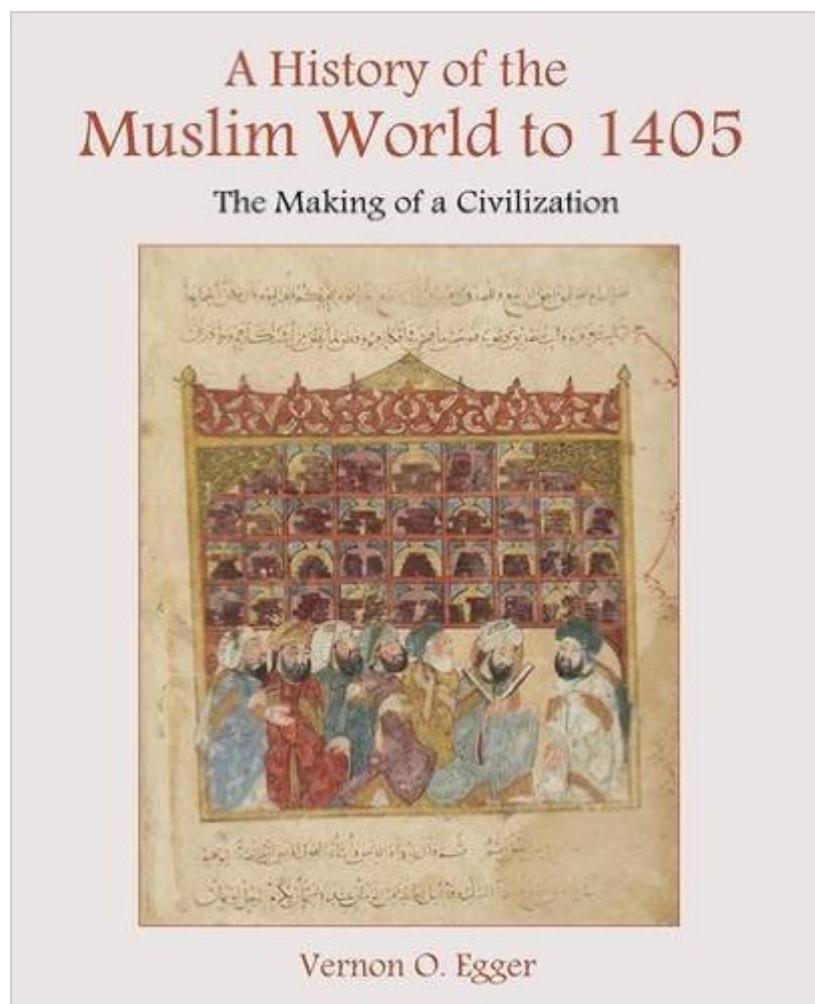


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A History Of The Muslim World To 1405: The Making Of A Civilization



Synopsis

Muslims first appeared in the early seventh century as members of a persecuted religious movement in a sun-baked town in Arabia. Within a century, their descendants were ruling a vast territory that extended from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indus River valley in modern Pakistan. This region became the arena for a new cultural experiment in which Muslim scholars and creative artists synthesized and reworked the legacy of Rome, Greece, Iran, and India into a new civilization. A History of the Muslim World to 1405 traces the development of this civilization from the career of the Prophet Muhammad to the death of the Mongol emperor Timur Lang. Coverage includes the unification of the Dar al-Islam (the territory ruled by Muslims), the fragmentation into various religious and political groups including the Shi'ite and Sunni, and the series of catastrophes in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that threatened to destroy the civilization.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is pretty good as it covers everything in the history of Islamic civilization in chronological order, including a number of things I never knew of before (For example, the fact that the sunni Abbasid caliph was at one point pretty much controlled by the shia Buyid). A downside to the book I've noticed is that a few of the events are either not covered extensively or I've read differing accounts of it (For example, the part pertaining to the rise of the Seljuk Empire, in regards to the origins/rise of its founders Tughril and Chaghri). However, another good thing about this book is that it covers the origins and beliefs surrounding the different sects quite well. In fact, a few of them such as the Jabariyya, I have not read about elsewhere. It also has good information with regards to the

Mutazili controversy. I bought this book for class, and I believe the Professor followed the book pretty closely. I learnt a good number of things from it, and would definitely recommend non-students to buy this book as well. There's a lot to be learnt from it.

I was assigned this text for a History of the Middle East Course, and for the most part this book is very informative. However, this is also its downfall. While traditional histories will focus principally on the geopolitical nature to of the region, the author devotes a great deal of time and attention to cultural achievements. By no means are these unimportant facets of the early Muslim World, but the time spent exploring minor scientific, cultural, or philosophical players made for a difficult text to study. With that minor complaint, this is an excellent, through book on the early Islamic World.

I got this book for a college class and actually found it to be a pretty good read. A lot better than a lot of other texts that I have been subjected to. It seemed factual without being biased to one side or the other.

I keep it by my side at the kitchen table for reference and recommend it to friends interested in the current mess in the Middle East to better understand the Muslim mind.

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