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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2007 Volume II: Voyages in World History Before 1500

The 1183-1185 Hajj of Ibn Jubayr and Teaching Islam

Guide for Curriculum Unit 07.02.04
by Justin Boucher

The goal of this unit is to guide high school history students in a study of the early Islamic world through the eyes of a 12th century Spanish pilgrim, Abul-Husayn Muhammad ibn Ahmed ibn Jubayr. Ibn Jubayr undertook the Hajj in 1183 and traveled extensively throughout the Islamic world before his return to Spain, meticulously documenting his travels. This unit follows his travels through his writing while exploring such major themes in history as the movement of ideas, religious experience, and changing perspectives on historical data all through primary source reading. This use of one excellent primary source will allow the teacher to stress the importance of primary sources in historical study, while allowing the students to identify deeply with an historical figure. Approaching the early Islamic world in this way gives teachers, particularly teachers of world history, the chance to expose their students to the Islamic world, before the Mongol invasion, and in only three weeks of classroom time.

(Developed for World History, grade 9; recommended for World History, grades 9-12)

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