. The plague diverts Christian attention away from conquering further Muslim territories, allowing Granada to continue to survive and flourish. Great works of architecture, such as the expansion of the Alhambra, are completed in Granada. Christian kings hire Granadian craftsmen to build and transform palaces and other buildings, resulting in many remarkable buildings throughout Spain that contain elements of the diverse Andalusian cultural legacy that is rapidly fading.

Segment 8: Loss

In 1453 CE, Constantinople falls to the Ottoman Turks. This event shocks Christian Europe and hardens the resolve of Spain's monarchs to make the peninsula a purely Christian land. In 1469 CE, the kingdoms of Castile and Leon and Aragon are united by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella. Soon thereafter, the monarchs begin their campaign against Spain's last Muslim holdout, Granada. Meanwhile, the Pope authorizes the Inquisition, a bloody investigation into the religious lives of Spain's people. Jews and Muslims who have converted to Christianity but continue to hold on to Muslim or Jewish traditions are severely persecuted. In Granada, internal strife allows Christian forces to take lands around the city. Boabdil, an ambitious Granadian prince, then allies himself with the Christians in a civil war against his father. In the end, Boabdil breaks the alliance, but cannot prevent the fall of Granada to the Christians. He surrenders the city to Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492 CE. Upon the completion of this final conquest, the Catholic monarchs order all Jews to convert or face expulsion from Spain. Many leave. Some convert or pretend to convert. Eventually, the Muslims of Spain are given the same choice. As with the Jews earlier, many Muslims convert, but continue to practice Islam in secret. Finally, in 1609 CE all Muslims, including the Moriscos (converted Muslims) are expelled from Spain.

3: Reading a Historical Map Sequence

Author and Map Designer: Ernest O'Roark

Overview and Purpose of the Lesson:

The purpose of this set of lessons is to help students get a clear picture of the locations and environments that helped shaped the story of Al-Andalus. Students first look at the vast territory spanned by the growing Islamic Empire and examine its environments to explain why Spain would have been considered such a rich prize. Spain's unique geographic location is also studied to understand its role as independent Caliphate and transmitter of knowledge to Europe. Students then examine a time-series of maps illustrating the stages of Spain's medieval history. (**Note:** Although a lesson is described below, the maps provided on this website are intended to be a kit from which teachers can design their own lessons and presentations.)

Performance Objectives:

- Locate major political features of medieval Spain.
- Describe the stages of medieval Spain's history.

Materials Needed:

- Map Sets: A large variety of possible maps and combinations of maps have been provided on the website <www.islamicspain.tv> . The intent is that teachers will select the sets of maps that best suit their students' needs and teaching situation. For example, black and white maps can be used if a teacher decides to Xerox class sets. Color maps could be used to create transparencies or make PowerPoint presentations.
- Student Handout 3a: Reading a Historical Map Sequence

Time: 20 – 30 minutes

Procedure:

1. Distribute or display map sets for task 4 (Maps of medieval Spain <www.islamicspain.tv>)
2. The maps illustrate stages of medieval Spain's complex history, and each question follows a brief description of what happened during that stage. This task can be completed stage by stage in conjunction with viewing the video or as a pre-viewing activity.
3. Extension: Combine this activity with the Timeline Activity (lesson set #3) and have students correlate the maps with the corresponding point on the timeline when the changes to the political landscape occurred (invasions, battles, conquests).

Possible Assessments:

- Include a map section on a unit assessment.
- Have students place untitled versions of the map sets in chronological order.
- Create matching questions using the timelines and the political maps.

Student Handout 3a: Reading a Historical Map Sequence

Use the set of Spain maps to answer these questions about the political story of Al-Andalus.

Al-Andalus reached its greatest height during the Cordoba-based Caliphate begun by Abd al-Rahman III. For most of the 900's, Al-Andalus was unified, independent, and able to hold its own against any would-be adversaries including the Christian kingdoms to the north. But a series of civil wars among Muslim factions beginning early in the 1000's eventually brought an end to the Caliphate. The result was the fragmentation of Al-Andalus into many "taifa" kingdoms. (Taifa is Arabic for "party" or "faction.") At first there were as many as 60 taifa kingdoms. But constant struggles among them for land, power, and prestige gradually reduced their number as the stronger absorbed the weaker.

1. Why would the division of Al-Andalus into taifa kingdoms be an advantage to the bordering Christian kingdoms?

Some taifa kingdoms fought against Christian kingdoms as well as against each other. Sometimes taifa kingdoms made alliances with their Christian neighbors in order to defend themselves against other taifas.

2. Which taifas shown on the map would most likely have both fought against and sometimes made alliances with Christian kingdoms? Explain your answer.

By the late 1000's the Muslim taifas were beginning to have trouble holding off the advances of Christian kings, especially Alfonso VI of Castile and Leon. In 1086 taifa leaders invited a North African Berber dynasty known as the Almoravids into Spain to help them defend against the Christians.

3. What major Muslim taifa city had already fallen to the Christians when the Almoravids were asked to come help defend Spain?

The Almoravids did help hold off the Christian armies. But the religiously conservative Almoravids were offended by the rich, tolerant, and diverse society they found in Spain. They soon conquered the taifas and took control of Muslim Spain for themselves. Around 1150, the Almoravids were succeeded by another even more puritanical Berber dynasty, the Almohads. Meanwhile, the Christian kingdoms continued to chip away at Muslim territory.

4. Which two major Muslim cities had fallen to the Christians by the time of Almohad rule in 1200?

The strict and puritanical Almohads were unpopular with much of the native Andalusian population, whatever their religion. Many fled Almohad rule into territory held by the Christians.

5. Which Christian cities would have been most attractive to refugees from Almohad rule? Explain your answer.

In 1212, the Almohads were soundly defeated by a combined Christian army at the Battle of Las Navas. The Almohads abandoned Spain and returned to North Africa. This left the much-weakened taifas on their own once more. Unable to effectively defend themselves, most of the remaining taifas were quickly overrun.

6. Which Muslim kingdom survived until 1492?

4: Timeline of Medieval Spain

Author: Ernest O'Roark

Overview and Purpose of the Lesson:

The purpose of this lesson is to give students a sense of the chronology and span for the many phases of Islamic Spain's history. In a text or video presentation, events and their dates are mentioned frequently, but it can be difficult for students to visualize how an event or time period fits into the timeline of the overall story. Dates can quickly become relatively meaningless. By studying a timeline of the major events and periods, students can more easily see the sequence of events and how each time period relates to the others. As an aid to viewing the video, a second, parallel timeline is provided that illustrates the span of each segment of the film.

Performance Objectives:

The student will be able to:

- Identify the major periods of Islamic Spain's history.
- Calculate the span of time over which each major period took place.

Materials Needed:

- Handout: "Timeline of Medieval Spain" – one for each student or as a class set (requires color printing)
- Handout: "Reading the Timeline of Medieval Spain" – one for each student
- Transparency (optional) of "Timeline of Medieval Spain" or video projector to display the timeline from a computer

Time: One class period or less (not including use in conjunction with viewing the video)

Procedure:

1. If you are using the timeline in conjunction with viewing the video, *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain*, give students the timeline in advance. Using the overhead or a projector discuss the time period shown by the timeline. Point out that all dates are AD (or CE) Review if necessary how spans of time are calculated by subtracting earlier dates from later. Point out and discuss how the video is divided into segments that *do not* represent equal spans of time.
2. Refer to the timeline as part of the discussion following each segment of the film.
3. Following the video, give students the activity, "Reading the Timeline of Medieval Spain." Assign students to complete it individually or in small groups.
4. When students have completed the activity, discuss the answers, emphasizing the significance of each.

Adaptations:

- Instead of giving students the "Timeline of Medieval Spain," give students a list of dates, events, and time periods and have students create their own timelines.

- Using Lesson 3: Reading a Historical Map Sequence, have students correlate the maps to points on the timeline when invasions, battles, conquests and other political changes happened.

Assessment:

- Include information from the timeline and the timeline activity on a unit test.

Student Handout 4a: Reading the Timeline of Medieval Spain

Read and analyze the timeline provided to answer these questions.

The Umayyad Dynasty and Caliphate, which began when Abd al-Rahman I became Emir of Cordoba, was the longest period of unified rule in Islamic Spain. It effectively ended when Berbers rebelled after control of the Caliphate was seized by the vizier, Al-Mansur.

1. About how many years did the unified Umayyad Dynasty and Caliphate survive? _____

The Umayyad Caliphate of Cordoba reached its height during the period beginning with the reign of Abd al-Rahman III and ending with the "Time of Fitna." This period is sometimes referred to as Spain's "golden age."

2. How long was this period of Spain's history? _____

Following the fall of the Caliphate of Cordoba, the once-unified Muslim Spain shattered into many small, rival kingdoms called taifas. This first period of taifa disunity lasted until Berbers from North Africa brought the taifas under their rule.

3. How long did this first taifa period last? _____

Northern Christian kingdoms took advantage of taifa disunity to gradually seize Muslim territories. Berber dynasties from North Africa, the Almoravids and the Almohads, were able to hold off the Christian forces for a time.

4. How long did the Berber dynasties rule Islamic Spain? _____

Christian forces defeated the Almohad army at the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212. Following this defeat, the Almohads withdrew to North Africa leaving the now once-again independent taifas to defend themselves. Christian kingdoms, united by the spirit of the Crusades, conquered most of the weakened taifas, one by one. By the end of this second taifa period, only one taifa remained.

5. How long did the second taifa period last? _____

6. What was the last surviving taifa kingdom? _____

7. How long did it survive? _____

8. What event of the 1300's might have helped to prevent Christian armies from being strong enough to conquer this last taifa?

   _____

The taking of Toledo by the Christian Alfonso VI of Castile in 1085 was the event that resulted in the Almoravids from North Africa being asked to come help defend the remaining Muslim territories. Toledo became a critical point of contact and transmission between Muslim and Christian cultures as Muslim libraries were studied by Christian scholars and refugees from puritanical Almoravid rule filled the city. This time, during which a great deal of knowledge from the Muslim world was transmitted to Christian Europe, continued until shortly after 1492 when Granada fell to Christian forces and all non-Christians were expelled.

9. For how long did Europe benefit from this flow of knowledge from Muslim Al-Andalus?

   _____

Islamic Spain, known as Al-Andalus, was an important and unique center where Muslim, Christian, and Jewish cultures mixed and sometimes collaborated in the collection, preservation, and advancement of knowledge in many fields. Al-Andalus began with Tariq ibn Ziyad and ended with the surrender of Granada.

10. How long did Al-Andalus exist? _____

Student Handout 4b: Timeline of Medieval Spain

711-740 Al-Andalus ruled by governors appointed by Caliph.

Rule of Umayyad Dynasty/Caliphate

Time of "Fitna" - Strife

740-756 Civil war results in Yusuf al-Fihri becoming independent ruler.

756 Abd al-Rahman I becomes Emir of Cordoba.

976 Al-Mansur seizes control of Caliphate. Berbers rebel. Civil war erupts.

1086-1212 Berber Almoravid and Almohad rule.

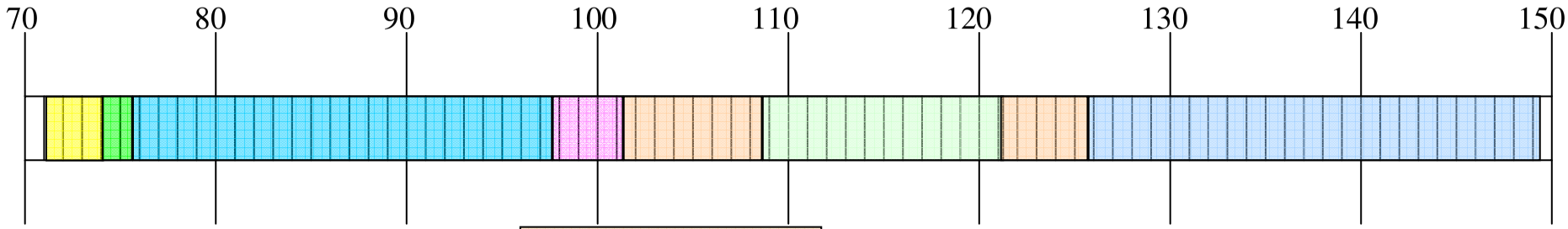
929 Abd al-Rahman III proclaims himself Caliph.

1013 Caliphate of Cordoba begins to break up into Taifas.

Almoravid 1086-1148
Almohad 1148-1212

1212-1248 2nd Taifa Period - Reconquest

1248-1492 Nasrid dynasty in Granada



711 Tariq ibn Ziyad crosses into Spain. Defeats Visigoths

Taifa period. Taifas fight with one another. Some smaller northern Taifas ally themselves with Christian kingdoms.

1207 Pope declares Spain a crusading zone.

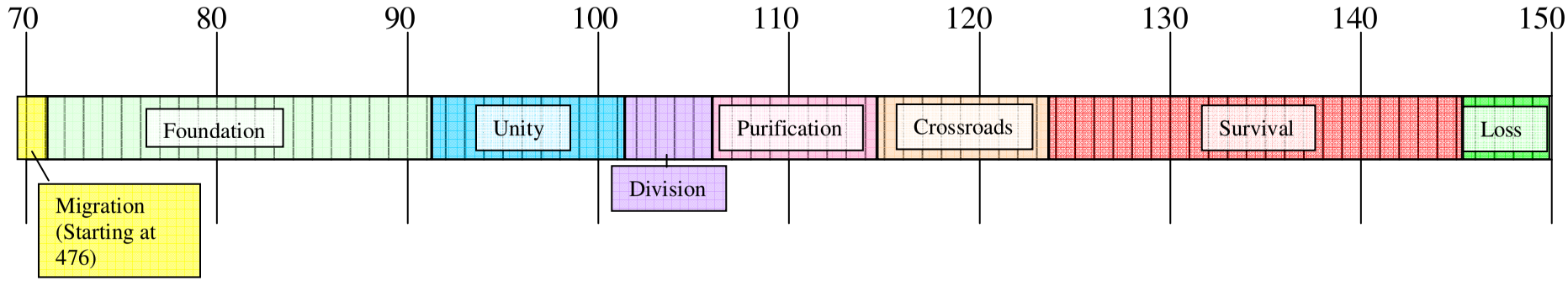
1348-54 Black Death plague

1469 Union of Castile and Aragon against Granada

1063 Pope Alexander II sends "Crusade." Defeated 1065.

1066 Abu Ishaq instigates massacre of Jews in Granada.

Segments of "Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain"



5: Cities of Light: Viewer's Guide Discussion Questions

Authors: Ernest O'Roark and Eileen Wood

Procedure:

Use these questions in pauses between the segments of the documentary.

Segment 1: Opening and Migration

We'll lounge beneath the pomegranates,
Palm trees, apple trees,
Under every lovely, leafy thing,
And walk among the vines,
Enjoy the splendid faces we will see,
In a lofty palace built of noble stones.
Ibn Gabirol, 11th century

1a. Describe the tone or feeling of Ibn Gabirol's 11th century poem.

b. Does this sound like a place you would want to live in or visit? Explain.

2a. Which group may have lived on the Iberian Peninsula as early as the 1st century?

b. Which group arrived in Iberia in the 5th century?

c. Which group crossed into Iberia from Africa in the 8th century?

Segment 2: Foundation

1. Why did the new Muslim rulers give Christians and Jews in Iberia the status of "dhimmi" or protected people?
2. Abd al-Rahman's reign marks the beginning of a century of peace and prosperity centered on Cordoba. What were some of the achievements of this era?
3. What caused tension in other parts of al-Andalus?

Segment 3: Unity

In 929 Abd al Rahman III proclaims Al-Andalus independent from the rest of the Islamic Empire and himself Caliph, the legitimate successor to the Prophet Muhammad.

1. If you visited Cordoba during the reign of Abd al Rahman III, who and what might you see and/or hear?
2. What happens to Cordoba after the death of Abd al Rahman III's successor?

Segment 4: Division

1. Define "taifa."
2. Name several taifa kingdoms.
3. Why was this period of civil wars also a period of great cultural splendor?

Segment 5: Purification

1. What was Pope Alexander II's role in "purifying" Spain?
2. What was Muslim leader Abu Ishaq's role in "purifying" Spain?
3. How did the capture of Toledo by Alfonso VI result in the transmission of Islamic civilization to Christian lands?
4. In what ways did the typical lifestyle and culture of Al-Andalus offend the Almoravids?
5. According to the Almoravids, what was the cause of Islamic Spain's problems?
6. What was the role of the Almohads in "purifying" Spain?
7. What effect did the Crusades have on Christian and Muslim attitudes toward one another in Spain?

Segment 6: Crossroads

1. The Jewish scholar Maimonides and the Muslim scholar Ibn Rushd (Averroes) made similar contributions in their field. Describe their accomplishments.
2. What important work was being undertaken in late 12th century Toledo?
3. What was the significance of the outcome of the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa?

Segment 7: Survival

1. One of the scholars says, "In some ways, Alfonso X epitomizes the schizophrenia in such a way that must have afflicted a lot of these medieval Muslims, Christians and Jews." He is implying that Alfonso's thinking and behaviors are often contradictory. What are some examples of this contradictory thinking and behavior on the part of King Alfonso X?
2. What event brings the Christian re-conquest of Spain to a sudden halt?
3. Describe an example of how Spanish architecture reflects what was going on during this time.

Segment 8: Loss

1. What effect did the fall of Constantinople in 1453 have on the Christian monarchs of Spain?
2. What was the Inquisition and who were its targets?
3. What role did Boabdil (Abu Abdullah) play in the fall of Grenada?
4. What happened to the Muslims and Jews of Spain after the fall of Grenada?

Viewer's Guide Discussion Questions

Answer key in parentheses.

Segment 1: Opening and Migration

We'll lounge beneath the pomegranates,
Palm trees, apple trees,
Under every lovely, leafy thing,
And walk among the vines,
Enjoy the splendid faces we will see,
In a lofty palace built of noble stones.
Ibn Gabirol, 11th century

1a. Describe the tone or feeling if Ibn Gabirol's 11th century poem. *(beauty, peace, etc.)*

1b. Does this sound like a place you would want to live in or visit? Explain *(Yes. Note that Ibn Gabirol seems to think that it's like a paradise.)*

2a. Which group may have lived on the Iberian Peninsula as early as the 1st century? *(Jews)*

2b. Which group arrived in Iberia in the 5th century? *(Visigoths – a Germanic tribe)*

2c. Which group crossed into Iberia from Africa in the 8th century? *(Muslim Berbers)*

Segment 2: Foundation

1. Why did the new Muslim rulers give Christians and Jews in Iberia the status of "dhimmi" or protected people? *(The Qur'an states that people of "the Book" should be allowed to practice their religion freely.)*
2. Abd al-Rahman's reign marks the beginning of a century of peace and prosperity centered on Cordoba. What were some of the achievements of this era? *(unity of authority, integrated culture – "open society," one language – Arabic, trade brings an influx of goods and people, first music school under Ziryab)*
3. What caused tension in other parts of al-Andalus? *(Northern converts to Islam resent the fact that their conversion does not bring them better treatment than those who have not converted. They rebel.)*

Segment 3: Unity

In 929 Abd al Rahman III proclaims Al-Andalus independent from the rest of the Islamic Empire and himself Caliph, the legitimate successor to the Prophet Muhammad.

1. If you visited Cordoba during the reign of Abd al Rahman III, who and what might you see and/or hear? *(magnificent palace, ambassadors from far-off lands, diversity at court, bath houses, street lights, Jewish scholar, poet, and doctor Hasdai ibn Shaprut, medical school, Sicilian monk Nicholas, poetry and poets, libraries, water wheels and irrigation systems, gardens)*

2. What happens to Cordoba after the death of Abd al Rahman III's successor? *(It was a time of "fitna" or strife. Civil war. Berber army burns down Cordoba and slaughters Jews, Muslims, and Christians.)*

Segment 4: Division

1. Define "taifa." *(A relatively small, independent Muslim kingdom; a fragment of the shattered Cordoba Caliphate.)*
2. Name several taifa kingdoms. *(Cordoba, Seville, Toledo, Zaragoza, Granada, Malaga)*
3. Why was this period of civil wars also a period of great cultural splendor? *(Each ruler wanted to have the most brilliant court possible.)*

Segment 5: Purification

1. What was Pope Alexander II's role in "purifying" Spain? *(He made a proclamation in which he said relationships between Christians and Muslims were immoral.)*
2. What was Muslim leader Abu Ishaq's role in "purifying" Spain? *(He preached that Jews and Christians should not have authority over a Muslim. A mob in Granada was incited by a poem he wrote to riot and massacre a large number of Jews.)*
3. How did the capture of Toledo by Alfonso VI result in the transmission of Islamic civilization to Christian lands? *(Alfonso understood the value of Toledo's Muslim libraries and so prevented their destruction. Translation projects eventually transferred much of the knowledge into the rest of Europe.)*
4. In what ways did the typical lifestyle and culture of Al-Andalus offend the Almoravids? *(They are living a lavish, liberal lifestyle. Some drink wine. They mingle freely with Christians and Jews.)*
5. According to the Almoravids, what was the cause of Islamic Spain's problems? *(Diversity and the tolerance of Christians and Jews was immoral and had led to a corruption of Islamic values weakening Al-Andalus, which, in turn, was responsible for the success of Christian armies.)*
6. What was the role of the Almohads in "purifying" Spain? *(The same as the Almoravids only more so. They sought to make the diverse land a purely Muslim state. Christianity and Judaism were outlawed. Many were forced from their homes and had to flee to Christian territories.)*
7. What effect did the Crusades have on Christian and Muslim attitudes toward one another in Spain? *(The Crusades helped make religious differences the point of wars in Iberia. There was a hardening of positions on both sides. Tolerance was seen as immoral by both sides.)*

Segment 6: Crossroads

1. The Jewish scholar Maimonides and the Muslim scholar Ibn Rushd (Averroes) made similar contributions in their field. Describe their accomplishments. *(Both scholars were able to reconcile Aristotelian philosophy with religious beliefs. Their ideas led to similar philosophical works by Christian scholars.)*
2. What important work was being undertaken in late 12th century Toledo? *(The translation by diverse teams of scholars of important Arabic texts so that knowledge from Islamic civilization could be transmitted to the rest of Europe.)*

3. What was the significance of the outcome of the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa? *(This was the final defeat of the Almohads, who then abandoned Al-Andalus, leaving the fragmented and relatively weak taifas to fend for themselves. Most of the taifas were then quickly overrun by Christian forces.)*

Segment 7: Survival

1. One of the scholars says, "In some ways, Alfonso X epitomizes the schizophrenia in such a way that must have afflicted a lot of these medieval Muslims, Christians and Jews." He is implying that Alfonso's thinking and behaviors are often contradictory. What are some examples of this contradictory thinking and behavior on the part of King Alfonso X?

2. *(Alfonso enacts laws and penalties for Jews and Muslims that are very harsh. But at the same time, his laws also provide some protections and privileges for Jews and Muslims. Alfonso also loves the Islamic culture of Al-Andalus including its poetry.)*

3. What event brings the Christian re-conquest of Spain to a sudden halt? *(The Black Death, or plague.)*

4. Describe an example of how Spanish architecture reflects what was going on during this time. *(Many buildings contain mixed elements of Christian, Jewish, and Islamic culture. Muslim craftsmen were often hired to construct Christian buildings resulting in mixed styles. Major buildings such as mosques changed hands and were converted to churches resulting in unusual combinations of styles.)*

Segment 8: Loss

1. What effect did the fall of Constantinople in 1453 have on the Christian monarchs of Spain? *(It made them more determined than ever to unite in an effort to make Spain a purely Christian land.)*

2. What was the Inquisition and who were its targets? *(The Inquisition was an investigation authorized by the Pope into the private religious lives of Spain's people. Many suffered torture and horrible deaths at the hands of inquisitors.)*

3. What role did Boabdil (Abu Abdullah) play in the fall of Grenada? *(An ambitious prince, Boabdil allied himself with Christian forces against his own kingdom. After making and then reneging on several deals with the Christians monarchs, he was finally forced to surrender Granada to Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492.)*

4. What happened to the Muslims and Jews of Spain after the fall of Grenada? *(They were forced to convert or leave Spain. Some converted, but continued to practice their religious traditions in secret. Eventually, all Jews and Muslims including those who had "converted" were expelled.)*

6a: Factors Contributing to Tolerance and Intolerance in the History of Al-Andalus

Author: Ernest O'Roark

Overview and Purpose of the Lesson:

The purpose of this lesson is to provide students with an understanding of the nature, causes, and consequences of tolerance in a society. The activities achieve the objectives through the use of Medieval Spain as a case study. Students first explore and define the concepts of tolerance and diversity. The concepts are then applied to societies and events in Spain during the Middle Period. Finally, students are asked to identify cause and effect relationships for both tolerant and intolerant societies.

Performance Objectives:

The student will be able to:

- Define and identify examples of tolerance and diversity.
- Explain the causes and results of tolerant vs. intolerant societies in Medieval Spain.

Materials Needed:

- Graphic Organizers: Tolerant and Intolerant Societies
- Video: *Cities of Light*

Time: 2 to 4 class periods, depending on how much of the video is used.

Procedure:

1. Introduction: Explain to students that in this lesson they will be exploring how people have historically dealt with the fact that, for various reasons, their society may be made up of more than one cultural, religious, or ethnic group. When such a society exists, how are minorities treated? What are the consequences for the society as a result of how it decides to treat its minority groups?
2. Discussion: Place the terms "diverse" and "tolerance" on the board or overhead. Ask students to think about the terms and how they may have heard them used in the past. Have students volunteer definitions for each. The result of this discussion will likely be something similar to the following:
    - Diverse: Varied; made up of many things (or people) that are different from one another.
    - Tolerance: A willingness to put up with people whose opinions or ways differ from one's own, and to allow them to express their differences in social situations, to allow participation of different groups on an equitable basis.
3. Explain that due to circumstances of geography and history some societies find themselves to be more diverse than others. A society that is not diverse is *homogeneous* – made up of a single cultural, religious, or ethnic group. Diverse societies can decide for various reasons to either be tolerant or intolerant.

4. Brainstorming: Divide the class into groups. Assign each group to brainstorm and record possible answers to one of these sets of questions:
    - What would be the characteristics of a tolerant diverse society? What would it be like? Why might it decide to be tolerant?
    - What would be the characteristics of an intolerant diverse society? What would it be like? Why might it decide to be intolerant?

   Have students share their answers in a full-class discussion. (As with any brainstorming activity, the teachers should not make any comments regarding the accuracy of student's ideas. All ideas are accepted.)
5. Graphic Organizers: Give half the class the "Tolerant, Diverse Society" graphic organizer and the other half the "Intolerant Society" graphic organizer. Review and explain the format of the graphic organizers.
6. Video Introduction: Explain to students that they will be viewing a video about Spain during the Middle Ages. Medieval Spain makes an exceptionally good case study, since it was a very diverse society in a time when the question of tolerance vs. intolerance was becoming a major issue. As a result of various political, religious, and social forces, the people of Spain were often faced with the question of whether their diverse society should be tolerant or intolerant. Sometimes they chose to be tolerant and at other times they chose intolerance. Half the class is to look for and note the circumstances that resulted in a tolerant society and the characteristics that society had as a result of being tolerant and diverse. The other half of the class is to look for and note circumstances that resulted in a society becoming intolerant and the characteristics such a society possessed.
7. Video: The video consists of eight chapters, each of which illustrates a phase of Spain's medieval history. They vary in length from about 10 to 20 minutes. The entire video or select segments may be shown. It is recommended that discussion take place between each segment to clarify the story for students, answer questions, and discuss the progress of the graphic organizers. Students may also be asked to make predictions about the next segment based on its title and what they've seen so far.
8. Small Group Discussion: Assign students who have the same graphic organizer to work in small groups to share and refine the notes they've collected.
9. Full Class Discussion: Give students a blank copy of the graphic organizer they do not already have. Moderate a discussion in which students are asked to share and discuss what they believe are the key ideas they collected. Students should note these key points on their blank graphic organizers.

Assessment:

- Give students a hypothetical society and have them categorize the society as tolerant or intolerant and then select from a list of other characteristics that would likely be true of that society.
- Give students a hypothetical society that is faced with an influx of immigrants for some reason. Some in the society argue for tolerance, others for intolerance. Have students respond, write an opinion or letter or debate the issues.
- Create a cause-and-effect matching using specifics from the graphic organizers and video.

- Play or write “what if” in which students speculate about how the history of Spain might have been different if it had remained tolerant and diverse, or how European history might have been different if Spain had never been diverse, or other scenario.

Lesson Set-up Aids for the Teacher

Conditions and events that help foster tolerance: Questions to consider

- What happens in the film that helps or allows the society to be tolerant?
- What do the experts say about how and why the society was tolerant?
- What political, economic, or social conditions helped people, especially leaders, decide to make tolerance a characteristic of their society?

Conditions and events resulting from tolerance: Questions to consider

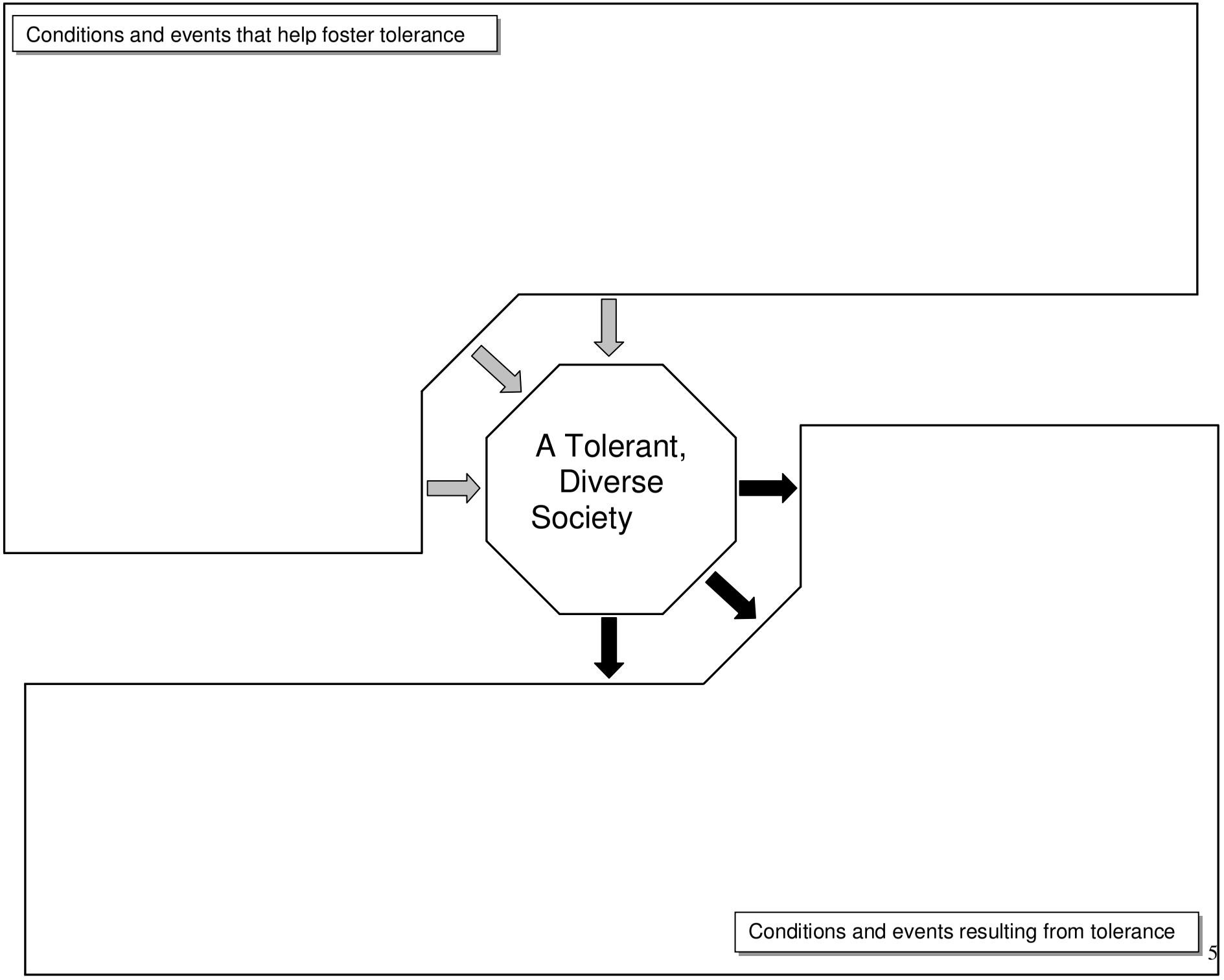
- What happens in the film that is at least somewhat a result or consequence of tolerance? What took place that was possible because the society was tolerant?
- What do the experts say about the results of tolerance? What achievements are described? What problems?
- What forms does tolerance take? What are the characteristics of a tolerant, diverse society? How can you tell that the society was tolerant?
- Were there any advantages for the society to be tolerant? Were there disadvantages?
- Overall, were the effects of tolerance more positive or negative? Were conditions better or worse when the society was tolerant?

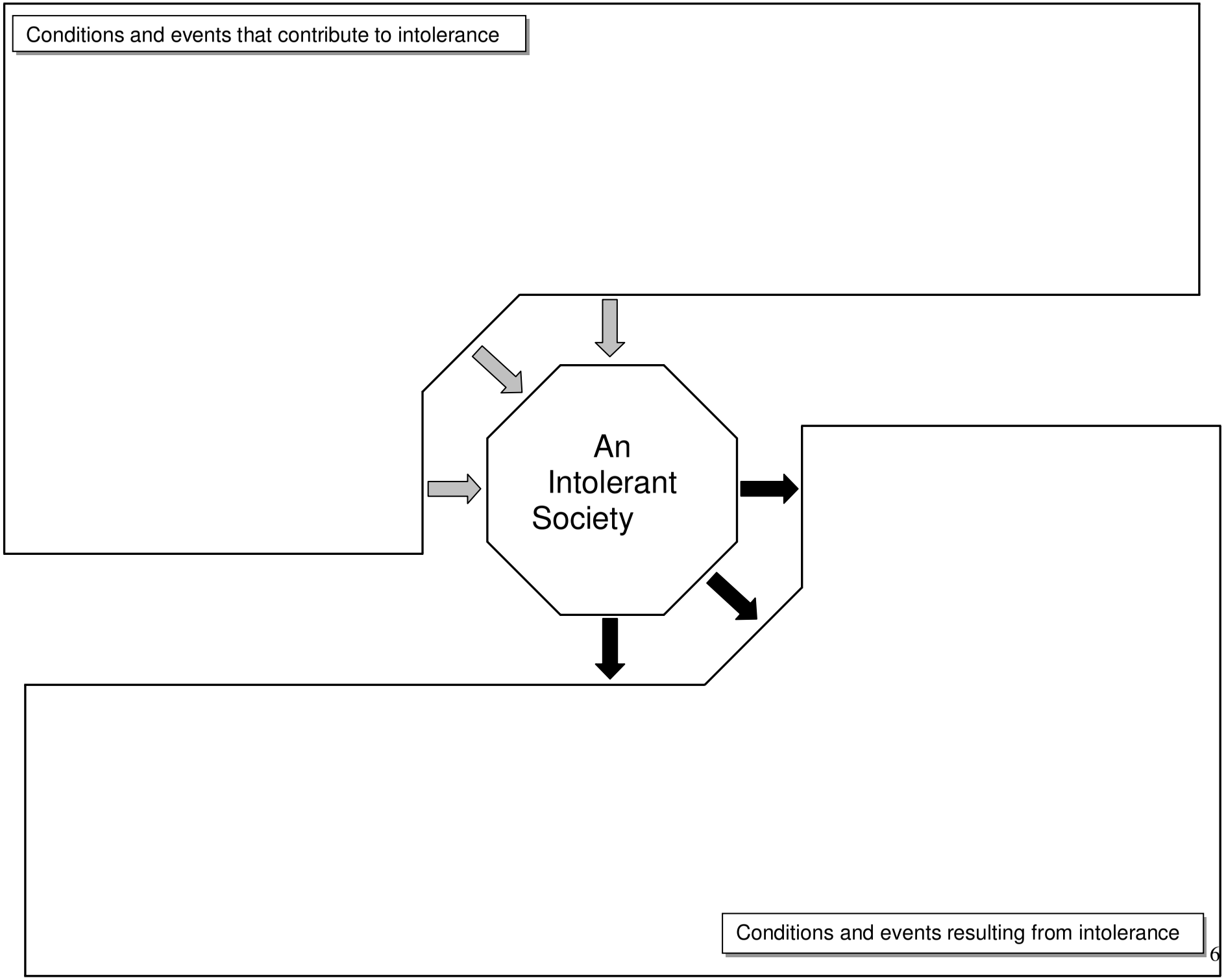
Conditions and events that contribute to intolerance: Questions to consider

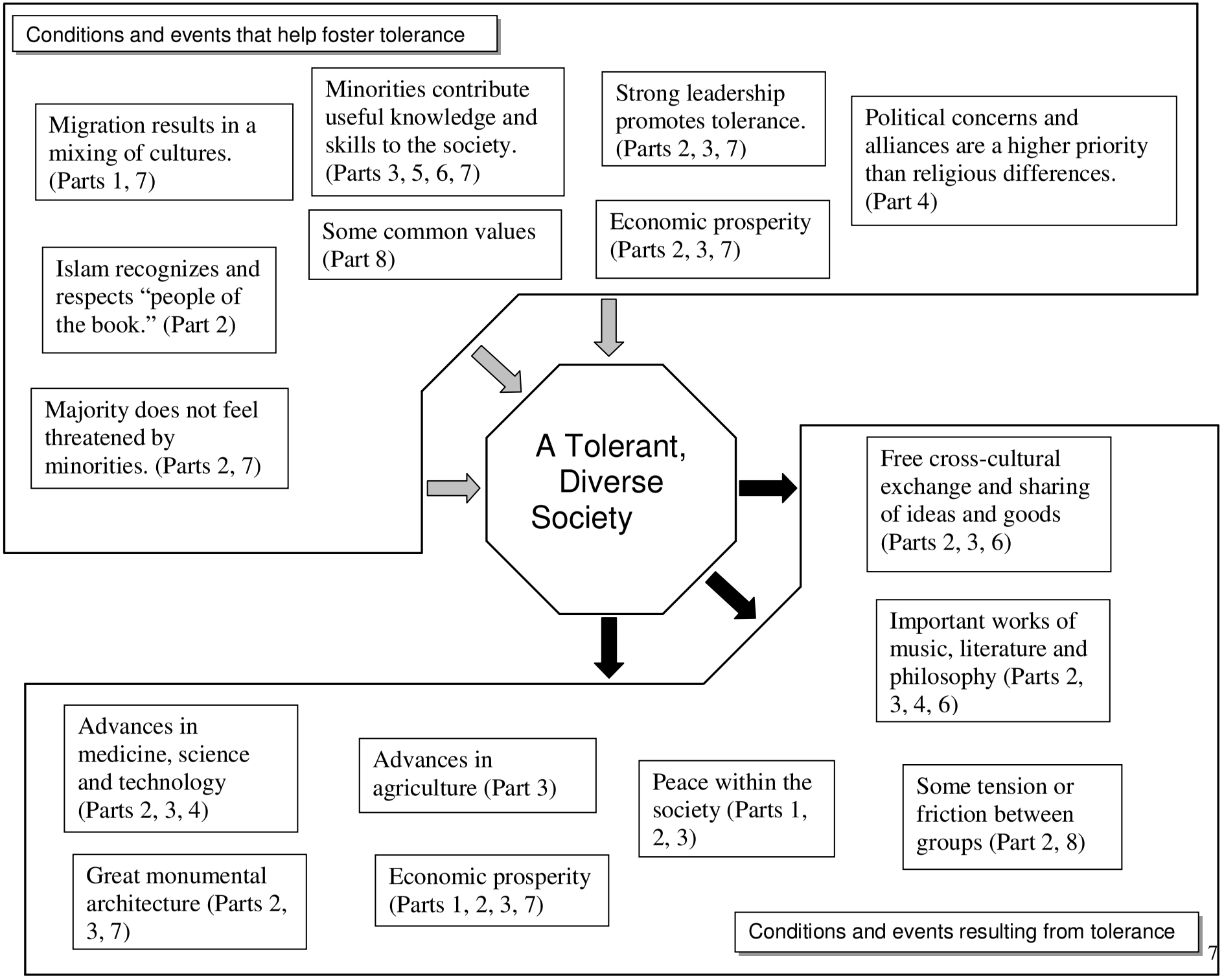
- What happens in the film that makes the society become intolerant?
- What do the experts say about how and why the society became intolerant?
- What political, economic, or social conditions made people, especially leaders, decide to make intolerance a characteristic of their society?

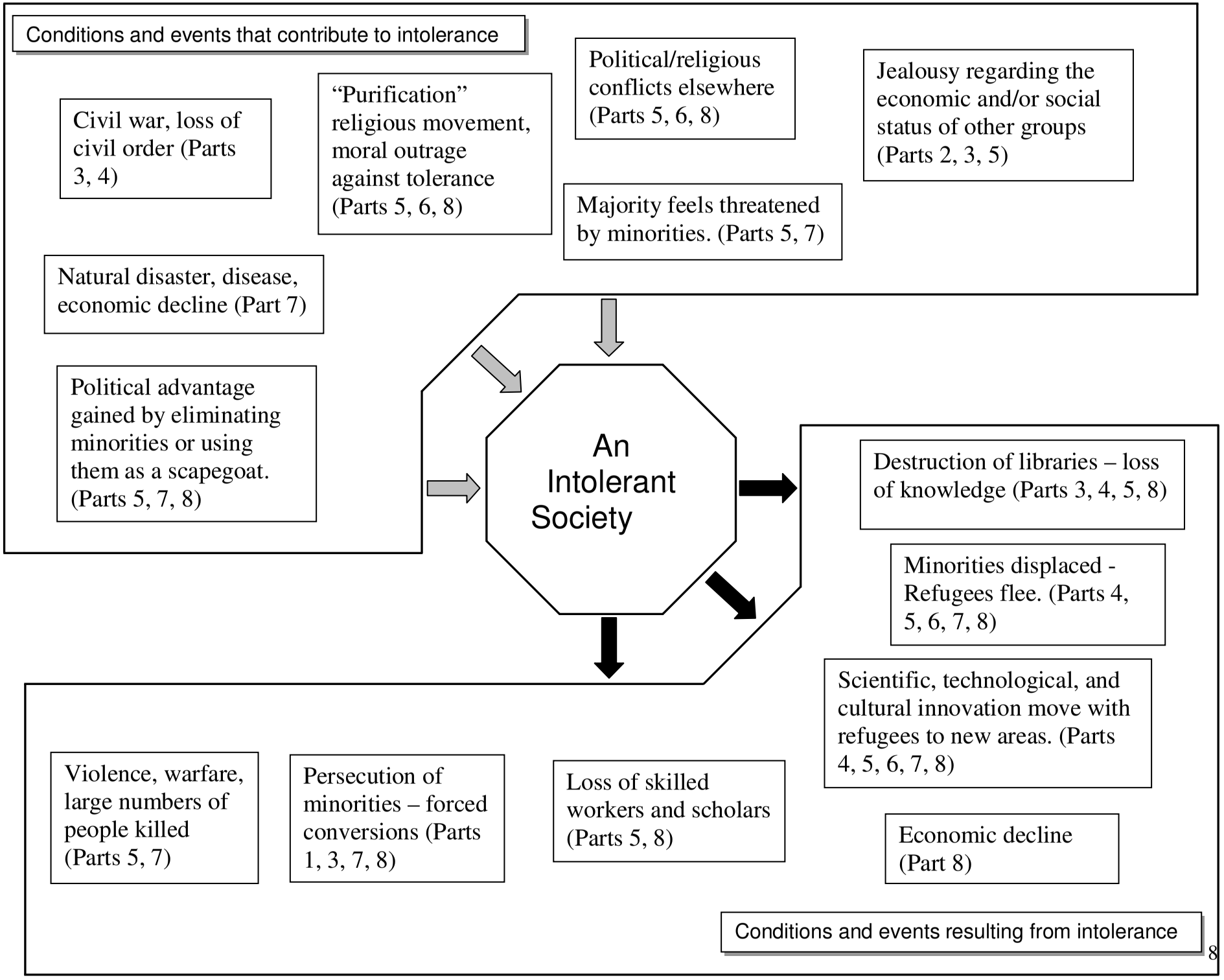
Conditions and events resulting from intolerance: Questions to consider

- What happens in the film that is at least somewhat a result or consequence of intolerance? What took place largely *because* the society was intolerant?
- What do the experts say about the results of intolerance? What achievements are described? What problems?
- What forms does intolerance take? What are the characteristics of an intolerant society? How can you tell that the society was intolerant?
- Were there any advantages for the society to be intolerant? Were there disadvantages?
- Overall, were the effects of intolerance more positive or negative? Were conditions better or worse when the society was intolerant?


Conditions and events that help foster tolerance
A Tolerant, Diverse Society
Conditions and events resulting from tolerance


Conditions and events that contribute to intolerance
An
Intolerant
Society
Conditions and events resulting from intolerance


Conditions and events that help foster tolerance
Migration results in a mixing of cultures. (Parts 1, 7)
Minorities contribute useful knowledge and skills to the society. (Parts 3, 5, 6, 7)
Strong leadership promotes tolerance. (Parts 2, 3, 7)
Political concerns and alliances are a higher priority than religious differences. (Part 4)
Some common values (Part 8)
Economic prosperity (Parts 2, 3, 7)
Islam recognizes and respects "people of the book." (Part 2)
Majority does not feel threatened by minorities. (Parts 2, 7)
A Tolerant, Diverse Society
Free cross-cultural exchange and sharing of ideas and goods (Parts 2, 3, 6)
Important works of music, literature and philosophy (Parts 2, 3, 4, 6)
Advances in medicine, science and technology (Parts 2, 3, 4)
Advances in agriculture (Part 3)
Peace within the society (Parts 1, 2, 3)
Some tension or friction between groups (Part 2, 8)
Great monumental architecture (Parts 2, 3, 7)
Economic prosperity (Parts 1, 2, 3, 7)
Conditions and events resulting from tolerance


Conditions and events that contribute to intolerance
Civil war, loss of civil order (Parts 3, 4)
"Purification" religious movement, moral outrage against tolerance (Parts 5, 6, 8)
Political/religious conflicts elsewhere (Parts 5, 6, 8)
Jealousy regarding the economic and/or social status of other groups (Parts 2, 3, 5)
Majority feels threatened by minorities. (Parts 5, 7)
Natural disaster, disease, economic decline (Part 7)
Political advantage gained by eliminating minorities or using them as a scapegoat. (Parts 5, 7, 8)
An Intolerant Society
Destruction of libraries – loss of knowledge (Parts 3, 4, 5, 8)
Minorities displaced - Refugees flee. (Parts 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
Scientific, technological, and cultural innovation move with refugees to new areas. (Parts 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
Violence, warfare, large numbers of people killed (Parts 5, 7)
Persecution of minorities – forced conversions (Parts 1, 3, 7, 8)
Loss of skilled workers and scholars (Parts 5, 8)
Economic decline (Part 8)
Conditions and events resulting from intolerance

6b: Synectics: Concluding Activity on Al-Andalus

Author: Eileen Wood

Overview and Purpose of the Lesson:

Synectics is an activity that helps students internalize new information. Students must think creatively to synthesize what they've just learned by comparing it with some randomly selected common or familiar object. By engaging in this mental exercise, students create mental "hooks" to the new information which in turn helps move that information from short term to long term memory. Besides all of these benefits to learning, the activity is also fun.

Objectives:

The student will be able to:

Identify and describe major characteristics of medieval Spain.

Materials Needed:

Synectics Chart – one per group of students
Synectics Example – overhead transparency or projected with computer

Time:

One class period or less

Procedure:

1. Begin by placing students in groups of four people.
2. Have each team choose four common everyday objects and draw those objects, one per box, on their synectics chart.
3. Write the following sentence stem on the board:

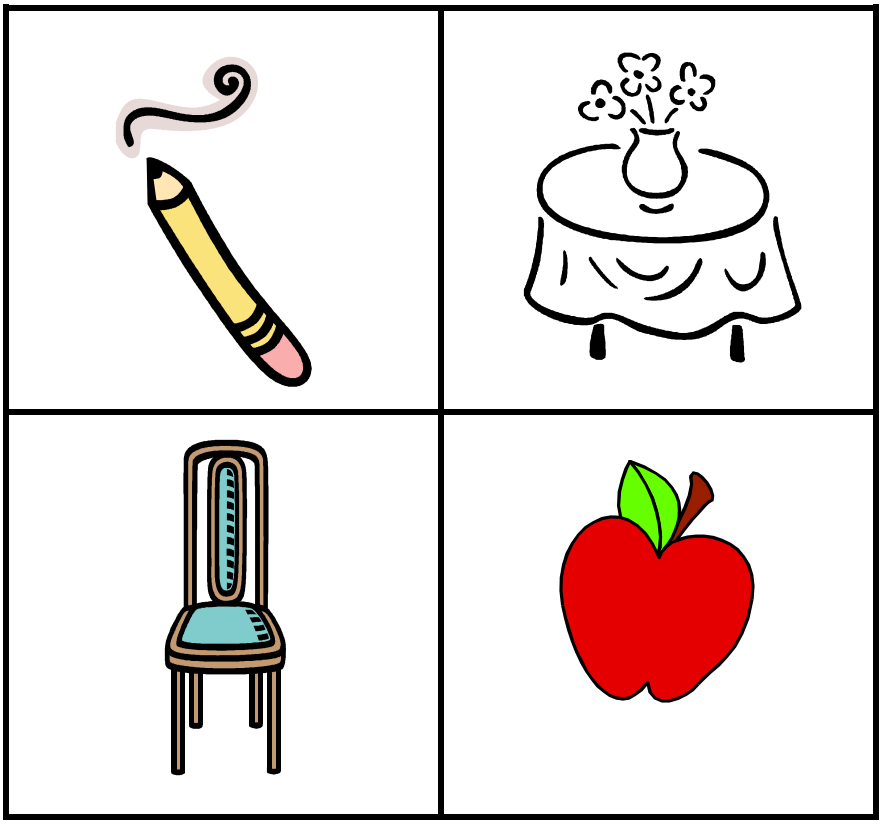
   Medieval Spain was like a _____ because…

   (Because there is no obvious connection between medieval Spain and the selected objects, students must think about the physical attributes and/or functions of each to develop unique and insightful connections about medieval Spain.)
4. Show students the example and discuss. Perhaps perform a "think aloud" for students to demonstrate the thinking process necessary to come up with a logical sentence.
5. Students write the completed sentences inside the box with the object.
6. Have each group share their results with the entire class.

Assessment:

Since this is a scaffolding activity meant to help students internalize new information, it would not in itself be assessed. However, analogies based on this activity could be used as part of a unit assessment.

Synectics Example:



- Medieval Spain was like a pencil because pencils are used to write and in medieval Spain, poetry was written and enjoyed by many.
- Medieval Spain was like table because a table is a place for eating and entertaining, and in medieval Spain, many new foods entered Spain from other lands, and customs of fine dining like separate courses at banquets, table linens and fancy sweet desserts were introduced.
- Medieval Spain was like a chair because a chair is like a throne for a ruler, and many times in history, wars and intrigues over power changed the rulers who sat on those thrones.
- Medieval Spain was like an apple because apples grow in orchards, and medieval Spain was famous for its agriculture, orchards and beautiful gardens.

Synectics Chart 

6c: Roundtable on Applying the Film's Message to Our Times

Author: Susan Douglass

Overview and Purpose of the Lesson:

Lesson 6a utilized the content of the film to explore the social and political conditions under which cultural pluralism and religious tolerance can thrive, and the forces that undermine it. This lesson builds on understandings developed through viewing the film, and guides students toward the critical and historical thinking skill of drawing contemporary parallels while respecting the distance between our own time and social conditions and those in the past. The lesson concludes with an activity related to applying civically responsible and creative behaviors on the part of the students toward fostering tolerance and responding to intolerance. It can be used as a current events civics lesson as well, and as an assessment activity for the documentary film.

Performance Objectives:

- Build upon the ideas presented in *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain*
- Articulate positive and creative forms of civic behavior that foster tolerance, and discuss what individuals and groups can do to encourage it.
- Identify behavior that should be avoided because it is intolerant and discuss what appropriate measures individuals and groups can take to counter it.
- Identify current events, policies and actions by individuals and groups in the nation and the world that form examples of fostering tolerance or creating conditions for intolerance.

Materials Needed:

Roundtable:

- Completed graphic organizers from Activity 6a, *conditions that help foster tolerance*, and *conditions that contribute to intolerance*
- Lesson Set-up aids for the Teacher from Lesson 6a.
- Student Handout 6c: What would you do if…?

Extension:

- Classroom or hallway bulletin board, butcher paper mural, or poster boards
- Markers, writing paper, construction paper, display materials

Time:

Roundtable: About 15-20 minutes for roundtable discussion in groups as a concluding post-viewing activity.

Extension: Approx. 1-2 class periods for class round table discussion, plus homework, library, or computer lab assignment to clip news items and articles related to tolerant or intolerant public or civic behavior observed by

Procedure for Roundtable:

1. This roundtable discussion can be a whole-class activity, or students can be divided into groups of 4 or 5 students each, with a table leader selected. The teacher should go over the *Lesson Set-up aids for the Teacher* from Lesson 6a as a foundation for leading the class discussion, or it can be given to table leaders ahead of time if class is to be divided into groups.
2. All students should take a few minutes to go over their completed graphic organizers from Lesson 6a, "*conditions that help foster tolerance*," and "*conditions that contribute to intolerance."*
3. Brainstorm scenarios of intolerance in our own times that seem parallel or equivalent to the actions shown in the film. Against whom are they directed, and what do you think the motives are behind such acts?
4. Write the events or acts in brief form in the rows on the left column of the chart (Handout 6c).
5. In the rows on the right column opposite the event or act, write a brief description of what you might do to challenge the intolerant behavior in a civically responsible manner.
6. Brainstorm scenarios of tolerance in our own times that can foster good relations, civility, and a sense of security among various groups in society.
7. In each row on the left column of the chart (Handout 6c), write an action that you could carry out in conjunction with school, work environments and society at large in order to foster tolerance.
8. Write a brief summary of how you think a person might respond after witnessing or being affected by your expression of tolerance.

Procedure for Extension:

1. After completing the roundtable activity, have students—as homework or in the library or computer lab—search news reports in a variety of sources and media to identify acts that foster intolerance, whether they are related to individual actions or speech, local, state, or national policies by a government, or laws. Such actions have the effect of limiting, denigrating certain groups, and making them feel insecure, and fostering poor civic relations. For each one of these news clips the student finds, they must locate another one that illustrates tolerant or inclusive behavior, or behavior toward certain groups that fosters a sense of security and positive social relations.
2. After students have presented a few of their clippings, have a roundtable discussion about the actions and outcomes that result or could result from the actions, speech, policies or laws described in the articles or media clips.
3. Make a bulletin board or butcher paper mural that displays the media clippings in a manner that expresses for viewers what are the "inputs" and "outcomes" of tolerant and intolerant behavior in modern society. Develop a graphic layout using colors, lettering and symbols or designs that conveys the message to the viewer effectively.

Student Handout 6c:

What would you do if someone acts intolerant…?

Action witnessed	Your response

What could you do to foster tolerance...?

Action you could take	Likely response

7: The Geography of the Islamic Empire and Al-Andalus

Author and Map Designer: Ernest O'Roark

Overview and Purpose of the Lesson:

The purpose of this set of lessons is to help students get a clear picture of the locations and environments that helped shaped the story of Al-Andalus. Students first look at the vast territory spanned by the growing Islamic Empire and examine its environments to explain why Spain would have been considered such a rich prize. Spain's unique geographic location is also studied to understand its role as independent Caliphate and transmitter of knowledge to Europe. Students then examine a time-series of maps illustrating the stages of Spain's medieval history. (Note: Although a lesson is described below, the maps provided on this website are intended to be a sort of kit from which teachers can design their own lessons and presentations.)

Performance Objectives:

- Locate Spain within the Islamic Empire.
- Explain how the environment of Spain made it attractive to invaders.
- Locate major political features of medieval Spain.
- Describe the stages of medieval Spain's history.

Materials Needed:

- Map Sets: A large variety of possible maps and combinations of maps have been provided on the website at <www.islamicspain.tv>. The intent is that teachers will select the sets of maps that best suit their student's needs and teaching situation. For example, black and white maps can be used if a teacher decides to Xerox class sets. Color maps could be used to create transparencies or make PowerPoint presentations.
- Student Handout 7a: "Al-Andalus: The Iberian Prize" for each student or small group of students.
- Student Handout 7b: "Climates of the Mediterranean Region" chart for each student or small group of students.

Time: one class period (will vary with procedure chosen)

Procedure:

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that in order to understand what happened in Islamic Spain, it is helpful to understand the "stage" on which the story was played out. Where was Spain in relation to the rest of the Islamic world? What special roles did it play because of its location? Why was Al-Andalus considered "special?"
2. Distribute Student Handout 7a: "Al-Andalus--The Iberian Prize" to students.
3. Distribute or display map sets for tasks 1, 2, and 3. (Maps of the Mediterranean region)
4. Distribute Student Handout 7b: "Climates of the Mediterranean Region" charts.
5. Have students work independently or in small groups to complete the first three tasks.

6. When students have completed the first three tasks, hold a debriefing discussion during which students can share their ideas.
7. Distribute or display map sets for task 4 (Maps of medieval Spain)
8. **NOTE:** this segment of the lesson has been extracted as a separate lesson #3 in the Tier One Set, where it features an extension correlating with the Timeline Activity (#4). The maps illustrate stages of medieval Spain's complex history, and each question follows a brief description of what happened during that stage. This task can be completed stage by stage in conjunction with viewing the video or as a pre-viewing activity.

Possible Assessments:

- Include a map section on a unit assessment.
- Have students place untitled versions of the map sets in chronological order.
- In an essay, have students explain the role of geography in shaping the medieval history of Spain.

Student Handout 7a: Al-Andalus--The Iberian Prize Map Study

Task 1:

The 7th Century Bishop, Isidore of Seville described Spain this way:

"*Of all the lands from the west to the Indies, you Spain, oh sacred and always fortunate mother of princes and peoples, are the most beautiful! You are the pride and jewel of the world – the most illustrious part of the earth!*"

Use your maps to locate Spain and the rest of the Islamic Empire. Read the climate chart and locate each of the climate regions described.

Using what you have learned, explain why Isidore of Seville would have considered Spain to be so special. Support your answer with specific evidence from the maps and chart.

Task 2:

In 822 the Arab musician Ziryab moved to Cordoba from Baghdad, the capital of the Islamic Empire. Brian Catlos of UC Santa Cruz says of Ziryab:

"*He brought as a package…all the newest fashions of the East. Not so much just a style of music, but really a style of acting – a style of being. He revolutionized cooking, he revolutionized hair styles, and music – the way the aristocracy acted. And this was a culture that the Muslim elite of Al-Andalus really looked up to. They were kind of… the hillbillies of the Islamic world. They were way out in the west in the middle of nowhere, far from the center of power, far from the center of learning*."

Study the maps showing the growth of the Islamic Empire and its major cities. Use the scale of miles to note the distances between different parts of the Empire, particularly between Cordoba and the other major centers such as Baghdad.

Use specific facts from what you have learned to explain why Ziryab's move to Cordoba was an important event for Al-Andalus.

Later, Al-Andalus would serve as the place where knowledge from the Muslim world would be transmitted into Europe, helping to spark the revival of learning in Europe known as the Renaissance.

Explain how the geography of Al-Andalus made it a good place for the transfer of Muslim knowledge into Europe.

Task 3:

In 929, Abd al-Rahman III proclaimed himself Caliph, the legitimate successor of the Prophet Muhammad. He also declared Al-Andalus to be independent of the rest of the Islamic Empire.

Use your maps to explain how the geography of Al-Andalus helped make possible this act of defiance by Abd al-Rahman. In other words, how did Spain's location help Abd al-Rahman get away with his declaration of independence?

Task 4: [NOTE: This segment of the lesson is repeated as Lesson 3: Historical Maps]

Use the set of Spain maps to answer these questions about the political story of Al-Andalus.

Al-Andalus reached its greatest height during the Cordoba-based Caliphate begun by Abd al-Rahman III. For most of the 900's, Al-Andalus was unified, independent, and able to hold its own against any would-be adversaries including the Christian kingdoms to the north. But a series of civil wars among Muslim factions beginning early in the 1000's eventually brought an end to the Caliphate. The result was the fragmentation of Al-Andalus into many "taifa" kingdoms. (Taifa is Arabic for "party" or "faction.") At first there were as many as 60 taifa kingdoms. But constant struggles among them for land, power, and prestige gradually reduced their number as the stronger absorbed the weaker.

1. Why would the division of Al-Andalus into taifa kingdoms be an advantage to the bordering Christian kingdoms?

Some taifa kingdoms fought against Christian kingdoms as well as against each other. Sometimes taifa kingdoms made alliances with their Christian neighbors in order to defend themselves against other taifas.

2. Which taifas shown on the map would most likely have both fought against and sometimes made alliances with Christian kingdoms? Explain your answer.

By the late 1000's the Muslim taifas were beginning to have trouble holding off the advances of Christian kings, especially Alfonso VI of Castile and Leon. In 1086 taifa leaders invited a North African Berber dynasty known as the Almoravids into Spain to help them defend against the Christians.

3. What major Muslim taifa city had already fallen to the Christians when the Almoravids were asked to come help defend Spain?

The Almoravids did help hold off the Christian armies. But the religiously conservative Almoravids were offended by the rich, tolerant, and diverse society they found in Spain. They soon conquered the taifas and took control of Muslim Spain for themselves. Around 1150, the Almoravids were succeeded by another even more puritanical Berber dynasty, the Almohads. Meanwhile, the Christian kingdoms continued to chip away at Muslim territory.

4. Which two major Muslim cities had fallen to the Christians by the time of Almohad rule in 1200?

The strict and puritanical Almohads were unpopular with much of the native Andalusian population, whatever their religion. Many fled Almohad rule into territory held by the Christians.

5. Which Christian cities would have been most attractive to refugees from Almohad rule? Explain your answer.

In 1212, the Almohads were soundly defeated by a combined Christian army at the Battle of Las Navas. The Almohads abandoned Spain and returned to North Africa. This left the much-weakened taifas on their own once more. Unable to effectively defend themselves, most of the remaining taifas were quickly overrun.

6. Which Muslim kingdom survived until 1492?

Climates of the Mediterranean Region

Climate	Temperature	Precipitation	Natural Vegetation	Agriculture
Marine	Warm Summers Cool Winters	Wet all year Frequent light rain, fog	Dense Forest	Vegetables, fruits, grain crops, livestock
Mediterranean	Warm to hot Summers Cool Winters	Dry summer Moderate rain in winter	Grassland, bushes, scattered trees, patches of forest	Citrus fruits, vegetables, grapes/wine, olive oil, nuts, grain crops, livestock
Subtropical	Hot, humid Summers Cool Winters	Moderate rain all year	Forest	Vegetables, fruits, grain crops, livestock
Continental	Hot, humid Summers Cold Winters	Moderate all year – snow in winter	Forest	Vegetables, fruits, grain crops, livestock
Steppe	Hot Summers Cool Winters	Dry all year with 10 to 20 inches of rain Prone to droughts	Short grassland, scrubby bushes	Drought resistant grain crops, livestock
Desert	Hot Summers Warm to Hot Winters	Dry all year with less than 10 inches of rain	Scattered grasses and bushes, many areas barren	Livestock (nomadic herding), grain crops only along river valleys
Highland	Varies with elevation Higher = cooler	Varies with elevation and location Windward = wetter	Varies with elevation	Varies with elevation and terrain – mainly livestock

8: Historical Background: The Abrahamic Faiths

Author: Susan Douglass

Overview:

This lesson provides background on three Abrahamic faiths, or the world religions called Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It is a brief primer on their geographic and spiritual origins, the basic beliefs, scriptures, and practices of each faith. It describes the calendars and major celebrations in each tradition. Aspects of the moral and ethical beliefs and the family and social values of the faiths are discussed. Comparison and contrast among the three Abrahamic faiths help to explain what enabled their adherents to share in cultural, economic, and social life, and what aspects of the faiths might result in disharmony among their adherents.

Levels:

Middle grades 6-8, high school and general audiences

Objectives:

Students will:

- Define "Abrahamic faith" and identify which world religions belong to this group.
- Briefly describe the basic elements of the origins, beliefs, leaders, scriptures and practices of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.
- Compare and contrast the basic elements of the three faiths.
- Explain some sources of harmony and friction among the adherents of the Abrahamic faiths based on their beliefs.

Time:

One class period, or outside class assignment of 1 hour, and ca. 30 minutes class discussion.

Materials:

Student Reading "The Abrahamic Faiths"; graphic comparison/contrast handout, overhead projector film & marker, or whiteboard.

Procedure:

1. Copy and distribute the student reading, as an in-class or homework assignment. Ask the students to take notes on each of the three faith groups described in the reading, including information about their origins, beliefs, leaders, practices and social aspects. They may create a graphic organizer by folding a lined sheet of paper lengthwise into thirds and using these notes to complete the assessment activity.
2. After the reading is completed, discuss what does the term Abrahamic faith mean, to which religions does it apply, and why. Make sure students understand the difference between beliefs and practices. Discuss how religious practices influence culture, and how diversity of culture persists despite common beliefs and practices—why?

3. Distribute the graphic comparison/contrast handout and divide the class into three groups or conduct a whole class discussion. The handout contains a graphic organizer for information about the Abrahamic faiths: a Venn diagram with three interlocking circles. The object of the exercise with the trefoil diagram is to use the information in the reading to determine what elements of the three faiths are common to all three faiths, which are unique to one of them, and which are held in common between each pair.
4. **EXTENSION:** If the class is undertaking a more detailed study of the three faiths than this brief overview provides, two other graphics might be added as activities: a set of parallel boxes and three concentric circles—a target diagram. The object of using the target diagram is to describe a relationship of inclusion and exclusion concerning elements of the faiths, such as the recognition of Jesus and the biblical prophets in Islam, and the recognition of the biblical prophets before Jesus in Christianity. In this case Judaism would be in the center, because the teachings of both Islam and Christianity include aspects of Jewish beliefs and scriptures The parallel boxes can be used to list and describe elements or themes in all of the Abrahamic traditions that run parallel. Suggestions include the moral and ethical guidelines, attitudes toward the role of women (and changing or challenged interpretations of these today), the belief in emulating the prophets or spiritual leaders, the idea of water as purification medium, beliefs about death and the afterlife, judgment, and the role of journeys or pilgrimages. The importance of Jerusalem and the Holy Land are additional parallel elements.
5. Finally, the class can reflect on the significance of different ways of comparing and contrasting so as to appreciate the fact that complex relationships between beliefs and practices cannot always be reduced to categories of same and different, or for or against. Point out that similar information may appear on more than one chart, but it acquires meaning in terms of the ways in which adherents of the three faiths may view each other, and ways in which their interaction may be completely harmonious or absolutely opposed. How do people cope with awareness of these contrasts in their social interactions? How does the film *Cities of Light* show these aspects playing out historically?

Reading and Activity Handout 8: The Abrahamic Faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Introduction

Among the major world religions, three are very closely related in their origins, their beliefs, their revealed books or holy scriptures, and their institutions of leadership. They are also closely related in their beliefs about morals and ethics, and their views of the individual and social life. They do differ, however, in important aspects of their beliefs. Historically, relations among these faith groups reflect both conflict and cooperation. In modern times, adherents of the Abrahamic religions sometimes seem to be enemies and aliens, but at other times they seem like squabbling children of a single parent, who are in fact capable of reaching understandings and living in peace together.

Geographic Origins of the Abrahamic Faiths

Abraham was a person who lived during the Iron Age, sometime after 2000 BCE, in the city of Ur, in Mesopotamia. Accounts of his life vary, but all have two common threads: Abraham (or Abram) was called by God to take his family and migrate to another place. Abraham was the ancestor of many peoples—most prominently the Semitic (after the origin of their languages) peoples, among whom were the Hebrews, , the Ethiopians, and Arabs. Among Abraham's descendants were the major prophets of the monotheistic tradition. The land where Abraham and his descendants settled came to be called the Holy Land, a region on the eastern Mediterranean coast between Mesopotamia and Egypt, and the desert toward its south—the land where the prophets described in the Biblical and Qur'anic scriptures lived, traveled, and preached. Today, that land includes all or part of several modern countries, including Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and parts of Egypt, Iraq, and Syria.

Over time, these lands have been the place of spiritual journeys, settlements and cities, trade, colonies, wars, and empires. They have been lands of human joy and sorrow, conflict and cooperation, and great diversity of thoughts and ideas. During the past four thousand years, the monotheistic tradition has brought forth the world religions called Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The prophets mentioned in the Torah, the Bible, and the Qur'an were born and lived in this region—that is why this geographic space is holy in all of the Abrahamic faiths. Unfortunately, this shared space has also been the scene of conflict, because of differing beliefs about that land and heritage among the three, and especially, claims to the right to govern this territory and possess its resources.

Basic Beliefs and Common Stories

Jews, Christians and Muslims believe that God made a covenant, or agreement with Abraham to keep the faith in One God, and to worship Him, to keep that faith and teach the practice of worship to his children down the generations, and God would preserve, protect and multiply the children of Abraham. This covenant became the legacy, or trust, for the children of Abraham to continue. Abraham had two sons, Ishmael (son of Hagar) and Isaac (son of Sarah), whom he settled in different parts of the Arabian Peninsula, the latter near Jerusalem, and the former near Makkah. According to the scriptures, Abraham was promised

that his offspring would become the fathers of great nations. These nations are the people who are now called Jews, Christians, and Muslims. They are called monotheists, meaning people who believe in one God, the Creator of all that is in the universe and on earth.

The common core of Abraham's story is his faith and obedience to the call of God. It is expressed in the Jewish and Christian traditions in a verse of the book of Genesis. In this verse, God calls to Abraham, and he replies, "Here I am" (Genesis 1:22), and in the *Qur'an*, 2:131, which states "When his Lord said to him: Surrender! he said: I have surrendered to the Lord of the Worlds." When Muslim pilgrims say, "Labaik! Allahuma labaik!" as they approach the sanctuary at Makkah—which they believe Abraham built—they are repeating, "Here I am, Lord, at Your Command!" Another act of Abraham that belongs to the core story is that God told him in a dream to sacrifice his son. He and his son were prepared to obey this divine command, but God redeemed the sacrifice with a magnificent ram. This miracle meant that God does not require human sacrifice, but only the willingness to obey. The Biblical account says that the son to be sacrificed was Abraham and Sarah's son Isaac, while the Qur'an states that it was the first-born son Ishmael, whose mother was Hajar. The lesson of obedience and strength of faith, however, is the same.

God, Prophets, and Revelations Over Time

All of the monotheistic faiths share a belief that God, the Creator, has "spoken" to humankind over time. The word for this divine communication is "revelation." It comes from the word "reveal" (to make visible or apparent). Adherents of the Abrahamic religions believe that God revealed Himself to certain individuals called prophets over the course of human history. They believe that God communicated five main messages: (1) the nature and qualities of the one God; (2) the purpose and nature of the universe created by God; (3) the need to worship one God; (4) the purpose of human life and the need to live a righteous life and the news of judgment after death, and reward or punishment in the afterlife, (5) morals and laws which people are told to follow.

The Abrahamic faiths have in common a belief in angels as God's messengers to human beings. The angel of revelation is named Gabriel. The human beings chosen by God as bearers of revelation to other human beings are called prophets. Some of them were chosen and inspired to teach people, while the major prophets received revelations that have been memorized, recited and written in holy books or scriptures over the centuries.

Abraham is very important to the monotheistic faiths, but he was not the first leader. Adam and Eve are the first human beings mentioned in the scriptures as receiving revelation from God. Other prophets included Elijah, Isaiah, Noah, Jonah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David and Solomon. The Abrahamic religions differ, however, over two of these individuals, Jesus and Muhammad, who lived about 600 years apart.

Believers in the Abrahamic faiths have preserved these scriptures and traditions of the prophets and the story of their unfolding in human history. They have continued to write, recite, and study the words of revelation that were first communicated orally, then recorded in books.

- The scripture of Judaism is the *Torah*, which is the first part of the *Tanakh*. The *Torah* contains the revelation that was given to Moses. The *Tanakh* includes the *Torah* and the books of the Prophets, the Psalms, Proverbs and other writings, 24 books in all. It contains history, law, poetry and song. It is written on a scroll and recited in Hebrew as a part of Jewish worship.

- The scripture of Christianity is the *Bible*, including the Old Testament (the Hebrew Bible of Judaism, including the first five books, called by Christians the Pentateuch), and the New Testament. The New Testament includes the books that describe the life and teachings of Jesus and the history of the early Church. As the titles of the parts of the *Bible* indicate, it was compiled from the writings of many authors over time. Christians believe that it was inspired in these authors by God. There are 66 books in most versions of the Christian Bible.
- The scripture of Islam is the *Qur'an*. It consists of 114 chapters called *surahs*, and over 6000 verses called *ayat*. Muslims believe that it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad through the Angel Gabriel over a period of 23 years. The *Qur'an* describes and affirms the basic spiritual and moral messages of the Torah and the Bible. The *Qur'an* text states that it is a continuation of God's message to humankind from earlier revelations.

Another concept common to the Abrahamic faiths is the Messiah. The word means one who is chosen by God for a specific holy task—literally, one upon whom oil is rubbed or poured to signify his appointment to a high honor and mission.

- Jews believe that a Messiah is still awaited, and coming at some future time. Jews do not believe that Jesus was the Messiah. Some Jews believe that Jesus was a spiritual leader.
- Christians believe that Jesus was the Messiah. They also believe that Jesus was the son of God, who came to redeem human beings from sin or wrongdoing, and that he compensated for all human sins with his suffering and death. This salvation, or being saved and given eternal life, is the central teaching of the New Testament (which means promise or pledge, i.e. the salvation through Jesus)
- Muslims also believe that Jesus was the Messiah, but they do not believe that he was the son of God, and Muslims also believe that God did not allow him to die at the hands of human beings.
- Both Christians and Muslims believe that Jesus was raised up to God, but Christians believe that Jesus was raised from the dead, or resurrected. Muslims believe that Jesus was one of the greatest prophets. Muslims also share the belief with Christians in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ near the end of time.
- Among adherents of the Abrahamic faiths, only Muslims believe that Muhammad was a prophet, a man who was born in Makkah in about the year 570 CE. They believe that he received the final revelation from God—the holy book called the *Qur'an*. Historically, Muhammad was not accepted as a prophet by Christians and Jews. Similarly, Jews do not accept Christian or Muslim beliefs about Jesus.

The Monotheistic Concept of God and the Afterlife

All three Abrahamic faiths share many ideas about the nature of God. He is the Creator of the Universe. The monotheistic tradition of God includes the idea of a covenant, or promise, of God. The covenant is a trust placed upon human beings to believe in God, to worship only Him and not to worship any other gods. The scriptures describe God's characteristics or attributes, such as justice, mercy, and power over all of Creation. The scriptures of the Abrahamic faiths also describe the promise of God to judge all human beings on the Judgment Day, after they have died, and to reward or punish them according to God's justice. All of the faiths believe that God requires human beings to show mercy to

others, to do good deeds such as helping others, and that He will reward those who have faith and do good in this world. Some Christians differ over the importance of having faith vs. doing good works. They believe that human beings are only granted salvation by the grace of God and His mercy, not by virtue of good works.

The promise of God is for eternal life after death, in a heavenly paradise. Equally, those who do evil will be punished in Hell. The most important thing for human beings, however, is to have faith in God, that He will grant mercy to whomever He will, and forgive their sins or wrongdoing. Another important concept of God is that He is not distant or removed from the world, but He is present, and each human being can approach God and become near to Him, through prayer and other acts of worship.

Theology, or the study of the nature of God, has developed as an important intellectual tradition in the Abrahamic faiths. Theologians have written thousands of books discussing the characteristics of God, trying to grapple with ideas that seem to contradict each other and affect the human condition. For example, the idea that God created human beings with a free will seems to contradict the idea that God decides the fate or outcome of each person's life. The idea of evil in the world and disasters that happen to innocent people seem to contradict the idea of a merciful, benevolent God. These questions concern people in traditions other than the Abrahamic faiths, but there is much shared philosophy among them.

Practices of Worship

Belief in the need to worship God is common to all religions. The most basic form of worship is prayer. Each tradition prescribes specific words and requirements for prayer, which takes place at appointed times of day. Public prayer in houses of worship is common to all three faiths—for Jews on Saturday, for Christians on Sunday, and for Muslims on Friday—and during celebrations throughout the year. All Abrahamic faiths recognize the personal, private prayer of each believer. The desire to speak with God is common among people everywhere, whether they follow a particular religious tradition or not. Prayers that mark the times in the day and the cycle of the year are among the most important signs of obedience to God. Such rituals are also the source of scientific efforts to achieve accurate timekeeping and calendars. The work of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim astronomers reflects this common and shared effort.

Fasting – going with out food or certain kinds of foods – for a period of time is a common form of worship in the Abrahamic tradition. Fasts are often related to holy days in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Fasting is also found in many other spiritual traditions in the world. Giving charity as an act of kindness, help for the poor, or as a way to make up for bad deeds is common in the Abrahamic tradition. The idea that wealth is purified through giving is also common to the three traditions.

Water has a spiritual significance in the Abrahamic faiths. Purification of the body before prayer and in connection with other rituals is a common theme. Pilgrimage, or travel to visit holy sites to seek forgiveness, to strengthen the connection with God, and the journey in search of knowledge is similar, even though the pilgrimage involves different destinations. In Islam, the pilgrimage to Makkah once in a lifetime is one of the five pillars. In Christianity, visiting the holy land and other shrines has a long tradition. In Judaism, the site of the temple in Jerusalem is a pilgrimage destination.

Celebrations

Each of the Abrahamic faiths has a few major celebrations during the year. Both Judaism and Islam follow a lunar calendar for the timing of these celebrations, and some Christian feast days are also influenced by the lunar calendar. Some of these celebrations are:

- Judaism – Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Passover, Shavuot, Sukkot, Chanukkah, Purim; these celebrations recall events in the dramatic history of the Jewish people.
- Christianity – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Good Friday, Easter, and Pentecost; these are only a few of the celebrations that commemorate events in the life of Jesus.
- Islam – Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr; Hajj and Eid al-Adha; Ramadan is a month of fasting commanded in the Qur'an, and the feast day that ends it is Eid al-Fitr. Eid al-Adha and the Hajj (the ritual journey to Makkah) commemorate events in the life of Abraham and his family.

There are fast days and feast days, when people deny themselves the ordinary necessities of life for a time of remembrance and thankfulness. Sharing food and other gifts with family, neighbors, and needy people are common ways to celebrate, and attending special worship services are part of these celebrations.

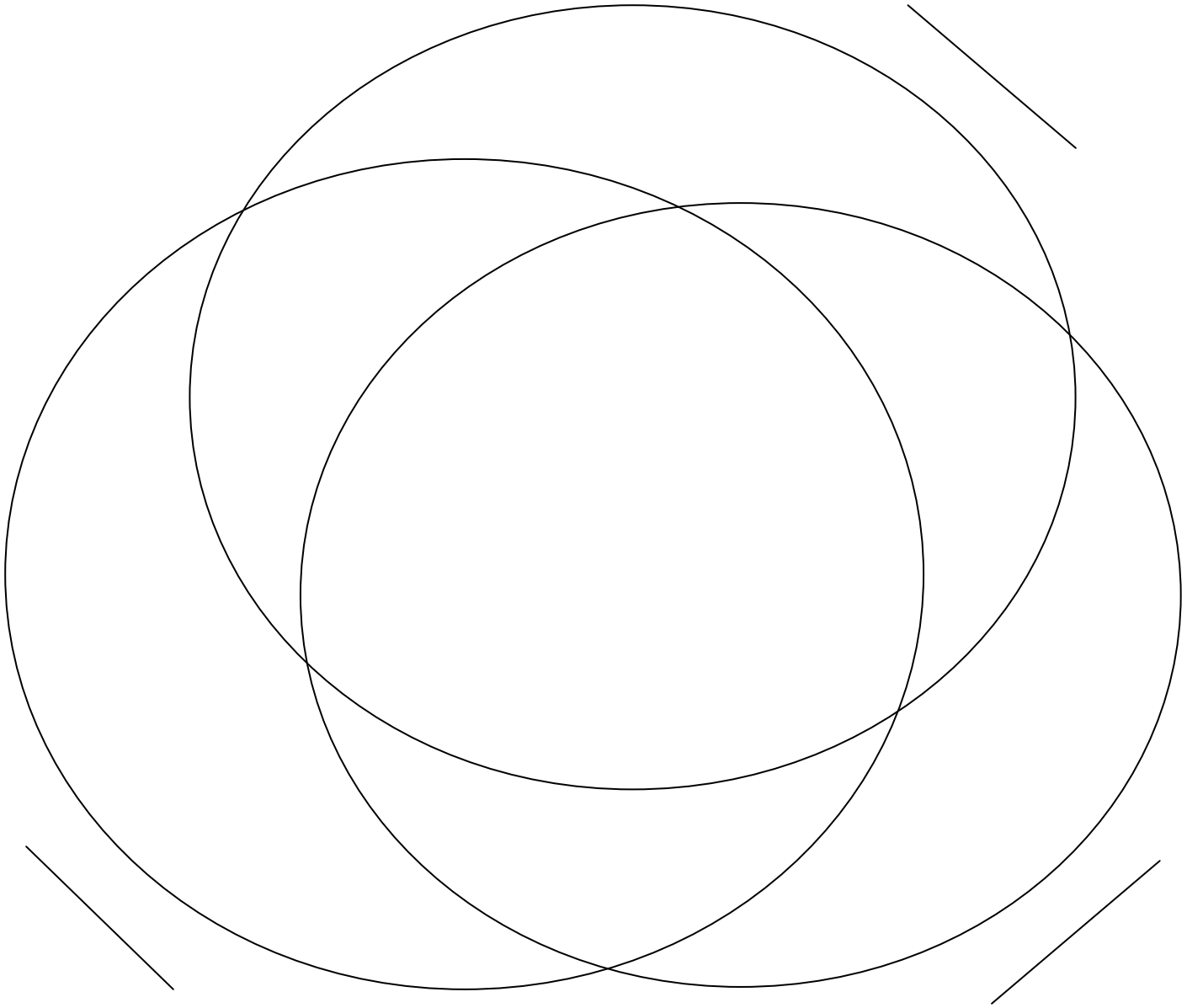
Leaders

Individuals and the community participate in worship and follow ethical, practical and religious laws. Leaders especially trained in knowledge of the faith and care for the community and its members play roles in guiding the faithful. In Judaism, leaders are called *Rabbis*, and they receive rigorous training in the scriptures and other Judaic writings. In Christianity, *priests* and *pastors* serve as part of a church hierarchy, or ranks of authorities. Only trained, ordained, or initiated priests can fulfill certain sacred functions of worship for the lay, or ordinary, people. In Islam, there is no priesthood, ordination, or religious hierarchy. A prayer leader is called an *imam*—"one who stands in front" of the lines of worshippers. Leaders who offer advice on how to practice Islam, on the law, and other kinds of guidance are called *alim* (sing., AH-lim) or *ulema (*pl., *oo-leh-MA).* The word means one who has knowledge.

Moral and ethical principles and laws

One condition for groups of people to be able to live together in one society is that they share a set of morals and values. The most basic set of moral and ethical values in the Biblical tradition is the Ten Commandments, which was part of the revelation taught by Moses, and are revered by Jews and Christians as they appear in the Torah and the Old Testament. This part of the belief system is an important reason why Muslims are taught to respect Jews and Christians as fellow "People of the Book." The Qur'an includes all of the ten commandments – many of them stated in a similar way, with the exception of the Sabbath (day of rest). The Qur'an also states that its revelation came to confirm the message that the earlier prophets brought. Much of this message is the central religious concept of one God, and the basic commandments to honor parents, help the poor, respect neighbors, not to steal, kill, envy, or lie, and so on. Some of these commandments also form the basis of civil and criminal law in secular governments, and they form the basis for the concept of human rights.

Another type of religious practice that affects how religiously diverse groups get along is rules about food. Jews and Muslims both follow dietary laws about the types of meat they can eat, how animals used for meat are slaughtered and prepared. Christians do not follow either the very detailed laws about food of the Jews, nor do they follow the laws in Islam that forbid eating pork and drinking alcoholic beverages. Jews, Christians, and Muslims, however, do share food in social settings, and among members of religiously mixed families. This is an important basis for social life in a diverse society such as Spain during the medieval period, in mixed cities of the Muslim lands, or in large cities of the world today. Sharing food makes sharing ideas much easier, as do shared values, beliefs and ethics make business dealings and many kinds of interactions possible, including intermarriage.



Trefoil Diagram of the Abrahamic Faiths

The three faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—share a common core of beliefs and practices. There are also certain beliefs, practices and traditions that are shared between two of the three faiths. Finally, there are aspects of each faith that are uniquely held by each tradition. (1) Label each of the circles on the line outside the circles -- "Judaism," "Christianity," and "Islam." Using the Student Reading, identify elements of these belief systems and practices that are held in common by all three faiths, and place them in the central space. In the intersecting spaces between each two faiths, place elements held in common between two of the groups. In the non-intersecting space, identify and write elements that are unique to each of the three traditions. Be prepared to discuss the results in class. You may also want to do some additional research to find out more specific details.

9: Achievements and Contributions of Al-Andalus: Exploration of Material Culture and Science

Author and Researcher: Susan Douglass

Overview:

During the more than 700 years of Muslim rule in the Iberian Peninsula, Muslim culture was both a center for receiving influences from other Muslim lands, and a center of innovation and adaptation in material culture and the sciences. Through an interface either on the Cities of Light web pages, or through a system of handouts printed from the web site at <www.islamicspain.tv> and made available to the class for study, students will use select readings and images that introduce them to a range of arts, sciences and technologies that contributed to the material culture of al-Andalus and its dissemination to other cultures. Through the collective learning activity, students can become "experts" in a number of fields they will present to the class from what they learned, and through the shared classroom experience, they will also be exposed to many other fields. An assessment activity aims to create a lasting impression of this information to round out the students' understanding of the contributions of al-Andalus to civilization.

Objectives:

Students will be able to

- identify numerous areas of achievement in material culture and the sciences in medieval al-Andalus.
- describe a selection of contributing fields of knowledge and activity from al-Andalus during the centuries of Muslim rule in the Iberian Peninsula.
- list individuals who contributed as scientists, artists and writers in the area of material culture and the sciences.
- assess the importance of al-Andalus as a center of activity and contributing culture in the areas of material culture and the sciences.

Materials:

"Magic Squares" game board, Student Handout 9a for note-taking on the topics and print-outs of the 1-2 page text and image information texts and images that correspond to the topic named in each square on the grid, **Student Handouts 9.1 to 9.25**.

Time:

1-2 class periods and/or option of a homework assignment for preparation

Procedure:

Teachers can assign the students to choose a given number of rows up or across, complete a diagonal row or rows, or a pattern of numbers that add up to a certain sum. They will be responsible for presenting the material to the rest of the class. When the class is de-briefed on their exploration, they will gain an overall idea of the cultural and scientific ideas that took place in al-Andalus during the eight centuries of Muslim rule

and its aftermath in the translation effort, and the effects of the diffusion of this knowledge.

Students can also be assigned to freely choose a square (corresponding to the labels on the chart on the next page), and select the handout that corresponds to the topic. Teachers can assign the students to choose a given number of rows up or across, complete a diagonal row or rows, or a pattern of numbers that add up to a certain sum. Users will be able to acquire a broad overview of the cultural and scientific ideas that took place in al-Andalus during the eight centuries of Muslim rule and its aftermath in the translation effort, and the effects of the diffusion of this knowledge in a short period of time by surveying the images and following the links according to their interest.

Student Handout 9a: Magic Squares for Exploring Material Culture and Sciences in al-Andalus

The labels on this set of "Magic Squares" refer to contributions to the arts, sciences, and technologies that al-Andalus contributed to the world. Select any vertical, horizontal, or diagonal row and ask the teacher for the readings that correspond to the numbers in the row you have chosen, or find them online at <www.islamicspain.tv>.You will become a class expert in the information contained in those readings. Be ready to briefly summarize the knowledge you have gained and share it with the class. You will learn about the areas you did not choose from your classmates. Use the note-taking organizer in Handout 9b to take notes.

1 Medicine	2 Glass	3 Chemistry	4 Botany	5 Physics & Optics
6 Surgery	7 Pharmacology	8 Music	9 Astronomy	10 Mathematics
11 Textiles	12 Carving	13 Leatherwork	14 Ceramics	15 Architecture
16 Navigation	17 Metallurgy	18 Geography	19 Engineering	20 Zoology
21 Cuisine	22 Agriculture	23 Hydraulic Technology	24 Calligraphy	25 Games

Student Handout 9b: Notes Organizer for the Magic Squares Activity

CONTRIBUTION	NOTES ON INFORMATION	DRAWING OR SYMBOL THAT REPRESENTS THIS CONTRIBUTION
1 Medicine		
2 Glass		
3 Chemistry		
4 Botany		
5 Physics & Optics		
6 Surgery		
7 Pharmacology		
8 Music		
9 Astronomy		
10 Mathematics		

10: Andalusian Poetry

Author: Susan Douglass

Overview:

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to engage with various examples of Andalusian poetry related to the history of Muslim Spain, giving them the opportunity to experience the literature of that time and place, and to engage with a rich primary source that illuminates a way of life.

Levels: middle grades 6-8, high school and general audiences

Objectives: students will:

- Identify some topics on which Andalusian poets expressed themselves.
- Identify some purposes for which poems were written, recited or sung.
- Compare and contrast different forms of poetry from al-Andalus.
- Analyze how descriptive language in Andalusian poetry reveals information about life in al-Andalus and how it illuminates people's responses to historical events.
- Cite some possible influences of Andalusian poetry on other cultures.

Time: One – two class periods

Materials:

Student Handout 10a: Categorizing Poetry
Student Handout 10b: Andalusian Poetry
Notebook paper for reading responses
Overhead projector film & marker, or whiteboard

Procedure:

1. Distribute Student Handouts 10a and 10b and allow time for students to skim all of the poems (10-20 minutes). The first engagement with the group of poems will be to categorize the poems in several ways (length, topic, style), writing the numbers of each type of poem they identify in the appropriate boxes.
2. Using the categories and corresponding poem numbers, students will work individually or in pairs, trios, or small groups to select poems to explore through the activities that follow. Each student or group will select one poem from each of the categories on the chart into which the students have sorted the poems on the graphic organizer. Knowing that students may select only the shorter poems, the selections have been sorted into Groups A, B. C, and D, so that the teacher can ask students to include one of the longer poems in responding to the questions. Discuss the results of group or individual work.

3. Finally, following the directions on the student worksheet, assign students as homework or classwork to try their own hand at a poem similar to those they have studied. Spend a class session on a Poetry Jam, in which students share their poems.

Student Handout 10a: Categorizing and Exploring Poems

Directions:

1. Skim through the group of poems in the Andalusian Poetry handout in 15 minutes or so. You are not reading them through, but taking a quick look at their characteristics on the chart below.
2. Write the numbers (#) of the poems that fit that category in the corresponding boxes in the chart below. Poems may fit in more than one. After you are finished, you will use these categories and your selections to explore some examples of Andalusian poetry in depth.
3. Choose one poem from each category, and answer the questions about that category in the blank forms. Be sure also to choose at least one longer poem. Be ready to share your answers and ideas with the class.
4. Poetry Jam: Try your own hand at writing a 5-line or 10-line poem (or longer if you feel like it!) on one of the topics or goals below. Try to model your poem on one of the poems you have studied. When you are finished, share with the class. If you want to recite it as a song, or with rhythmic accompaniment, that will be even better.

Characteristics	Poem Numbers	Poem Numbers	Poem Numbers	Poem Numbers	Poem Numbers
What is the topic of the poem?	daily life	historical events	religious ideas	about people	long poems
Goal: What is the poet trying to do?	describe a scene	tell a story	bring out strong feelings in the audience	give advice	short poems

Daily life poems

1. What human activity or activities are described? Is it work or leisure?
2. What clues does the poem give to the way people lived in al-Andalus long ago?
3. What man-made objects are mentioned in the poem?
4. What inventions do they describe?

Historical events

1. Are the events described in the poem real or fictional, or both?
2. Are the events in the poet's recent past or the distant past, or both?
3. Describe what you know about the event from clues in the language.
4. What do you think might have happened to people because of the event described?

5. What does the poet want the audience to feel about the event? How did it the poet feel about it?

Religious ideas

1. What ideas about religion or spirituality does the poet express?
2. What does the poet want to express about his or her religious beliefs?
3. How does the poet use the form of the poem to express these religious ideas?

People

1. Is the person in the poem an important or an ordinary person? Male or female?
2. How does the poet describe the personality of this person?
3. Is the poet trying to impress the person being described? Are they trying to impress others about the person?
4. Why do you think the poem about this person was written?

Describing a scene

1. What sights, sounds and smells would you experience if you were in the scene the poet is describing?
2. What colors would you use if you were painting the scene?
3. List some words that would describe your feelings if you could step into this scene.

Telling a story

1. Who are the characters in the story being told?
2. What happens in the story?
3. Why is the poet telling the story? (to entertain, teach, move to action, etc.)

Bringing out strong feelings in the audience

1. What emotions does the poet try to bring out in the audience?
2. How does the poet use words and images to affect the listener's feelings?
3. What is the purpose of bringing out strong feelings?
4. What might someone want to do after hearing the poem?

Giving advice

1. What is the poem about?
2. What advice is the poet giving to the audience?
3. What technique does the poet use to make the message effective?
4. Think of a sign or advertising that might have a similar message.
5. What type of person might offer the kind of advice the poet is giving?

Student Handout 10b: Andalusian Poetry Examples

#1

A palm tree stands in the middle of Rusafa,
Born in the West, far from the land of palms.

I said to it: How like me you are, far away and in exile,
In long separation from family and friends.
You have sprung from soil in which you are a stranger,
And I, like you, am far from home.

Abd al-Rahman, Emir of Cordoba, d. 788 CE

#2

A little shaikh from the land of Meknes sings in the middle of the marketplaces:
“What have I to do with men, and what have men to do with me?”

What, O friend, have I to do with any creature
[When] He whom I love is a Creator, a Provider?
Unless you are sincere, my son, say not a word.
Take down my words on paper and write them like an amulet on my authority.
What have I to do with men, and what have men to do with me?"
Here is a clear statement that needs no explanation:
What has anyone to do with anyone? Grasp this allusion well,
And observe my old age, my staff, and my begging wallet.
Thus did I live in Fez and thus do I live here too.
“What have I to do with men, and what have men to do with me?"

How beautiful are his words when he struts through the market-places
And you see the shopkeepers turn their necks in his direction.
With his begging wallet hanging from his neck, a short staff and cork sandals,
He is a well-built little shaikh, built as God created him.
"What have I to do with men, and what have men to do with me?"
Were you to see this little shaikh, how elegant he is in the true sense of the word!
He turned to me and said to me: "Do I see you follow me?
I set down my begging bowl-and may He who has mercy on us have mercy on it."
And he placed it among different kinds [of people] saying: "Leave me alone, leave me alone.
What have I to do with men, and what have men to do with me?

He who does good, O my son, receives only good in return;
He will look to his faults and reprove his own deeds,
While he who is close to my state will remain innocent and free."
He whose soul is good will grasp the innocence of the singer;
"What have I to do with men, and what have men to do with me?"
And in this way he busies himself in blessing Muhammad,
And [requesting God's] pleasure for his minister the glorious Abu Bakr,
And for the truthful ‘Umar and for the martyr of every place of martyrdom,
And for ‘Ali the grand judge over iniquities who, when he struck out, did not repeat the blow.

Shushtari (1212–1269 CE)

#3

Wonder,
A garden among the flames!
My heart can take on any form:
A meadow for gazelles,
A cloister for monks,
For the idols, sacred ground,
Ka'ba for the circling pilgrim,
The tables of the Torah,
The scrolls of the Quran.
My creed is Love;
Wherever its caravan turns along the way,
That is my belief,
My faith.

Tarjuman al-Ashwaq, Muhyyeddin Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 CE)

#4

Were it not for
the excess of your talking
and the turmoil in your hearts,
you would see what I see
and hear what I hear!

Muhyyeddin Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 CE)

#5

I believe in the religion
Of Love
Whatever direction its caravans may take,
For love is my religion and my faith.

Muhyyeddin Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 CE)

#6

Oh, her beauty--the tender maid!
Its brilliance gives light like lamps to one traveling in the dark.
She is a pearl hidden in a shell of hair as black as jet,
A pearl for which Thought dives and remains unceasingly in the deeps of that ocean.
He who looks upon her deems her to be a gazelle of the sand-hills, because of her shapely neck and the loveliness of her gestures.

Muhyyeddin Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 CE)

#7

My heart has become capable of every form: it is a pasture for gazelles and a convent for Christian monks,
And a temple for idols, and the pilgrim's Ka'ba, and the tables of the Tora and the book of the Koran.
I follow the religion of Love, whichever way his camels take. My religion and my

faith is the true religion.
We have a pattern in Bishr, the lover of Hind and her sister, and in Qays and Lubna, and in Mayya and Ghaylan.

Muhyyeddin Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 CE)

#8

Everything declines after reaching perfection, therefore let no man be beguiled by the sweetness of a pleasant life.
As you have observed, these are the decrees that are inconstant: he whom a single moment has made happy, has been harmed by many other moments;
And this is the abode that will show pity for no man, nor will any condition remain in its state for it.
Fate irrevocably destroys every ample coat of mail when Mashrifi swords and spears glance off without effect;
…
Where are the crowned kings of Yemen and where are their jewel-studded diadems and crowns?
Where are [the buildings] Shaddad raised in Iram and where [the empire] the Sassanians ruled in Persia?
Where is the gold Qarun once possessed; where are ‘Ad and Shaddad and Qab’an?
An irrevocable decree overcame them all so that they passed away and the people came to be as though they had never existed.
The kingdoms and kings that had been came to be like what a sleeper has told about [his] dream vision.
Fate turned against Darius as well as his slayer, and as for Chosroes, no vaulted palace offered him protection.
It is as if no cause had ever made the hard easy to bear, and as if Solomon had never ruled the world.
The misfortunes brought on by Fate are of many different kinds, while Time has causes of joy and of sorrow.
For the accidents [of fortune] there is a consolation that makes them easy to bear, yet there is no consolation for what has befallen Islam.
An event which cannot be endured has overtaken the peninsula; …
The evil eye has struck [the peninsula] in its Islam so that [the land] decreased until whole regions and districts were despoiled of [the faith]
Therefore ask Valencia what is the state of Murcia; and where is Jativa, and where is Jaen?
Where is Cordoba, the home of the sciences, and many a scholar whose rank was once lofty in it?
Where is Seville and the pleasures it contains, as well as its sweet river overflowing and brimming full?
[They are] capitals which were the pillars of the land, yet when the pillars are gone, it may no longer endure!
The tap of the white ablution fount weeps in despair, like a passionate lover weeping at the departure of the beloved,

Over dwellings emptied of Islam that were first vacated and are now inhabited by unbelief;
In which the mosques have become churches wherein only bells and crosses may be found.
Even the mihrabs weep though they are solid; even the pulpits mourn though they are wooden!
O you who remain heedless though you have a warning in Fate: if you are asleep, Fate is always awake!
And you who walk forth cheerfully while your homeland diverts you [from cares], can a homeland beguile any man after [the loss of] Seville?
This misfortune has caused those that preceded it to be forgotten, nor can it ever be forgotten for the length of all time!
O you who ride lean, thoroughbred steeds which seem like eagles in the racecourse;
And you who carry slender, Indian blades which seem like fires in the darkness caused by the dust cloud [of war],
And you who are living in luxury beyond the sea enjoying life, you who have strength and power in your homelands,
Have you no news of the people of Andalus, for riders have carried forth what men have said [about them]?
How often have the weak, who were being killed and captured while no man stirred, asked our help?
What means this severing of the bonds of Islam on your behalf, when you, O worshipers of God, are [our] brethren?
Are there no heroic souls with lofty ambitions; are there no helpers and defenders of righteousness?
O, who will redress the humiliation of a people who were once powerful, a people whose condition injustice and tyrants have changed?
Yesterday they were kings in their own homes, but today they are slaves in the land of the infidel!
Thus, were you to see them perplexed, with no one to guide them, wearing the cloth of shame in its different shades,
And were you to behold their weeping when they are sold, the matter would strike fear into your heart, and sorrow would seize you.
Alas, many a mother and child have been parted as souls and bodies are separated!
And many a maiden fair as the sun when it rises, as though she were rubies and pearls,
Is led off to abomination by a barbarian against her will, while her eye is in tears and her heart is stunned.
The heart melts with sorrow at such [sights], if there is any Islam or belief in that heart!

Abu al-Baqa Al-Rundi (fl. 1248 CE)

#9

In the ocean of night, as the last of the flood-tide
was ebbing, an eclipse snatched away half the moon.
It became like a mirror heated by a blacksmith, with
the red of the fire fading into the black.

Ibn Hamdis (Sicily, 1055-1132 CE)

#10

Look at the sun on the horizon; it is like a bird
casting its wing over the surface of the bay.

Ali ibn Musa ibn Sa'id (Alcala la Real, 1213-1286 CE)

#11

The hands of spring have built strong lily castles on their stems,
Castles with battlements of silver where the defenders,
grouped around the prince, hold swords of gold.

Ibn Darraj (Caceta, 958-1030 CE)

#12

Drink from the lily pond, red with flowers, and also green,
As if the flowers were tongues of fire coming out of the water.

Ibn Hamdis (Sicily, 1055-1132 CE)

#13

How beautiful the rose in its colors of deep red and pure white.
Its whiteness is like the brilliance of the stars;
its redness not different from the red of twilight.
And the yellow in its center is like sesame seeds clustered on a plate.

Abu al-Abbas al-Ghassani (Tunis, c. 1261 CE)

#14

The right hand of the wind forges a coat of
mail on the river which ripples with a thousand wrinkles.
And whenever the wind adds a ring, the rain comes
along to fasten it with its rivets.

Asa al-A'ma (Manish, c. 1131 CE)

#15

The river is like a piece of parchment
on which the breeze is tracing its lines.
And when they see how beautiful the writing is,
the branches bend down to read it.

Ali ibn Musa ibn Sa'id (Alcala la Real, 1213-1286 CE)

#16

How I love those boats as they start to race, like horses chasing one another.
The neck of the river was unadorned before, but now, in the darkness of night, it is all decked out.
The brightness of the boats' candles is as the brilliance of stars; you'd think their reflections were lances in the water.

Many boats are moved along by their sail wings and others by their oar feet; they look like frightened rabbits fleeing from falcons.

Ibn Lubbal (Jerez, d. 1187 CE)

#17

Nothing disturbed me more than a dove,
singing on a branch between the island and the river.
Its collar was the color of pistachio nuts,
its breasts of lapis lazuli, its neck brightly embroidered,
its tail and leading wing feathers of dark green.
A ring of gold surrounded its pearl eyelids,
pearls which rolled over rubies.
Black was the tip of its sharp beak, as if it
were a silver penpoint dipped in ink.
It pillowed itself on a couch of an Ark tree
and bowed with its wings folded over its breast.
But when it saw my tears, it was troubled by my
weeping and standing straight up on the green bough.
It spread out its wings and flapped them,
flying off with my heart to wherever it flew. Where?
I don't know.

Ali ibn Hisa (Seville, d. 1050 CE)

#18

O king, whose fathers were of lofty mien and most noble lineage!
You have always adorned my neck with marvelous
gifts; so may you now adorn my hand with a falcon.
Bestow on me one with fine wings, as if its
leading feathers had been arched by the north wind.
Proudly I shall take him out in the morning,
making the wind veer in my hand, and I shall capture
the free with my chained one.

Abu Bakr Ibn al-Qabturnuh (Badajoz, c. 1126 CE)

#19

Bright as a meteor, he came prancing forth in a gilded saddle cloth.
Someone said, envying me, as he saw him trotting beneath me into battle:
"Who has bridled the morning with the Pleiades
and saddled the lightning with the crescent moon?"

Abu al-Sall (Denia, 1067-1134 CE)

#20

If white is the color of mourning in Andalusia,
that is only just.
Don't you see that I have put on the white of old age

out of mourning for my youth?

al-Kafif al-Husri (Kairouan, d. 1095 CE)

#21

When the bird of sleep thought my eye was a nest, he saw
its lashes and, being afraid of nets, he was frightened away.

Ibn al-Hammarah (c. 1150 CE)

#22

You have a house where the curtains are perfect for
musical evenings, but let us understand one thing:
The flies do the singing, the mosquitoes accompany them,
and the fleas are the dancers.

Abu Abdallah ibn Sharaf (Kairouan, d. 1068 CE)

#23

My soul and my family be the ransom for my patron,
from whom I never ask for help against fate without being helped.
They feathered my wings and then drenched them with
the dew of generosity, so now I cannot fly away from their tribe.

Ibn al-Labbanah (Denia, d. 1113 CE)

#24

Scatter your good deeds all around, not caring
whether they fall on those near or far away,
Just as the rain never cares where the clouds pour
it out, whether on fertile ground or on rocks.

Ibn Siraj (Cordova, d. 1114 CE)

#25

My soul said to me: “Death has come for you and here you
are still in this sea of sins.
“And you haven’t even provided for the journey.”
“Be quiet, “ I said. “Does one take provisions to the
Generous One?”

Abu al-Hajjaj al-Munsafi (Almuzafes, c. 1210 CE)

#26

Be forgiving of your friend when he offends
you, for perfection is seldom ever found.
In everything there is some flaw; even the
lamp, despite its brilliance, smokes.

Ibn al-Haddad (Almeria, d. 1087 CE)

#27

Look at the fire as she dances, shaking her sleeves
with joy.
She laughs with amazement as the essence of her ebony
is transmuted into gold.

Ibn Abi al-Khisal (Segura, 1072-1145 CE)

#28

Oh, the beauty of the fountain, pelting the
horizon with shooting stars, leaping and jumping around
playfully;
Bubbles of water burst out of it, gushing into
its basin like a frightened snake,
As if it used to move back and forth beneath the
earth, but when it had the chance, it quickly escaped,
And settled into the basin, happy with its new
home, and in amazement kept smiling, showing its bubbles.
And the branches hover overhead, about to kiss
it as it smiles, revealing the whiteness of its teeth.

Ibn al-Ra'iah (Seville, 13th century CE)

#29

How wonderful is the water-wheel! It spins around like a
celestial sphere, yet there are no stars on it.
It was placed over the river by hands that decreed that
it refresh others' spirits as it, itself, grows tired.
It is like a free man, in chains, or like a prisoner
marching freely.
Water rises and falls from the wheel as if it were a
cloud that draws water from the sea and later pours it out.
The eyes fell in love with it, for it is a boon companion
to the garden, a cupbearer who doesn't drink.

Ibn al-Abbar (Valencia, d. 1260 CE)

#30

Wedding Feast on the Horizon

Pass round your cups for there's a wedding feast on the horizon—
although it would be enough for us just to feast our eyes on your beauty.
The lightning is a henna-dyed hand, the rain, pearls
and like a bride, the horizon is led forth to her husband—
and the eyes of the dawn are lined with kohl.

Ali ibn Musa ibn Sa'id (Alcala la Real, 1213-1286 CE)

#31

O people of Andalusia, spur on your horses, for

staying here is a mistake;
Garments begin to unravel at the seams, but now I see
that the peninsula is unraveling at the center.
al-Assal (Toledo, d. 1094 CE)

#32

We are moons in the darkness of the night; wherever we
sit, there is the head of the room.
If contemptuous fate unjustly takes away our
greatness, it can not take away the greatness of our souls.
Ibn Adha (Granada, 1098-1145 CE)

#33

Granada

Come, spend a night in the country with me,
my friend (you whom the stars above would gladly call their friend),
for winter's finally over. Listen
to the chatter of the doves and swallows!
We'll lounge beneath the pomegranates, palm trees, apple trees,
under every lovely, leafy thing,
and walk among the vines,
enjoy the splendid faces we will see,
in a lofty palace built of noble stones.

Resting solidly on thick foundations,
its walls like towers fortified,
set upon a flat place, plains all around it
splendid to look at from within its courts.
Chambers constructed, adorned with carvings,
open-work and closed-work,
paving of alabaster, paving of marble,
gates so many that I can't even count them!
Chamber doors paneled with ivory like palace doors,
reddened with panels of cedar, like the Temple.
Wide windows over them,
and within those windows, the sun and moon and stars!

It has a dome, too, like Solomon's palanquin,
suspended like a jewel-room,
turning, changing,
pearl-colored; crystal and marble
in day-time; but in the evening seeming
just like the night sky, all set with stars.
It cheers the heart of the poor and the weary;
perishing, bitter men forget their want.

I saw it once and I forgot my troubles,
my heart took comfort from distress,
my body seemed to fly for joy,
as if on wings of eagles.

There was a basin brimming, like Solomon's basin,
but not on the backs of bulls like his –
lions stood around its edge
with wells in their innards, and mouths gushing water;
they made you think of whelps that roar for prey;
for they had wells inside them, wells that emitted
water in streams through their mouths like rivers.

Then there were canals with does planted by them,
does that were hollow, pouring water,
sprinkling the plants planted in the garden-beds,
casting pure water upon them,
watering the myrtle-garden,
treetops fresh and sprinkling,
and everything was fragrant as spices,
everything as if it were perfumed with myrrh.
Birds were singing in the boughs,
peering through the palm-fronds,
and there were fresh and lovely blossoms –
rose, narcissus, saffron –
each one boasting that he was the best,
(though we thought every one was beautiful).
The narcissuses said, “We are so white
we rule the sun and moon and stars!”
The doves complained at such talk and said,
“No, we are the princesses here! Just see our neck-rings,
with which we charm the hearts of men,
dearer far than pearls.”
The bucks rose up against the girls
and darkened their splendor with their own,
boasting that they were the best of all,
because they are like young rams.
But when the sun rose over them,
I cried out, “Halt! Do not cross the boundaries!”

(from Ibn Gabirol, ca. 1021- 1058 CE,
“The Palace and the Garden,”)

Sources for the poems, by number:

#1, #33: Maria Rosa Menocal, Raymond P. Scheindlin, Michael Sells, editors. *The Literature of al-Andalus*. Cambridge University Press, 2000. p. 25; pp. 1-2 "Granada" translated by Raymond P. Scheindlin.

#2: Monroe, pp. 308-314

#3, 4, 5, 6, 7: Reynold A. Nicholson, translator *The Mystics of Islam.* New York: Penguin Books, 1914. Retrieved at http://www.poetseers.org/spiritual_and_devotional_poets/sufi/ibn_arabi/ip/won/ and http://www.poetry-chaikhana.com/I/IbnArabiMuhy/Ibelieveinre.htm

#8: James Monroe. *Hispano-Arabic Poetry: A Student Anthology* Gorgias Press, 2004. pp. 332-336

#9-32: Bellamy, James and Patricia Owen Steiner, translators. *The Banners of the Champions: An Anthology of Medieval Arabic Poetry from Andalusia and Beyond.* Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1989. The original Arabic title is Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi (b. 1213 CE) *Rayat al-Mubarizeen wa Ghayat al-Mumayizeen* (*The Banners of the Champions and Pennants of the Chosen*).

NOTE on *Banners of the Champions*: Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi was born near Granada in 1213 CE, to a prominent literary family. He spent his life traveling and writing, and he authored or compiled over forty works. He was familiar with many of the cities of Andalusia and North Africa, and the eastern centers like Cairo, Baghdad and Makkah. He is best known for completing a great anthology of poetry in over 15 volumes. Started by his great-grandfather, it took over 100 years to finish. The *Banners* is a short extract of about 300 poems compiled in Cairo in the summer of 1243 CE.

11: Legacies and Transfers: The Story of the Transfer of Knowledge from Islamic Spain to Europe

Author: Susan Douglass

Overview:

This lesson builds upon references in *Cities of Light* that describe the translation effort and the legacy of Islamic Spain for the European Renaissance and modern science. It provides a narrative of the process of knowledge preservation and transfer in world history. It traces the origins of the ancient and classical traditions and follows their preservation in 8th to 10th century Muslim civilization, and the flowering of learning in Muslim societies, including Spain. The reading describes the process of translation and transfer of the heritage of Greek and Arabic learning to western Europe through Spain in the 11th and 12th centuries, and its impact on cultural life in Europe that led to the Renaissance and Scientific Revolution. A primary source activity and a map activity reinforce and deepen engagement with the content.

Objectives:

Students will

- Describe the process of collective learning and identify factors that facilitate and hinder its preservation and transfer across time and space.
- Explain the accumulation of the ancient and classical heritage of learning among the major civilizations up to the fall of Rome.
- Describe the preservation of the ancient and classical heritage in Persian and Islamic civilizations.
- Identify factors in Islamic civilization that fostered a tradition of learning and its spread in the lands under Muslim rule.
- Assess the role of Islamic Spain and some of the Christian kingdoms as places where knowledge was prized and explain the roles of Jewish, Christian and Muslim scholars in its development.
- Describe the process of transferring scientific and other knowledge from Spain into other parts of western Europe through translation, and assess its impact on European society after the 12th century.
- List the major subject areas of knowledge that were translated from Arabic into Latin and carried into Europe.
- Identify major historical centers of learning and its preservation from classical to medieval times, and locate them on a map. [optional: be able to associate these centers with historical eras in which they were important to the preservation of knowledge.]

Materials:

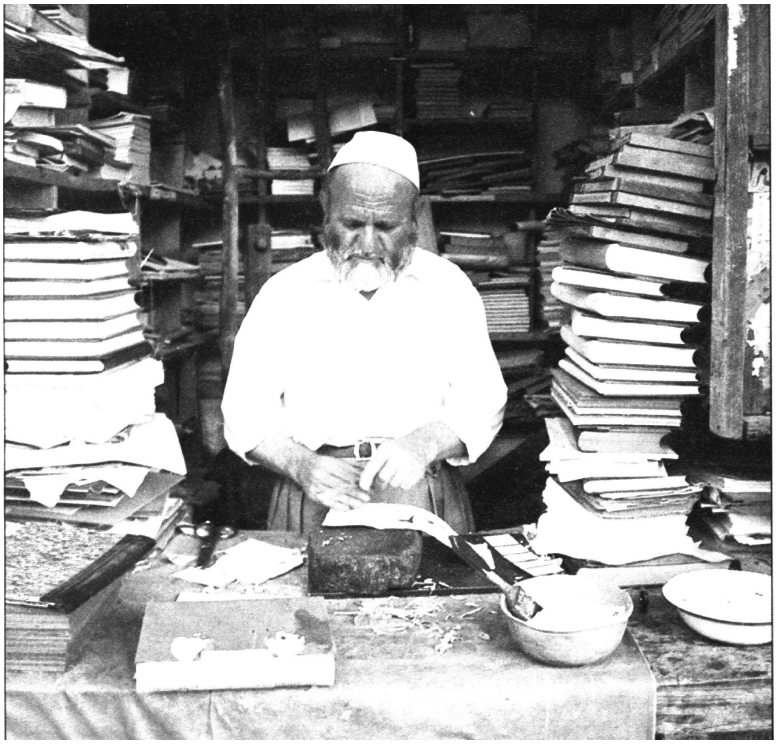
- Student Reading Handouts 11a-d: Parts 1-4
- Activity Sheet 11e: *Who Were the European Translators of Arabic Books in Spain?*
- Activity Sheet 11f: Map/diagram activity on the transfer of knowledge

Procedure:

1. Jigsaw Activity for a double class period: Distribute Student Reading Handouts 10a-d, Parts 1-4, dividing the class into four groups, each of which receives one of the four parts of the reading. Have the students read each part silently and make notes for their summary. The teacher should circulate and answer questions that may arise. Each group then shares its notes and comprehension of the main story line and important points within their group. When this process is complete, members of each group are able to tell their part of the story to the others. Create groups with one member each from groups 1-4. These groups meet to assemble the four parts of the story. In the last 20-30 minutes of the activity, discuss the story as a whole group.
2. Alternatively, have the groups 1-4 meet to discuss the reading of their sections, and as a way of "transferring the knowledge," create a skit, a narration or other means to tell their part of the story to the whole class, and present it during the last 30-45 minutes of the activity. The teacher should circulate during the activity to answer questions that may arise and check on progress.
3. Distribute the handout Activity Sheet 11e: *Who Were the European Translators of Arabic Books in Spain?* Students will elaborate on the quotations by the translators by writing a letter home as one of them. In addition to describing what they translated and how they accomplished it, they can describe their life in Spain; what they see, what they eat for dinner, what sort of clothes they wear, what they do for entertainment, where they worship, and other things they have seen. This activity draws upon the film content and any other reading they have done on the period and the culture of Spain.
4. Distribute Activity Sheet 11f: *Mapping the Transfer of Knowledge across Time and Space*. This activity allows students to visualize the information from the reading in three different ways. They will view a diagram of the locations that played roles in the preservation and spread of knowledge, and correlate them to an outline map. They will then use the time labels to create a timeline showing when these locations were important to the spread of knowledge.

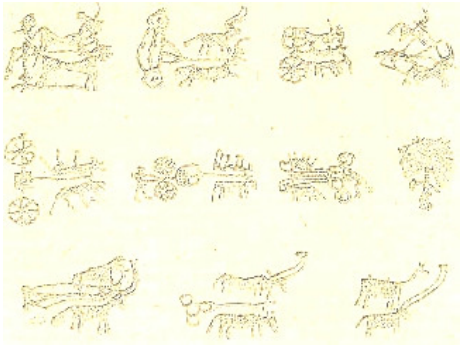
Student Reading Handouts 11a-d, Parts 1-4: How the World's Ancient and Classical Knowledge Came to the West through Muslim Spain

Our knowledge of science was built up over thousands of years. People of many cultures and civilizations have contributed to what we know today. Modern advancements in science and technology are spectacular, but without the slow, patient accumulation of learning, humanity could not have achieved them. This reading tells the story of an important period of history when the foundation for modern science was laid. You will read how the knowledge of the Ancient and Classical Civilizations of Greece, Rome, China, India and Persia passed to the Muslims in western Asia, in a time of tolerance and cooperation among religions. Centuries later, in western European Spain, during another time of toleration among religious groups, that heritage of learning was added to and passed along again, and brought this heritage of learning from ancient into modern times.



Part 1: Collective Learning and Preservation of Knowledge

Part of what makes us human is that each generation can build upon the work of those who came before. Humans can pass on knowledge through spoken and written language. This process, called "collective learning," has gone on throughout human history, locally and globally. As human societies came in contact through trade networks and other forms of exchange, they shared knowledge and technologies across cultural barriers. As networks of exchange spread, the pace of learning increased. The more we learn, and the more we share what we know, the more the rate of new learning picks up.



This sounds easy: progress in human knowledge is like a hike straight up a mountainside. In fact, it has not been so easy. Setbacks in recording and preserving knowledge, wars that destroy people and institutions of learning, broken off connections in human exchange networks, and barriers to sharing have been as much a part of history as progress in sharing knowledge. What factors help in the preservation and sharing of human learning?

Person-to-person, oral transmission of knowledge was slow but effective. To help remember what was said, ideas were put into poetry and song. To prove that it worked, orally transmitted ideas have come down to us today in religious texts and epic poems from thousands of years ago. The next major advancement was writing systems. Scribes patiently wrote things down on clay, stone, wood, bone and skin. Alphabets improved. Instead of pictures, they used sound—phonetic—symbols. More people could learn to read and write. With the invention of papyrus, parchment, and then paper, ideas could be stored in smaller spaces. Written words became more portable, and could be carried over land and sea. Books hold more than scrolls, libraries collect books, and today, we collect and share masses of knowledge in 1's and 0's inside computers and on plastic. Powered by electricity and radio waves, digital ideas are so portable that they can shoot around the world and even into outer space and back in seconds or minutes.

What factors stop, slow, or prevent the sharing of knowledge among people and across generations? People who can't understand each other's language can't communicate much beyond the basics. Language difference has been a key barrier to sharing knowledge. Translators must be found, and they are fairly rare. Merchants,

diplomats, and scholars need foreign language skills. Languages also get lost over time, and have to be de-coded to unlock their message again. Loss of recorded knowledge is probably the largest factor halting the spread of knowledge across time and place. Libraries have burned because of accidents, wars and intentional destruction of ideas. Books written on paper rot and decay. Even today, librarians worry about deterioration of books less than a century old. Modern technology might make recorded knowledge even more fragile. If no one has a record player, vinyl recordings of great music cannot be heard again. Floppy disks have become obsolete within only ten years. CD's and tapes are fragile, even though they are amazing ways of recording words, sounds and images. When a computer breaks down, data losses can be huge. Today we can record masses of information, but it can be lost forever in the blink of an eye!

When we look at the transmission of ideas this way, it is remarkable how much has survived. We have clues about how much has been lost. We also know of times and places in history when conditions favored the preservation of knowledge and its transmission across cultural barriers.

Expansion of empires has sometimes resulted in great bursts of learning. Empires bring together people of many languages and cultures under one government—often a very wealthy one. Great leaders have paid for books to be collected from all over the known world, housed in libraries, and translated. Just as a nutritious meal gives the body energy, collection of knowledge and translation stimulates learning and sciences in these empires. This process is part of the development of civilizations. The spread of religions has also led to scholarship, travel, and exchange of ideas. The search for religious wisdom has often led to study of nature and the collection of books and their translation. Trade and even warfare can spread ideas and result in the desire to gain access to the best ideas that others have.

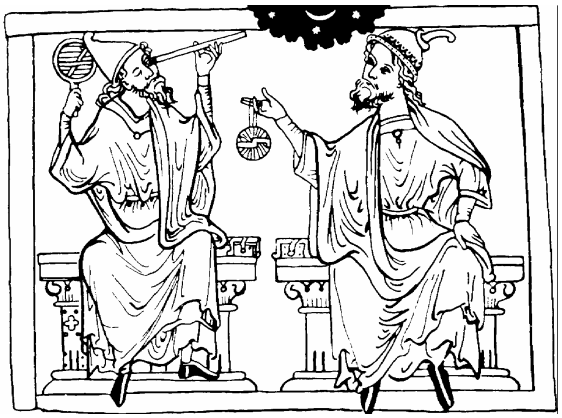
The spread of religions has also provided scholars with the motivation to learn, and brought them into contact with others with knowledge and technology to share. Buddhist monks and pilgrims traveling along the Silk Roads carried knowledge and promoted literacy among their followers. The spread of Christianity into Africa and Europe

stimulated reading, writing and study, as many early Christians wrote down their ideas. The Jewish tradition of learning has been carried into the many lands where Jews have settled and traveled for trade. Jews often became fluent in language, and served in the courts of rulers and communities of merchants as scribes and as scholars. The spread of Islam across Africa, Asia and southern Europe greatly encouraged the spread of learning, through the growth of cities, trade networks, and new technologies. Muslim civilization inherited, developed and passed on the learning of all the cultures with which it came in contact. Collection, preservation, and translation of the treasured learning from many sources were the key to these achievements.

Cooperation among people of different languages, cultures, and religions has taken place at numerous times in the past. Scholars of different faiths have from time to time sat down to listen to one another, to work out ways of translating their languages, and patiently transcribed the results. Places where knowledge is collected and society is tolerant—even for a time—have acted as magnets for those in search of learning. What are some of those times and places in world history?

Part 2: The Wisdom of the Ancients and the Classical Tradition

Science developed in ancient cultures as people observed the world around them, studied the night skies, and developed accurate calendars. They studied the human body and discovered medicines to cure illnesses. Counting and measuring developed into the science of mathematics. Chinese, Indian, Babylonian and Egyptian cultures are a few of the many societies that made important discoveries and wrote them down. In the Mediterranean region, many cultures contributed to what historians call "classical" learning. The Greeks, with their wide trade and colonial connections, gained wealth from land and sea. Greek thinkers wrote about mathematics, astronomy and philosophy—the study of wisdom. A Greek academy called the School of Athens became a famous center of learning. In Egypt, Ptolemy wrote an important work about geography and the solar system. The Romans absorbed Greek sciences, and excelled in literature, politics and history, and engineering. Books from Greek and Roman sources, along with the heritage of ancient wisdom from farther east, formed the foundation for later cultures.



Greek, Roman, Chinese, African, and Indian traditions of learning grew during the classical period—from around 1000 BCE to around 500 CE. During this time, understanding of the natural world of plants, animals and earth grew, as did theoretical knowledge such as mathematics, astronomy and philosophy. Alexander the Great built an empire that helped to spread Greek ideas and develop contacts among civilizations. Scientific knowledge led to advances in engineering and architecture, producing remarkable monuments and buildings. Religious and philosophical ideas, literature such as poetry, drama and prose explored problems and expressed ideas of beauty. As the classical civilizations declined, the institutions that preserved their knowledge did, too. A famous library at Alexandria, Egypt, and another at Pergamum survived for many centuries.

The fall of the Roman Empire was an important event in Europe, but it signaled a time of decline and loss in culture that lasted for centuries. As Christianity spread in Roman territory, the Empire split into eastern and western parts. The Latin, or western

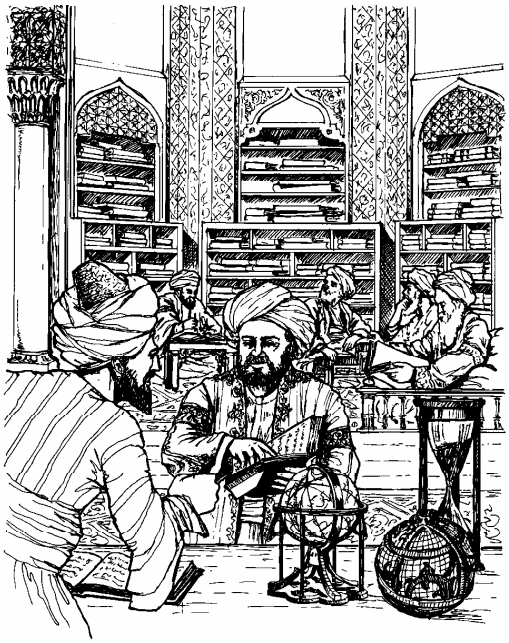
part, suffered invasions and unrest. It was a time when groups of people built castles to protect themselves, defended by knights. What little learning and books there were left from Roman times were kept mostly by monks in monasteries or other Church centers. In the East, the Byzantines remained stronger, and continued trade with other eastern lands and seas. They continued to preserve Greek learning, especially, but the growing power of the Church over learning and ideas caused many scholars to flee toward Persia, in the east. These Christian scholars were especially welcomed at the royal Academy of Jundishapur, where learning from India, Babylonia, the Hebrews, Greece and even distant China came together. With the help of Persian kings, many books were translated, copied and discussed by the people who gathered and taught at Jundishapur. The Byzantines also fell into wars with Persia during the 600s, and eventually both empires lost much or all of their territory to a new ruling group.

The rise of Islam in the sixth century resulted in the formation of a new empire and a world civilization. Rapidly expanding their territory from humble beginnings in Arabia, by the 700s, the Muslims governed lands stretching from Spain to the borders of China. Islamic teachings place a high value on learning, and historians agree that the early Muslims were very open to accepting both the religions and cultural heritage in the lands newly under their rule. They left the Academy of Jundishapur intact, and later added to its treasures. There is an old story that Muslims destroyed the famous library of Alexandria out of ignorance of its value, but the tale has been proven false. In fact, the library had been destroyed centuries earlier. The Abbasid Muslim rulers ordered translations to be made of the works at Jundishapur and other places.

This translation and preservation effort is an important example of religious and cultural cooperation. With the help of Christian, Jewish and Muslim scholars working together, these books were translated into Arabic. Indian mathematics, including Hindi numerals—called Arabic numerals today—was also introduced to Muslims during this time. Literature, music and decorative arts were part of this exciting period of cultural exchange. Fantastic fables, fairy tales, and stories also came to Jundi-Shapur from India, and even some knowledge from as far away as China.

Part 3: The Heritage of Learning Passes to Muslim Civilization

With the spread of Islam came the spread of the Arabic language across Afroeurasian lands from Central Asia to the Atlantic. Just as the Greeks, the Romans, and the Persians had done under their rule, Muslim governments established centers of learning to collect and translate scientific, literary, and philosophical works. Among the most famous effort was the House of Wisdom (*Bayt al-Hikma* in Arabic) the Caliph al-Ma'mun established in 870 CE in Baghdad. Under the leadership of al-Hunayn, a Christian scholar, a great effort to collect and translate available knowledge took place. Works in the library at Jundishapur played a role, and emissaries were sent out to purchase books from wherever they could be found. All of the great traditions were included.



Just around the time the House of Wisdom was founded in Baghdad, a new technology gave a boost to the spread of knowledge. In the early 700s, the Chinese invention of paper arrived in the Muslim countries of Southwest Asia. Paper can be made from cotton, linen, other plant fibers, or even from old rags. Suddenly, making books became cheaper and easier. Parchment was a good writing material, but it was made from expensive animal skins. Papyrus was cheap, but not very durable. Now, in the growing cities of Muslim lands, more and more people bought books, wrote books, and collected books than ever before. Instead of having just a few copies of a work in existence, more could be produced, increasing the chances that the work would not be lost to history. Books and paper-making spread westward across Africa to al-Andalus, or Muslim Spain. Use of water-power to pound the fiber was another technology that moved with the spread of paper-making. The result: libraries in Muslim lands grew to thousands of volumes, even though books were still copied by hand.

The cities in western Muslim lands, including Cordoba, Toledo, Seville and Granada, shared in this exchange of books and scholarship. Muslims, Jews and Christians

took part in the growth of learning and culture in eastern and western Muslim lands. Scholars in different places using the same book could correspond with each other, contributing to the growth of knowledge. Trade, travel and migration speeded this process, fueled by growing wealth and eased by the use of Arabic language and Islamic law across a wide territory. It was a very dynamic period for learning.

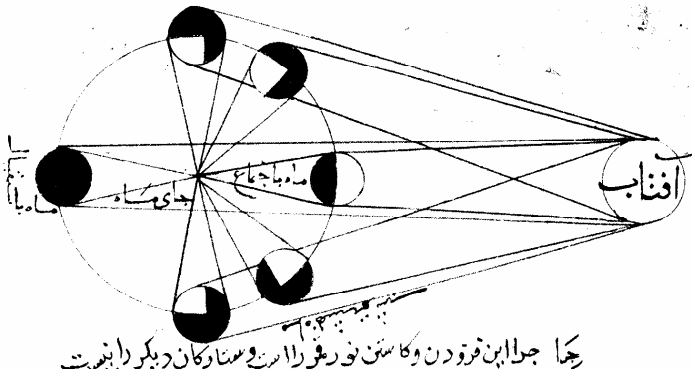
The House of Wisdom was a translation center and library, a museum, and an institute for scholars. Scholars copied, studied and discussed its books and manuscripts from every angle. In the courts and palaces, in the streets, homes and book shops, Baghdad's scholars also worked with the scientific ideas, and tested them by measuring, experimenting and traveling. In time, they developed a large body of new knowledge, in addition to the wisdom of ancient times. One important concern, which would be shared across religious boundaries, was the question of how these ancient ideas fit in with Islamic teachings. If scriptures, based as they believed on revelation from God, contained all wisdom, was it permitted to look to other sources of knowledge? Numerous scholars wrestled with this issue, and they generally reached agreement that faith, or belief, and reason, or independent investigation, are not just permitted, but encouraged. God created the human being with the capacity to think and to reason, and like other human abilities, it could be used for good and evil. The search for knowledge, understanding, and wisdom are another way to discover God and glorify Him. This important balance between faith and reason would be explored for centuries, and passed on through the work of Muslim, Jewish, and later Christian, philosophers and scientists. This shared understanding among the Abrahamic faiths put in place one of the cornerstones of modern science, and the scholars of al-Andalus played an important role in its formation and transmission.

Educational institutions such as schools, universities and libraries spread across the network of Muslim cities. Mosques offered classes in reading Arabic, and the wealthy employed tutors in theirs homes or palaces. In the centuries from the 800s to the 1100s, formal schools and colleges were established in major Muslim cities, and several important universities for teaching and research existed. In al-Andalus, there was a college in Cordoba attached to the Umayyad caliphate, the Seljuk Turks had established the Mustansiriyyah in Baghdad, and Cairo's famous al-Azhar university had been founded by

the Fatimid rulers. Traveling students came to these colleges. Among the students who were young European scholars. They came, learned Arabic, and transmitted important ideas, and even styles of song, poetry, and new foods when they returned home.

During the time when Muslims ruled territory in Spain and Sicily, people in those lands became centers of Muslim learning and culture. Spain and Sicily are Mediterranean lands within Europe, and linked to the East. Both warfare and peaceful contacts brought to Christian Europe information about the advanced way of life, luxury goods, music, fashions and learning available in al-Andalus. Some curious scholars, including Church officials, traveled to al-Andalus to learn first-hand and see the libraries of wondrous books available there in Arabic, on many important and useful subjects. Like a mirror of the translation effort in the House of Wisdom at Jundishapur centuries earlier, groups of scholars—Jews, Christians, and Muslims—sat down together to translate these precious books. With the support of some wise Christian rulers, they began to translate into Latin the Arabic books they found there.

During the 1100s and 1200s, Latin translations of Arabic books helped to bring about changes in Europe's schools and growing cities. Books about mathematics, including algebra, geometry and advanced arithmetic, introduced Arabic numerals. It took another 200 years before they replaced Roman numerals in Europeans' everyday life. Use of Arabic numerals by North African and Italian merchants helped to spread them first among accountants (people who do bookkeeping for merchants). Other books brought knowledge about astronomy—contributions from Greek, Persian, and Arabic sources. Geography and maps, as well as careful measurements of latitude and longitude, helped Europeans to see the world in a new way, and instruments for navigation eventually helped them to cross the Atlantic and discover the Americas. Among navigational instruments were the astrolabe, the quadrant, the compass, and the use of longitude and latitude to create accurate maps



and charts (calculating longitude at sea came in later centuries). Medical books, especially works by Ibn Sina, al-Razi and al-Zahrawi, and some classical Greek works, lifted the cloud of superstition over illness. Descriptions of diseases and cures, surgery, and pharmacy—the art of preparing medicines--helped develop a medical profession in Europe.

To summarize the importance of the translation work that took place in Spain after the Christian conquest of Toledo in 1085, modern writers Francis and Joseph Gies wrote:

> *It was the Muslim-Assisted translation of Aristotle followed by Galen, Euclid, Ptolemy and other Greek authorities and their integration into the university curriculum that created what historians have called "the scientific Renaissance of the12th century." Certainly the completion of the double, sometimes triple translation (Greek into Arabic, Arabic into Latin, often with an intermediate Castilian Spanish…) is one of the most fruitful scholarly enterprises ever undertaken. Two chief sources of translation were Spain and Sicily, regions where Arab, European, and Jewish scholars freely mingled. In Spain the main center was Toledo, where Archbishop Raymond established a college specifically for making Arab knowledge available to Europe. Scholars flocked thither…By 1200 "virtually the entire scientific corpus of Aristotle" was available in Latin, along with works by other Greek and Arab authors on medicine, optics, catoptrics (mirror theory), geometry, astronomy, astrology, zoology, psychology, and mechanics." 25*

Part 4: Classical and Islamic Learning Enters Europe

The knowledge that entered Europe in the 1100s would not have had an effect if the European education system was not ready to receive it. As it happened, a new desire for learning was developing, especially in the towns. Farming was improving, and trade began to grow, so towns along trade routes expanded. Growing towns needed skilled artisans and merchants, and stronger governments. They needed systems of law and people to keep records. Church learning was not enough. Schools began to educate the sons of wealthy merchants in more worldly subjects. With the entry of newly translated books from Spain and Italy, the quality of learning was gradually updated.

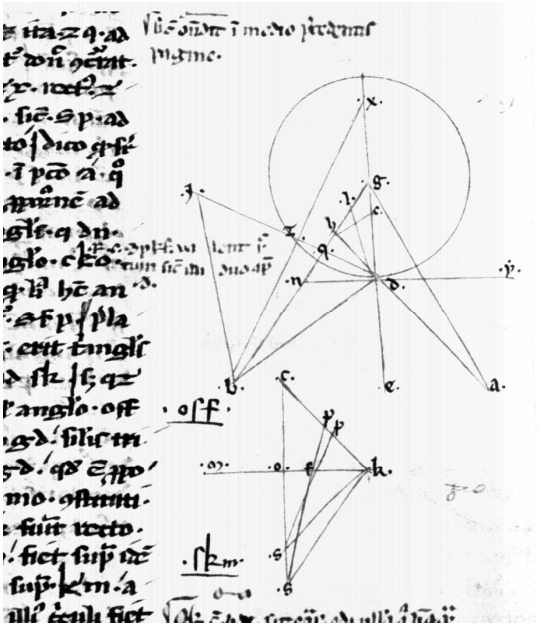
Philosophy means "love of wisdom" in Greek. Aristotle, Plato and other famous Greek philosophers wrote and taught about reason, moral teachings and human behavior. The heritage of Greek thinking is an important set of ideas shared among Jews, Christians and Muslims. Philosophers in all three religions have discussed how Greek ideas could be melded with the teachings their scriptures. They wrote about the links between God-given reason and God-given revelation and faith. How can humans balance the urge to question with the necessity to believe? People have spent whole lifetimes thinking, writing and teaching about such questions.

The classical works of Greek and other ancient philosophers and scientists might have been lost to Europeans if they had not been preserved in the Arabic language through the House of Wisdom. Muslims translated them, and also wrote comments and explanations, and added their own ideas. The Spanish Muslim Ibn Rushd commented on Aristotle, as did the Jewish thinker Maimonides—both were born and worked in Muslim Spain. Other Muslim philosophers like al-Kindi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna, the medical writer) and al-Ghazzali, had also written about faith and reason. Their works were translated into Latin, and stimulated Christian scholars to discuss reason and faith.

If Islam and Judaism had not contained similar ideas with Christianity, these translations and commentaries would not have held so much meaning for thinkers like

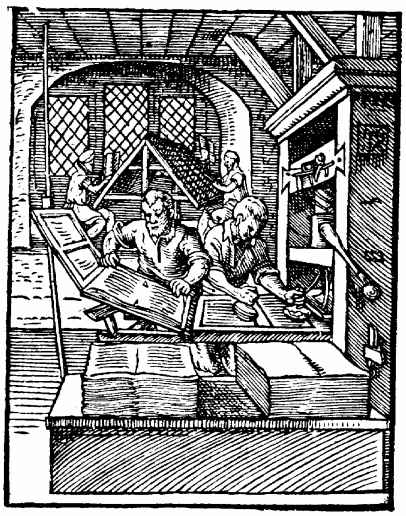
Thomas Aquinas, a scholar of the 12th century who wrote a famous work on this subject, called the *Summa Theologica*. It contains ideas from the Greek and Arab/Muslim thinkers. Europeans and Muslims alike were attracted to Aristotle and Plato's ideas, but they knew that the Greeks believed in many gods. To those who believe in One God, it raised the question of how Aristotle's ideas could be true. Classical knowledge and wisdom from other cultures had been transformed by Muslim intellectuals into something compatible with belief in One God. Most important, the work of the philosophers, whether Greek, Muslim, Jewish, or Christian, offered solutions that opened the way to scientific thought. They made it acceptable to investigate the natural world, to draw conclusions about it, and to try and discover the laws of nature.

The entry of new learning into Europe had a huge effect on higher education. Students and scholars wanted to study these important new works, and they eagerly sought out teachers who had read them. Colleges developed in Europe as centers for teaching and research in medicine, law, mathematics, astronomy, and physics. Universities in Paris, France, Oxford and Cambridge, England, were founded. A college at Bologna specialized in law, and another at Salerno taught the new Arabic medical knowledge.



Changes in knowledge opened up new ways of thinking among educated Europeans. Libraries filled with volumes of ancient wisdom, new learning and literature. We now call this period in history the Renaissance, or rebirth. The discovery of classical and Arabic learning had set off the search for other works that had been "lost" after the fall of Rome. Roman writings in law, history and poetry had lain forgotten in monastery libraries. During the Renaissance, European scholars took a new look at these works and brought a fresh perspective on the past. They put aside the rigid, narrow thinking of the Middle Ages and found ways to build a better life for the future using these ideas. The humanists' discovery of Greek and Latin writings led them to travel, discuss, and debate. The humanists also improved the teaching of Latin, Greek, Hebrew and even Arabic.

Even with changes taking place in the universities, the new knowledge reached only the tiny group of Europeans who attended college. Gutenberg's invention of the printing press in 1450 set off an explosion of literature and learning. Joined with the technology of paper-making that entered Europe through Muslim Spain, it became much easier and cheaper to produce books. Books became trade goods sold on the expanding trade routes all over Europe.



Wealthy customers—often merchants and aristocrats—bought scientific books to add to their libraries. The scientific books translated from Arabic two centuries earlier in Spain now became available in print. Authors with Latinized Arabic names like Avicenna for Ibn Sina, Geber for Jaber, Averroes for Ibn Rushd, and many others appeared in the new printed books on subjects like medicine, astronomy, agriculture, metallurgy and meteorology. Most of the works that had such an impact on teaching in the early European universities back in the 1200s now had an even greater impact. Some were printed and re-printed during the next three hundred years. The work of these Muslim, Jewish and Christian scholars centuries earlier jump-started a new age of discovery in Europe. The Scientific Revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries has roots in the transfer of knowledge five centuries before, and the developments in scholarship and education that led to the Renaissance.

The changes that led to the Renaissance and Scientific Revolution – which in turn brought about the Industrial Revolution—were not the accomplishment of just a few people in one part of the world. Knowledge of history proves that modern inventions and scientific understanding were the product of exchanges among many cultures, over a very long period of time. They are the result of humanity's desire and cooperation to preserve and pass on knowledge from one generation to the next.

Activity Sheet 11e: Who Were the European Translators of Arabic Books in Spain?[1]

What made European scholars of the 11th and 12th century leave the comfort of their homelands to endure the hardships of travel and learning a foreign language and customs? What drew them to Muslim Spain? Fortunately, we know many of their names, and can even hear their own voices telling us why they undertook the task.

Stephen, who worked at Antioch in 1127 on a translation of Ali Ibn Abbas's famous medical book *Liber Regalis*, preached the importance of transferring Arabic knowledge into Latin. He had learned Arabic in order to advance from "the naked beginnings of philosophy," and to study, *"God willing...things far higher, extending to the excellence of the soul."* He was looking for *"more famous things which the Arabic language contains, the hidden secrets of philosophy."*[2]

Raymond of Toledo (1125-1155) actively promoted translations of Muslim scientific books into Latin. In Toledo, he said there was *"a wealth of Arabic books, and a number of masters of the two tongues, and with the help of the Mozarabes—Arabized Christians and resident Jews—there arose a regular school for the translation of Arabic-Latin books of science, which drew from all lands those who thirsted for knowledge."*[3]

One of the most famous translators, the Englishman **Adelard of Bath**, contrasted the knowledge he was receiving with what was available in Europe: *"from the Arabic masters I have learned one thing, led by reason, while you are caught by the image of authority, and led by another halter."*[4]

Translators **Hermann of Carinthia** and **Robert of Ketton** wrote letters to each other about their work. Ketton mentions the lack of knowledge of astronomy among the Latins, as did **Plato of Tivoli** in 1145, saying, *"The Latins...have not a single author in astronomy...only foolish dreams and old wives fables."*[5]
Robert and Hermann stated that they worked to bring out *"the innermost treasures of the Arabs."*[6]

After **Gerard of Cremona**, who made more than eighty translations from Arabic, died at the age of 73 in 1187, his students wrote about his life and work. He went to Toledo because of his passion for medicine, and to get the *Almagest* (*al-Majisti*, a work of geography and astronomy). While he was there, he and his assistant, Ghalib the Mozarab translated texts from Arabic to Latin by working together: *"There, seeing an abundance of books in Arabic on every subject, and regretting the poverty of the Latins in these things,*

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[1] The translators' quotations in this activity are taken from the teacher resource guide *Emergence of Renaissance: Cultural Interactions between Europeans and Muslims* (Douglass and Alavi, Council on Islamic Education, 1999), pages 136-137.
[2] Norman Daniels, *The Arabs and Medieval Europe, (London: Longman, Librarie du Liban, 1979),* p. 268.
[3] Mehdi Nakosteen, *History of Islamic Origins of Western Education, AD 800-1350, (*Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 1964), p. 185.
[4] Daniels, p. 270.
[5] Nakosteen, p. 185.
[6] Daniels, p. 275.

he [Gerard] *learned the Arabic language in order to be able to translate. In this way he passed on the Arabic literature…To the end of his life he continued to transmit to the Latin world (as if to his own beloved heir) whatever books he thought finest, in many subjects, as accurately and plainly as he could."*[7]

Daniel of Morley, another Englishman, told the Bishop of Norwich why he went in search of Arabic knowledge: *"My passion for knowledge had chased me from England. I stayed for a while in Paris. There I saw only savages settled with grave authority on their scholarly seats, with two or three work stands in front of them loaded with enormous tomes [volumes of books]...writing plumes in their hands, with which they gravely painted asterisks and obleli [mistake markers] in their books. Their ignorance forced them to remain as still as statues, but they pretended to show their wisdom with such silence. As soon as they opened their mouths I heard only the babbling of babes. Having understood the situation, I sought the means of escaping...Therefore, since at present the instruction of the Arabs...is made available to all in Toledo, I hastened there to attend the lectures of the most learned philosophers in the world. As my friends summoned me back and invited me to return from Spain, I went to England with a precious collection of books."*[8]

Peter the Venerable was an abbot who went to Spain to inspect monasteries and stayed to translate the *Qur'an*, in 1142. He was moved by the spirit of the Crusades: *"Whether one gives the Muslim misconception the shameful name of heresy or the vile name of paganism, we must act against it, that is, we must write....I thus went in search of specialists in the Arabic language which has enabled this lethal poison to infest more than half the globe. Using pleas and money I persuaded them to translate the history and the doctrine of that unfortunate man [Muhammad] and his law which is called the Koran from Arabic into Latin. And to ensure that the translation would be entirely accurate and no errors would hinder our complete understanding I included a Saracen among the Christian translators."*[9]

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TRANSLATORS' WORDS

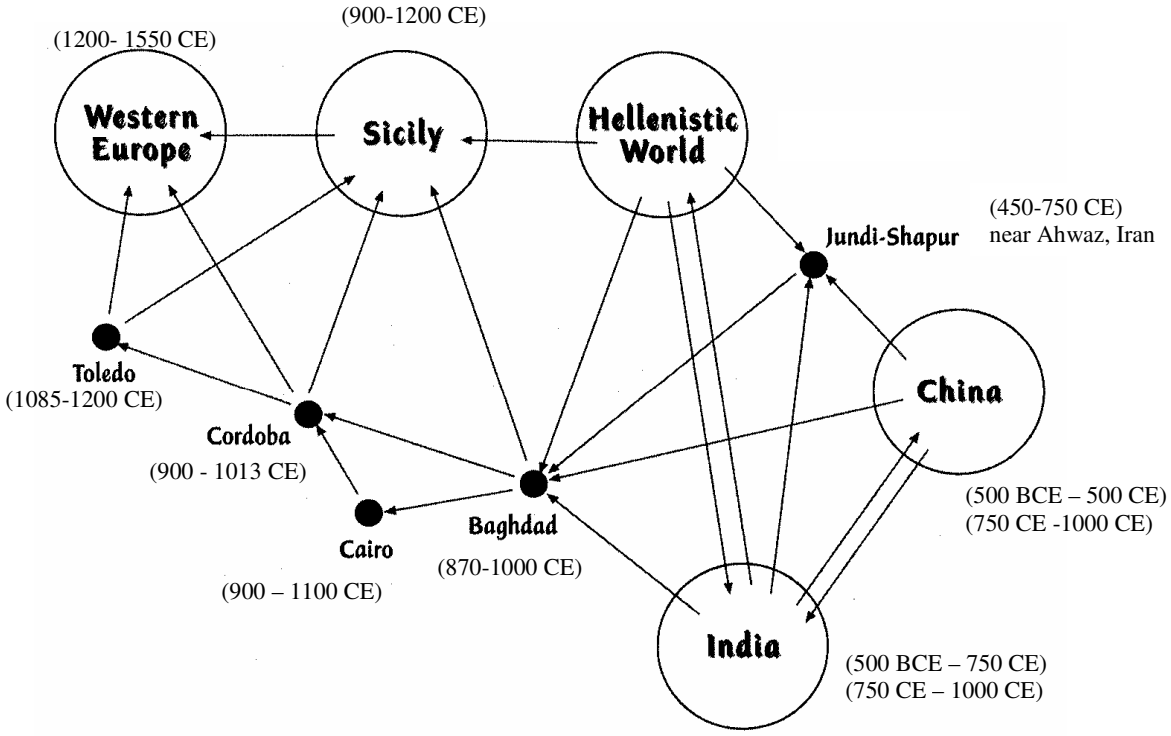
1. What complaint does Daniel of Morley bring against the University of Paris? Did he find satisfaction in Toledo, Spain?
2. What do these translators seem to mean by "philosophy"?
3. In what way is Gerard of Cremona typical of the translation effort?
4. Contrast the attitude toward Arab learning of Peter the Venerable and Daniel of Morley and Adelard of Bath.

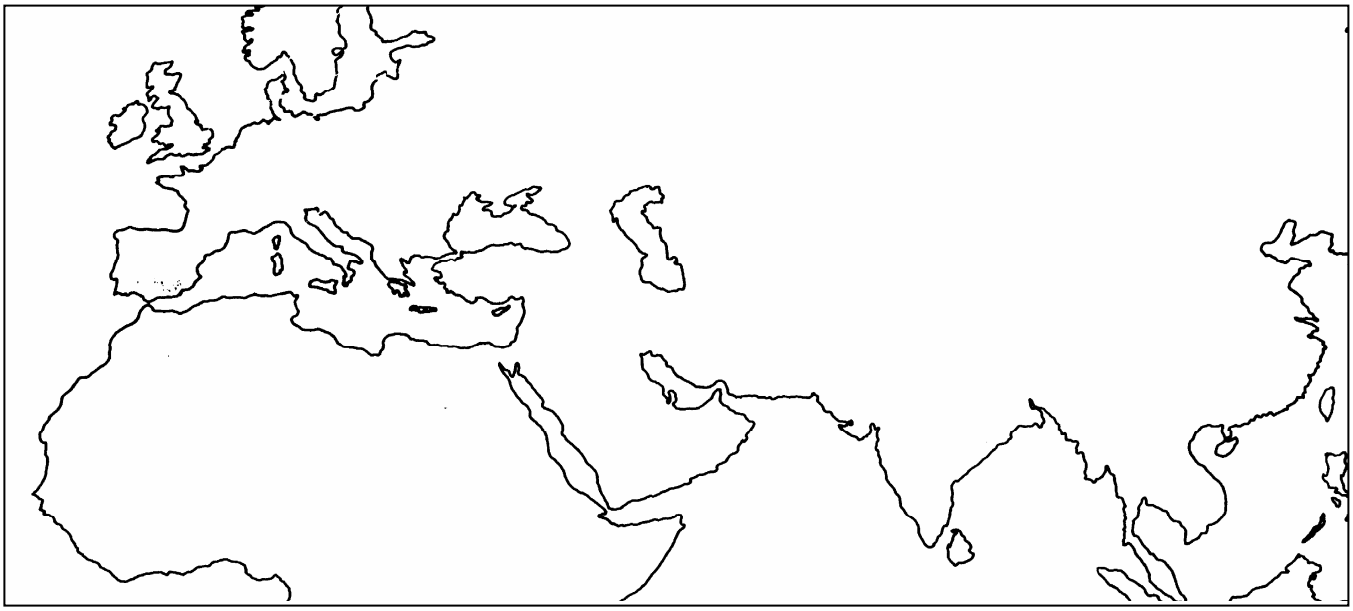
[7] Richard Fletcher, *Moorish Spain* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1992), p. 151.
[8] Jacques LeGoff*, Intellectuals in the Middle Ages*, (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993), pp. 18-19.
[9] LeGoff., p. 16.

Activity Sheet 11f: Mapping the Transfer of Knowledge across Time and Space

DIRECTIONS

1. Label the places on the map that correspond to the labels on the diagram.
2. Using the dates noted in the callout boxes, make a timeline on the back of this paper that shows the order in which preserved and new knowledge was transferred among different civilizations over time.





12: Will the Real El Cid Please Stand Up?

Author: Ernest O'Roark

Overview and Purpose of the Lesson:

Throughout time, myth and reality have been intertwined in our understanding of past events. In their own way, myths and legends have had an undeniable impact on history in spite of their distortions or complete fabrications of events. In this activity, students will explore the complex relationship between legend and history in a study of El Cid, one of Spain's greatest national heroes, who lived during the critical time of the taifa kingdoms when Al-Andalus was divided, Toledo was lost to the Christians, and the Almoravids made their fateful entrance into Spain. Students will compare the myth to the history, identify differences, propose possible reasons and motives to explain the differences, and explain the effects and uses of legend in the formation of national identity.

Performance Objectives:

The student will be able to:

- Differentiate elements of legend from actual history
- Describe El Cid's role in the history of medieval Spain, both as a historical figure and as the subject of legend.
- Describe the complex political relationships that existed in medieval Spain.
- Explain the role of legend in the formation of national identity.

Materials Needed:

- Reading Handout 12a: "El Cid – Warrior of Medieval Spain" (the history) for half the students
- Reading Handout 12b: "El Cid – Warrior of Medieval Spain" (the legend) for half the student
- Comparison Handout12c: "El Cid – History vs. Legend" one for each pair or small group of students

Time:

One class period

Procedure:

1. Pose these questions to students for discussion: What is a hero? What qualifies someone to be considered a hero? What are the qualities of a hero? Record student ideas on the board or overhead.
2. Explain to students that in this lesson they will get a close-up look at the political landscape of Medieval Spain during the time of the taifa kingdoms through a study of one of the most famous figures of the period, Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar, otherwise known as El Cid. Their task will be to decide if El Cid qualifies to be considered a hero of Spain.

3. Hand out the readings. Give the history version to half the class and the legend version to the other half. IMPORTANT! In order for the activity to work, *do not let students know that there are two different stories*. The handouts are designed to look identical from a distance. Students should be led to believe they are all getting the same story.
4. Assign students to read the story independently and to then answer this question in writing: Based on the story you have read, would you consider El Cid a hero? Justify your answer using specific evidence from the story.
5. Hold a full class discussion in which students share and discuss their answers. What will likely emerge will be a (perhaps heated) debate. Eventually through this discussion students will discover that the readings are different. (And be warned, they may be slightly irritated with you at this point.)
6. Ask: "Why are the two stories different? What is the difference between them?" Through discussion students will articulate the fact that one appears to be based on actual events, while the other seems more "made up." Explain that one is the actual *history* of El Cid while the other is the *legend* of El Cid.
7. Have students get into pairs or small groups such that each pair or group has both versions of the story. Give each group a copy of "El Cid – History vs. Legend" and have students collaborate to compare the stories in detail to complete the activity.
8. Hold a final debriefing discussion in which students share what they have discovered and concluded from their comparison.

Extension:

Show students a few selected scenes from the 1961 epic film *El Cid* starring Charlton Heston and Sophia Loren. Have students identify which parts are based on fact and which on legend. This could lead to a general discussion of how Hollywood often treats history. (The film is mainly based on the legend.) Note: You may find the film difficult to locate. Although it was restored in the 1990's by Martin Scorsese, it has not had a recent U.S. release.

Assessment:

A short essay question could be included on a unit assessment or as an individual assignment such as the two examples below:

- Describe at least two differences between the actual history and the legend of El Cid and explain why those differences exist.
- How do differences between the actual history and the legend of El Cid illustrate the changes taking place in the relationship between Christians and Muslims in Spain during the eleventh century?

Teacher Notes to El Cid

The following background notes contain points that you might want to share with students in the course of debriefing discussions.

El Cid lived during a tidal change in the relationships between Christians and Muslims in Iberia. For centuries, Christians and Muslims had lived side by side on the peninsula—sometimes as friends, sometimes as enemies. During all this time, political differences far outweighed religious ones. As the historical version of the story shows, El Cid and his contemporaries were as likely to be allied with Muslims as to fight against them. But this was changing.

The Pope in Rome considered the tolerant and often friendly relations between Christians and Muslims in Spain to be morally wrong and sought to correct the situation. His instrument for accomplishing this was the Benedictine Abbey of Cluny in France. Monks from this French monastery were sent into Spain to occupy high positions in the Spanish Church and make drastic changes to policy there. For example, when Alfonso VI took over Toledo in 1085, he promised the Muslim inhabitants that they could continue to use the city's main mosque for worship. He also appointed one of his most trusted diplomats, Sisnando Davidez, as Toledo's governor. Sisnando had lived much of his life in the service of Muslim Seville, and so he well understood the needs of Alfonso's new Muslim subjects. As historian Richard Fletcher puts it, "He was respected by the Muslim authorities with whom he had dealings." And they "…praised his shrewdness, tolerance, and regard for justice." But this was just the sort of relationship the Pope wanted to see ended. Archbishop Bernard from Cluny was therefore appointed to head the Church in Toledo shortly after it fell to Alfonso. Soon the main mosque in Toledo was turned into a Christian cathedral, and the tolerant Sisnando was replaced as governor by a much stricter man. (One of Archbishop Bernard's fellow monks from Cluny was Odo of Chatillon, who would later become Pope Urban II, the very Pope who proclaimed the first Crusade.) When El Cid took Valencia, Archbishop Bernard sent another monk from Cluny to take over the church there, with similar results.

Ironically, partly in response to Alfonso's take-over of Toledo, much the same thing would soon happen on the Muslim side. Panicked by the loss of Toledo and justifiably fearful of Alfonso's intentions, the remaining taifa rulers requested help from the North African Almoravids. The Almoravids, whose rise to power was based on a sort of revival of conservative, strict interpretations of Islam, saw Muslim woes in Spain as a symptom of the corruption of Muslims resulting from the tolerant, often friendly relations with Christians and Jews that existed in Al-Andalus. They came to Muslim Spain's rescue with an eye to fixing the situation by replacing the diverse collection of disunited Andalusian rulers with their own handpicked, conservative rulers.

There are many legends about El Cid, and the "legend" version of the story used in this lesson is a combination of several. But by far the dominant source for the legend is the epic poem *Poema de Mio Cid*, which was probably composed around 1207 or shortly before—about a hundred years after the death of El Cid. The key differences between the El Cid of history and the El Cid of legend are very clear and deliberate.

In the legend, El Cid is always a loyal servant of the king even when he is unfairly banished from the kingdom. He is a good and pious Christian and is always portrayed as fighting against the Muslims, never for or alongside them. As Richard Fletcher puts it, "The independent,

insubordinate, arrogant Rodrigo Diaz of history has been wrapped in a cloak of royalist pieties." What brought about these differences? The poem was written during a turbulent time in Castile's history. A child, Alfonso VIII, was king and ambitious relatives struggled among themselves to hold the reins of power in his name. Intermittent and destructive civil wars were the result, until Alfonso was old enough to rule on his own and bring an end to the strife. Meanwhile, to the south, the Almoravids had been replaced by the even more conservative and intolerant Almohads, who were seen as a very real menace.

The Crusades were just beginning in El Cid's time. They had been going on for a hundred years, and would go on for another hundred. As Richard Fletcher puts it, "The poet reminded his compatriots of where their responsibilities lay." Castile needed a Christian hero – a role model – who was unfailingly loyal to the king, brave and invincible in battle, and a fierce and uncompromising "holy warrior" against the Muslims. El Cid, with a few "adjustments," fit the bill. From there, the legend continued to grow and serve later generations. Castile would eventually be the power that would unify Spain and El Cid would become a symbol of Spanish nationalism.

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H. A. Guerber. *Myths and Legends of the Middle Ages*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1993. (This is a re-publication of the original work first published in 1909.)

Cantar de Mio Cid. 2007. University of Texas at Austin. 19 Jan 2007 retrieved at http://www.laits.utexas.edu/cid/main/index.php?v=eng (Excellent site – contains the entire text plus very helpful and interesting commentary.)

The History:

Richard Fletcher. *The Quest for El Cid*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Reading Handout 12a: El Cid – Warrior of Medieval Spain

Mighty victor, never vanquished,
Bulwark of our native land,
Shield of Spain, her boast and glory,
Knight of the far-dreaded brand,
Venging scourge of Moors and traitors,
Mighty thunderbolt of war,
Mirror bright of chivalry,
Ruy, my Cid Campeador!
Medieval Spanish Ballad

Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar was the greatest and most famous Spanish Christian knight of the Middle Ages. His Muslim enemies gave him the title "El Cid" meaning "sir" or "lord"—an Arabic title of respect. His Christian followers called him "El Campeador," a Roman military term which literally means "teacher of the (military) field." If one wanted to learn how to fight, this was the man you wanted as teacher.

Rodrigo was born into a minor noble family in the town of Vivar in Castile around 1043. Little is known of his childhood. He was literate, which suggests that he attended school in the nearby city of Burgos, or that he had a tutor. At about the age of fourteen he was sent to live in the household of King Ferdinand's eldest son Sancho. There he underwent the long process of learning the skills needed to become a knight. Rodrigo's first action after attaining knighthood was to fight with Sancho's army in a conflict with Sancho's uncle Ramiro, the king of Aragon. Ramiro had taken the town of Graus from the neighboring Muslim taifa kingdom of Zaragoza, which was a tributary of Castile. Zaragoza was one of many Muslim taifa kingdoms that had come into existence after the disintegration of the Cordoba Caliphate, which at one time had ruled most of Spain. The taifa kingdoms often fought over territory and resources with one another, as well as with neighboring Christian kingdoms. Weaker taifa kingdoms sometimes sought protection from their enemies by paying an annual tribute (money and goods) to stronger kingdoms in return for a promise of protection and aid if attacked. Often, taifas made this arrangement (or had it forced upon them) with the kingdoms that most threatened their survival. Stronger kingdoms could gain a great deal of wealth by "protecting" weaker neighbors in this way. Zaragoza was thus under Castile's protection. Since Aragon had attacked Zaragoza by seizing one of its towns, King Ferdinand of Castile sent his son Sancho and his army to take the town back. During the battle, Christian knights of Castile, including Rodrigo, fought alongside Muslim warriors of Zaragoza to defeat and kill King Ramiro.

As a young knight, Rodrigo went on to defeat two skilled warriors in single combat, one a Christian knight from the kingdom of Navarre and the other a Muslim. The reason for the fights is unknown, but feuds of various sorts among the nobility were common and often led to such one-on-one contests. In any case, young Rodrigo showed great skill as a warrior. In 1065, King Ferdinand died. He divided his kingdom among his three sons—Sancho, Alfonso, and Garcia. Sancho, the eldest, made it clear to everyone that he thought the entire kingdom should be his. Before long, a series of civil wars broke out among the three brothers. In these wars, Rodrigo served as Sancho's *armiger*—the overall commander of his army. In time, both brothers were defeated and exiled—Alfonso to Toledo and Garcia to Seville—both Muslim cities. But Sancho's reign was short. An invasion, probably by the Muslim taifa of Toledo, captured the city of Zamora in the southern part of Sancho's kingdom. The invasion may have been planned and perhaps even led by Sancho's exiled brother Alfonso. Sancho's army quickly rushed to Zamora and surrounded

the city. Sancho was murdered in his camp outside the city. Since Sancho had no child, the kingdom automatically passed to Alfonso. Following Sancho's funeral, Rodrigo pledged his loyalty to Alfonso, who accepted him as his vassal. Although no longer *armiger*, Rodrigo became a loyal knight in the king's service. His literacy served him well. The king on several occasions directed him to serve as a judge to hear cases in the king's court. Rodrigo was also permitted by the king to marry one of the king's relatives, a noble lady named Jimena, in 1074. Things were going well for Rodrigo.

Unfortunately, the good times did not last. In 1079, King Alfonso sent Rodrigo with a group of knights to the Muslim taifa of Seville to collect payment of tribute. The king sent another group of knights to the Muslim taifa of Granada for the same reason. The two groups arrived just in time to get involved in a fight between Seville and Granada. To Alfonso's great dismay, his two groups of knights found themselves facing each other on the battlefield. In the ensuing skirmish, Granada was defeated and Rodrigo managed to capture several high-ranking nobles of Castile. Among them was Count García Ordóñez, who was Alfonso's *armiger*. Rodrigo held the captives for three days, took from them a ransom in weapons and other gear, and then let them go. García Ordóñez was humiliated. Rodrigo had made a powerful enemy.

Some time later, a group of bandits, probably from the taifa of Toledo (but not sent by its ruler), made a surprise raid into southern Castile and made off with a lot of plunder. Such cross-border raids were not uncommon. The ruler of Toledo at the time was very weak and unable to control his subjects near the border. Rodrigo's response was extreme. On his own initiative, he gathered together an army of knights, invaded Toledo and, as Rodrigo's biographer puts it, "pillaged and laid waste the land." Alfonso was not pleased. Toledo was under Castile's "protection" and was paying huge amounts of tribute to Castile. (Toledo had also supported Alfonso in his earlier war with Sancho.) Rodrigo's formidable enemies at court, including García Ordóñez, urged the king to make an example of Rodrigo. Alfonso banished Rodrigo from the kingdom.

Rodrigo left his wife and children behind and set off with a band of followers to become a mercenary – a soldier for hire. He found employment with the ruler of the taifa of Zaragoza, al-Mu'tamin, who was under threat of attack from several enemies, both Christian and Muslim, including his own brother. Rodrigo did his job well, defeating each of Zaragoza's enemies in turn. On two occasions, Rodrigo's forces faced a combined army of knights from Aragon and rebel Muslim forces under the command of al-Mu'tamin's brother. The outcome of both battles was an overwhelming victory for Rodrigo and the capture of many high-ranking nobles. Rodrigo's fortune (through ransom and plunder) and reputation were made.

Meanwhile, in the taifa of Toledo, things were not going well for its ruler al-Qadir, who was weak, corrupt, and generally hated by his own people. Unrest in Toledo had become so great that al-Qadir's downfall was clearly imminent. Alfonso, taking advantage of the situation, laid siege to Toledo, and accepted its surrender in 1085. Confident that he could just as easily take other taifas, Alfonso began to threaten Seville, Granada, and Zaragoza. For a while, it looked like Rodrigo might have to go to war against his former king. But suddenly the situation changed completely. The Muslim taifa rulers, panicked by Alfonso's success in Toledo, appealed for help to a powerful North African Muslim dynasty known as the Almoravids. The Almoravids crossed into Spain with a huge army, intent on recapturing Toledo. Alfonso rushed out to meet them and was soundly defeated. Alfonso now needed every good knight he could find, and so Rodrigo was pardoned and welcomed back into the service of Castile. For a time, the Almoravids, distracted by events back in Africa, withdrew from Spain. They soon returned and laid siege to a castle in the south owned by Castile. Alfonso raised an army and headed for the castle. At the same time, he sent word to Rodrigo, who was busy defending one of Castile's tributaries, to come with his troops to reinforce the royal army. For some reason, the two armies failed to find one another.

Alfonso arrived without Rodrigo's men and the Almoravids withdrew. Alfonso was angry with Rodrigo for not meeting him as ordered, Alfonso listened to the urging of Rodrigo's enemies at court, and banished Rodrigo from Castile.

On his own yet again, Rodrigo and his followers traveled up the east coast of Spain, eventually confronting and defeating the army of Count Berenguer of Catalonia. The defeat and capture of Count Berenguer (this was the second time Rodrigo had captured the count) allowed Rodrigo to collect tribute from Catalonia's tributaries along the coast. While he was at it, he also extorted payments from some of Castile's tributaries. This Rodrigo did with great energy, amassing a huge fortune. Alfonso was greatly angered by this, and so the king immediately started making plans to invade the coast and punish Rodrigo. Unfortunately for the king, Rodrigo struck first. To Alfonso's complete surprise, Rodrigo invaded Castile, laying waste and pillaging the lands of his old enemy García Ordóñez before returning to a castle belonging to his ally, the Muslim ruler of Zaragoza.

Before Alfonso could respond, he learned that the Almoravids were on the offensive again. Frustrated with the feuding taifa princes, the Almoravids overthrew them one by one and took over their kingdoms. It looked like the Almoravids would take the valuable coastal city of Valencia—a Muslim city that had been paying Rodrigo for his "protection." Rodrigo wished to keep this prize, so he decided to take the city for himself. He besieged the city. In 1094, Rodrigo became master of Valencia. The people of Valencia clearly did not like Rodrigo. Rumors circulated that some preferred Almoravid rule, although the Almoravids were far from popular, even among the Muslim population. Rodrigo ruled Valencia with an iron hand, cruelly taxing and oppressing its Muslim residents. Meanwhile, Almoravid armies attacked Valencia repeatedly. Despite being greatly outnumbered, Rodrigo twice routed armies sent against him. This reinforced his reputation as an invincible warrior even more.

Rodrigo held Valencia for five years. During this time, his wife and daughters joined him, and he married off his two daughters to noblemen of Aragon and Catalonia, gaining valuable allies for Rodrigo. In July 1099, Rodrigo died—in the same month that the Christian Crusader armies took the city of Jerusalem. Rodrigo's wife Jimena continued to rule and defend Valencia, but with the death of El Cid, the end was inevitable. The Almoravids, encouraged by the death of their greatest enemy, refused to give up. In 1102, Jimena ordered the evacuation of Valencia in advance of the arrival of the Almoravid army. She took the body of Rodrigo Diaz, El Cid Campeador with her when she left Valencia. He was buried at the monastery of Cardeña. Never once defeated in battle, today El Cid is still revered as a great national hero of Spain.

Reading Handout 12b: El Cid – Warrior of Medieval Spain

Mighty victor, never vanquished,
Bulwark of our native land,
Shield of Spain, her boast and glory,
Knight of the far-dreaded brand,
Venging scourge of Moors and traitors,
Mighty thunderbolt of war,
Mirror bright of chivalry,
Ruy, my Cid Campeador!
Medieval Spanish Ballad

Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar was the greatest and most famous Spanish Christian knight of the Middle Ages. His Muslim enemies gave him the title "El Cid" meaning "sir" or "lord"—an Arabic title of respect. His Christian followers called him "El Campeador," a Roman military term, which literally means "teacher of the (military) field." If you wanted to learn how to fight, this was the man you wanted as teacher.

He was born into a minor noble family in the town of Vivar in Castile around 1043. When still a young and untested warrior, he was forced to defend his family's honor when Count Don Gomez, a powerful noble, insulted and struck his elderly father. Don Gomez was an experienced knight who had defeated many enemies in battle. In spite of this, young Rodrigo vowed to avenge his father's humiliation and challenged Don Gomez to fight in single combat. The Count admired the boy's bravery, but was confident his victory would be an easy one. As soon as the fight began, Don Gomez realized he was wrong, as the young Rodrigo ferociously wielded the great sword of his ancestors, blocking every great thrust of the Count's and forcing Don Gomez to defend himself against a barrage of heavy blows. Finally, as the Count staggered backward under this assault, Rodrigo made one mighty thrust at his enemy's heart and fatally impaled him with his sword. Victorious, Rodrigo cut off Don Gomez's head and rode home to present it to his father, who had not been able even to eat since he had suffered the grave insult at the Count's hand. The story of Rodrigo's stunning defeat of such a great warrior quickly reached the ears of the king and young Rodrigo soon found himself in the service of Prince Sancho, one of the king's sons.

It was not long before Rodrigo proved himself a great warrior. Leading a company of soldiers, he bravely confronted a superior force of Moors (Muslims) who had dared to attack a village in Castile. He soundly defeated the Moors, capturing five of their kings in the process. The captives were brought back to Vivar, where they expected to be turned over to the king and executed. But Rodrigo instead offered to release them provided they pledged never again to make war on Castile and also promised to pay a ransom. The Moors were surprised at this act of mercy and readily agreed, calling Rodrigo "El Cid." Some other warrior nobles, hearing of Rodrigo's victory over the Moors and his mercy toward their leaders, were at once jealous and angry. They tried their best on many occasions to discredit Rodrigo with the king. As a result, Rodrigo was forced to defend his honor against false accusations several times, once in a trial by combat in which he defeated the king's champion. In spite of this, Rodrigo remained loyal to the king and continued in the service of Prince Sancho, winning many victories against Castile's enemies.

Meanwhile, Lady Jimena, daughter of the slain Count Don Gomez, journeyed to King Ferdinand's court to ask justice against Rodrigo for the death of her famous father. But upon meeting Rodrigo and hearing of his bravery and nobility, she decided instead to ask the king to give her Rodrigo as a husband. This pleased Rodrigo greatly and so the king granted her request and they were married. Shortly after this, Rodrigo set off on a holy pilgrimage to the shrine of

Santiago de Compostella, the patron saint of Spain. Along the way he paused to pray at every church and generously gave alms to the poor. Rodrigo then went on to win more victories for his lord Prince Sancho, including the siege of the Muslim city of Zaragoza, which only ended when the inhabitants agreed to pay tribute to King Ferdinand and never to make war on Castile.

In time, the old king died leaving his kingdom divided in parts to his three sons. Sancho, the eldest son, made it clear that he thought the entire kingdom should be his. Soon a civil war broke out between the brothers. Rodrigo was dismayed by this turn of events for he did not wish to fight against his fellow countrymen. But he was loyal to King Sancho, so he reluctantly went to war against Alfonso and Garcia, Sancho's rebel brothers. In a brilliant series of battles, Rodrigo won a swift and decisive victory for his king. Both of the defeated brothers were banished into exile: Alfonso to Toledo and Garcia to Seville, both Muslim cities. While in exile, Alfonso encouraged the Muslim ruler of Toledo to invade Castile. The town of Zamora was captured by the invaders, prompting King Sancho and Rodrigo to surround the city with their army. While they were camped outside the city, an assassin murdered Sancho. Since Sancho had no children, the kingdom automatically passed into the hands of Alfonso. Rodrigo immediately suspected that it was Alfonso who had hired Sancho's assassin. Angrily, Rodrigo seized Alfonso and forced him to swear an oath that he had no hand in his brother's murder. Rodrigo accepted Alfonso's word and then pledged his loyalty and service to the new king. Alfonso, however, distrusted Rodrigo and so, with the help of some jealous nobles, he brought false charges of disloyalty against Rodrigo and banished him from the kingdom.

Greatly saddened by this turn of events, Rodrigo left his wife and children and set off with a band of loyal soldiers. Needing money to maintain his small army, Rodrigo began successfully attacking and plundering Moorish towns and castles. After one of his victories, he sent a treasure to King Alfonso as a present, showing his loyalty. Alfonso was pleased with the present and with Rodrigo's victories against the Moors and so made a proclamation that any knight of Castile could join Rodrigo's band if they wished. This swelled Rodrigo's army and his successes against the Moors continued. Finally, after a second treasure arrived from Rodrigo, Alfonso pardoned the knight and welcomed him back to Castile. Soon after this, the Muslim ruler of Toledo died, leaving his kingdom to his son, who was greatly disliked by the people. Alfonso, familiar with the city from his time in exile, saw his chance and with Rodrigo's help, attacked and conquered Toledo. In spite of this great victory, jealous nobles again conspired to cause an argument between Rodrigo and the king. Rodrigo suddenly found himself banished once again. Soon after his departure, the Moors, angered by the loss of Toledo, amassed a huge army and savagely began an assault on Christian lands. The city of Valencia quickly fell to the invaders. Hearing of this, Rodrigo and his men immediately rushed to Valencia and recaptured the city. Alfonso was overjoyed at this news and once again pardoned the valiant knight.

In order to defend it from further attack, Rodrigo then made Valencia his home and so had his wife Jimena and daughters brought to the city. As master of Valencia, Rodrigo had become very rich. Soon young noblemen of Castile sought to marry his two daughters. Two high-ranking counts of the county of Carrión were recommended by Alfonso. Seeking to please the king, Rodrigo allowed the two counts to come to Valencia. After some negotiations, the double marriage took place. But Rodrigo did not much like his new sons-in-law, who remained in Valencia for two years. In one incident, a lion belonging to Rodrigo escaped from its cage and entered the great hall where Rodrigo was asleep, surrounded by his guests, who were playing chess. Immediately the cowardly counts fled. One accidentally fell into a vat used for crushing grapes, and the other hid behind Rodrigo's couch. Rodrigo awoke, wrapped his cloak around his arm as a shield, and went after the lion, grabbing it by its mane and forcing it back into its pen. As a result of this and other events, it became clear to all that the two counts were great cowards. The counts were very much ashamed and angry that Rodrigo could not hide his dislike for them. So

they left Valencia with their wives and headed for Castile. But on the way, they decided to get revenge on Rodrigo for the dishonor they had suffered. One morning on the road, they assaulted their wives, beat them severely, and left them for dead. Fortunately, the two women were soon rescued by El Cid's nephew. Rodrigo was enraged by the news and immediately appealed to King Alfonso, who had recommended the two counts. Alfonso convened a court at Toledo and the Counts of Carrión were forced to attend. The counts defended themselves on the grounds that Rodrigo's family was of inferior rank and therefore his daughters were not worthy of them. But just as this defense was being offered, representatives of the kings of Navarre and Aragon arrived requesting the hands of Rodrigo's daughters for the princes of those kingdoms. The princes of Navarre and Aragon far outranked the counts, so the count's defense came to nothing. Alfonso then forced the counts to face two of Rodrigo's men in a trial by combat. Both of the cowardly counts quickly surrendered and were then banished from the kingdom. Rodrigo's daughters were soon happily wed to the princes of Navarre and Aragon.

Back in Valencia, the Moors once again tried to retake the city with a large force. Again, Rodrigo fought valiantly to completely defeat the invaders. But Rodrigo was now getting old and began to sense that he would soon die. Fearing that the territory would be lost without him to lead the soldiers, he made a plan and entrusted it to his closest supporters. He asked that when his time came, his dead body should be suited up in his own full armor. Thus equipped, he should be placed on his horse and bound into the saddle, sword in hand. In this way, he would be able to lead his men into battle one last time—in spirit at least—and without them knowing he was no longer alive. This was done. When the Moors attempted yet another assault, El Cid's lifeless body led the charge that sent them fleeing in terror. In spite of this victory, it was clear that the city could not be held for long without Rodrigo. The Lady Jimena ordered the evacuation of Valencia. Rodrigo's followers returned to Castile. El Cid was buried at the monastery of Cardeña. Never defeated in battle, always loyal to his king, and a great warrior in the Christian struggle against the Moors, El Cid is still remembered as the greatest of Spain's medieval heroes.

Handout 12c: El Cid – History vs. Legend

Compare the specifics of the two stories.

How do El Cid's relationships with the Muslims of Spain differ between the two stories?

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How do El Cid's relationships with his fellow Christians, particularly his relationship with the king of Castile, differ between the two stories?

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Why do you think the authors of the legends (the story is based on several legends) made the changes to the real history that they did?

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What other differences do you see between the two versions of the story? Explain, if possible, why you think these differences exist.

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13: Analyzing Secondary Sources: How Do Modern Historians Assess the Significance of Muslim Spain?

Author: Susan Douglass

Overview:

This activity sums up the points made in *Cities of Light* about the lasting importance of Muslim Spain to world history and Western civilization. It provides quotations from several recent works on the issues of tolerant coexistence in al-Andalus, and on the contribution to European culture of this period and this society. The quotations also explore the difficulties and possibilities of tolerance among cultural groups then and today.

Objectives:

Students will

- Analyze synthesizing statements about al-Andalus and its contribution to world and European history from recent works of cultural, political and literary history.
- Assess the role of Islamic Spain and some of the Christian kingdoms as places where knowledge was prized and explain the roles of Jewish, Christian and Muslim scholars in its development and transfer to Europe.
- Draw inferences between past and present using the example of al-Andalus.

Materials:

- Student Handout 13a: *What Do Modern Historians Say about the Importance of Islamic Spain in World History?*
- Activity Sheet 13b: *Experts in Cities of Light Sum Up the Importance of Islamic Spain to the World Today*

Time: 1-2 class periods (plus homework if desired), or as an assessment tool

Procedure:

1. Distribute Student Handout 13a: *What Do Modern Historians Say about the Importance of Islamic Spain for World History?* The class may be divided into groups to analyze each passage, or individual passages can be assigned for homework, with a paragraph explaining the meaning of the quotations. This could serve as preparation for a class discussion on the significance of Islamic Spain and its contribution to world history in the eyes of modern historians. The quotations can be used as prompts for culminating essay questions.
2. Distribute Student Handout 13b, which contains quotes from the experts featured in the documentary *Cities of Light*. These quotations summarize and reflect on the legacy of Islamic Spain, its mixture of tolerance and intolerance, and the lasting lessons and contributions to the world. Divide students into groups to discuss and then share with the group, or use the quotations as writing prompts. Finally, students are assigned to "be an expert" and write their own opinion in the form of a memorable quotation in the final space on the page.

Student Handout 13a: What Do Modern Writers Say about the Importance of Islamic Spain for World History?

Francis and Joseph Gies in the book *Cathedral, Forge and Waterwheel* (1994):
"One of the Middle Ages' most important creations, the medical school, was founded at Salerno in the eleventh century, when by no coincidence the earliest cultural contacts with Islam occurred… [then] ...It was the Muslim-Assisted translation of Aristotle followed by Galen, Euclid, Ptolemy and other Greek authorities and their integration into the university curriculum that created what historians have called "the scientific Renaissance of the 12th century." Certainly the completion of the double, sometimes triple translation (Greek into Arabic, Arabic into Latin, often with … Spanish …) is one of the most fruitful scholarly enterprises ever undertaken. Two chief sources of translation were Spain and Sicily, regions where Arab, European, and Jewish scholars freely mingled. In Spain the main center was Toledo, where Archbishop Raymond established a college specifically for making Arab knowledge available to Europe. Scholars flocked [there]…By 1200 "virtually the entire scientific corpus of Aristotle" was available in Latin, along with works by other Greek and Arab authors on medicine, optics, catoptrics (mirror theory), geometry, astronomy, astrology, zoology, psychology, and mechanics."[1]

Richard Fletcher in the book *Moorish Spain* (1992)*:* "The plain fact is that between 712 and 1492, Muslim and Christian communities lived side by side in the Iberian Peninsula…sharing a land, learning from one another, trading, intermarrying, misunderstanding, squabbling, fighting—generally sharing in all the incidents that go to furnish the ups and downs of coexistence…The most fortunate beneficiaries of this coexistence were neither Christian nor Muslim Spaniards but the uncouth barbarians beyond the Pyrenees. The creative role of Muslim Spain in the shaping of European intellectual culture is still not widely enough appreciated. Apart from anything else, it is a most remarkable story. The scientific and philosophical learning of Greek and Persian antiquity was inherited by the Arabs in the Middle East. Translated, codified, elaborated by Arabic scholars, the corpus was diffused throughout the culturally unified world of classical Islam…until it reached the limits of the known world in the west. And there, in Spain, it was discovered by the scholars of the Christian west, translated into Latin mainly between 1150 and 1250, and channeled off to irrigate the dry pastures of European intellectual life…Europe's lead in resourcefulness and creativity, the vital factor in the history of world for the six centuries preceding our own, was founded in large part on intelligent grasping at opportunities offered by the civilization of Islam; and that proffer came through Spain."
"…There was yet another way in which the encounter of Christian and Muslim in medieval Spain has powerfully affected later and distant human experience. Medieval Spaniards and Portuguese worked out by trial and error ways in which to administer large tracts of newly conquered territory and to govern their inhabitants. Thus, when an overseas empire was acquired in the sixteenth century, models and precedents existed for the guidance of those whose task it was to rule it. In this as in so much else there was little that was new about the so-called 'early modern' period of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Colonial Mexico and Peru and Brazil were medieval Andalusia writ large. Much that is central to the experience of Latin America follows from this." [2]

Norman Daniels in the book *The Arabs and Medieval Europe* (1979): "What the 12th century translators had set out to do was achieved with complete success. Europe recovered all that it had lost in the philosophical and scientific fields at the end of the classical age; and it received this body

[1] Francis and Joseph Gies, *Cathedral, Forge, and Waterwheel* (New York: Harper Collins, 1994), pp. 159-160.
[2] Richard Fletcher, *Moorish Spain* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1992), p. 8, 6.

of knowledge in a form which had been improved by centuries of Arab work on it....Although we have seen that Europe would have recovered its lost store of learning directly from the Greek, if it had not done so first from the Arabic, it is still true that it came through Arabic...The real importance of the restoration of learning was that Europe once again shared with its co-heirs of antiquity this whole vast area of knowledge and skills. In other ways Europe and the Arabs would begin to diverge...when that happened they remained linked in learning longer than in any other way."[3]

Rosa Maria Menocal in the book *Ornament of the World* (2002): "[According to] F. Scott Fitzgerald's wonderful formula… 'the test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideals in the mind at the same time.' In its moments of greatest achievement, medieval culture positively thrived on holding at least two, and often many more, contrary ideas at the same time. This was the chapter of Europe's culture when Jews, Christians, and Muslims lived side by side and, despite their intractable differences and enduring hostilities, nourished a complex culture of tolerance…This only sometimes included guarantees of religious freedoms comparable to what we would expect in a modern 'tolerant' state; rather, it found expression in often unconscious acceptance…could be positive and productive….The very heart of culture as a series of contradictions lay in al-Andalus…It was there that the profoundly Arabized Jews rediscovered and reinvented Hebrew; there that Christians embraced nearly every aspect of Arabic style—from the intellectual style of philosophy to the architectural style of mosques—not only while living in Islamic dominions, but especially after wresting political control from them…there that men of unshakable faith, like Abelard and Maimonides and Averroes, saw no contradiction in pursuing the truth, whether philosophical or scientific, or religious, across confessional lines....It was an approach to life and its artistic and intellectual and even religious pursuits that was contested by so many—as it is today—and violently so at times—as it is today—and yet powerful and shaping nevertheless, for hundreds of years.[4]

Discussion Questions:

1. According to the Gies' statement, where did most of the transfer of scientific knowledge from take place, when, and why was it significant that these translations took place?
2. Cite three ways in which Richard Fletcher believes that Muslim Spain affected the modern world. How does he characterize the relationship among diverse groups living in medieval Spain?
3. Who are Europe's "co-heirs of antiquity"? Why does Daniels think it is important that Europe and Islam had this body of knowledge in common?
4. Why does Rosa Maria Menocal think that difference and contradictions are creative? How did al-Andalus provide an example of this creativity in diversity?
5. How and why does Menocal compare the contradictions and creativity of a tolerant approach to life and culture in medieval and in our modern societies? What does she find similar to both times?

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[3] Norman Daniels, *The Arabs and Medieval Europe* (London: Longman, Librarie du Liban, 1979), p. 301-302.
[4] Maria Rosa Menocal, *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Muslim Spain* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2002), pp. 10-12.

Student Handout 13b: Experts in *Cities of Light* Sum Up the Importance of Islamic Spain to the World Today

Feisal Abdul Rauf:
… the reconquest of Spain by the Catholics and by the Christians created very much a sense of loss and even until today Muslims who visit Andalusia, Cordoba and Granada and Seville, feel this nostalgia, feel the sense of loss.

Ahmad Dallal:
When there is diversity, there is by definition friction. But of course, if you eliminate diversity, and everyone would be the same. There would be no friction, but there would be no creativity that results from that tension....

Raymond Scheindlin:
So, a kind of a rough and ready togetherness came about, not an ideological tolerance, but a practical kind of tolerance…

Dede Fairchild Ruggles:
I think that we're fascinated by Islamic Spain because we project into it our own desires for a world where Jews, Christians and Muslims all kind of got along, more or less got along….And when you look at that and it's wishful thinking- you wish that in the modern world relationships were easier.

Chris Lowney:
…just think of what medieval Spain gave to Europe. We have this technology for making paper. We have this irrigation technology…We have these medical ideas and all of these things came about only because cultures interacted and borrowed from each other…and we see that to a greater or lesser extent, people have to find a way to live together, find a way forward, despite some of the contradictions they feel, despite the fact that, you know, your belief is heretical in my eyes, but we're still here together in this city and we may have shared values and we're going to find a way to make this work for the good of our own children and families.…

You are the expert. Now write what YOU think is important about Islamic Spain:

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