CURRICULUM MATERIALS REVIEWS

Arts of the Islamic World A Teacher's Guide

Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Smithsonian Institution, 2002 90 pages, 10 color plates. Spiral-bound with inserts

PROJECT DIRECTOR: CARSON HERRINGTON WRITERS: KRISTA A. FORSGREN, ELIZABETH BENSKIN CURRICULUM CONSULTANT: SUSAN DOUGLASS EDITOR: JENNIFER ALT ART DIRECTOR: KATE LYDON DESIGNER: RICHARD FRIEND ILLUSTRATOR: ARASH NOROUZI MAP: GENE THORPE

his thoughtfully compiled teaching tool is essential for today's educators. While it emphasizes the visual arts, it is a cultural study, and could be taught within the fields of Social Studies, History, or Religion.

The brief introduction makes clear that specific categories— Book, Mosque, and Portable Object—are highlighted. The fine color plates, found in a sleeve of the folder, are works from the Smithsonian Institution's Freer Gallery and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery. On the back of each plate is a full identification and lengthy description setting each work within its cultural context. For instance, the description for a double-page from a Safavid *Qur'ān* gives the history of how the sacred text was revealed, how it was compiled, and its main teachings. It then discusses the elegant *naskh* script and the type and origins of the repeated geometric design. The expert research, combined with carefully chosen advisors, brings a high level of scholarship to this guide. The input of a Teacher-Consultant Group helps make this work truly teacher-friendly.

Any educator would want to refer to contemporary issues concerning Islam. *Arts of the Islamic World* gives a strong base for further discussion in the classroom. Interviews with practicing Muslims, as well as an excerpt from a young Muslim woman's journal, help bring a contemporary human reality to the subject. Facts and terms are covered exceptionally well, and could easily be used by educators from elementary through high school. A map shows the early spread of Islam, while diagrams clarify the parts of a Mosque and how Arabic script is written. Each section has a glossary of terms appropriate to the subject. Nine pages of resources could prove invaluable to teachers and school librarians. Suggested readings and videos carry good descriptions, and specific order information is given. Books are listed under age categories of Children and Adults.

Obviously, the original *Teacher's Guide* was developed for the Washington area. The lists of Local Islamic Centers and Mosques, and Embassies and Consulates are all in the neighborhood of the Smithsonian. However, such a model can be easily followed by educators working in other locations.

The Lesson Plans found in Arts of the Islamic World are remarkable proof that this Guide works. The five contributions are by named educators from elementary and high schools in Washington, Maryland, and Virginia. All are art teachers, and the activities described relate specifically to the accompanying plates. Each Lesson includes a goal, objectives, vocabulary, motivation and discussion, activity, and assessment and evaluation. Further information includes time needed, materials, variations and extensions, particularly in relation to older students. Actual student artwork has been reproduced, making the Guide completely believable.

Arts of the Islamic World: A Teacher's Guide, an important contribution to the field of education, holds many possibilities for the inspired teacher. The Lesson Plans are just a guide; the possibilities of nuanced and original lessons are endless.

ANN W. NORTON is Professor of Humanities in Art History at Providence College in Providence, Rhode Island, where she has also been Director of the Asian Studies Program since 1991.



Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 2003.

WRITERS: KRISTINA GIASI, ELIZABETH BENSKIN, AND PHILIPPA RAP-POPORT

SILK ROAD STORIES CD, PROJECT DIRECTORS: RAY WILLIAMS AND PHILIPPA RAPPOPORT

ART DIRECTOR: KATE LYDON

POSTER COURTESY OF THE SMITHSONIAN CENTER FOR FOLKLIFE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

he Silk Road, a series of trade routes connecting the Mediterranean with the Far East for several millennia, was at its height from the first to twelfth centuries CE. Travel and commerce led to the diffusion of languages, religions, inventions (e.g., paper, gunpowder, and the compass), and expensive and prized goods (jade, rugs, spices, etc.). In a multicultural world and pedagogically, lesson plans that include the Silk Road are essential and provide a compelling platform for supplementary activities.

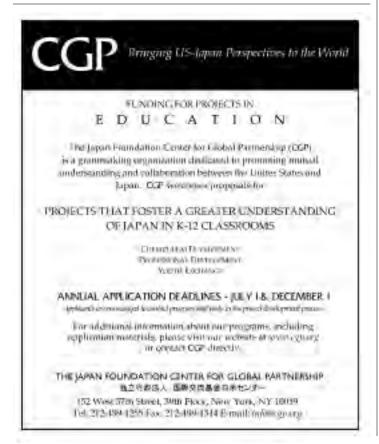
The Silk Road, a four-part set of curriculum materials on the fabled Silk Road, is designed for use predominantly by elementary school teachers but may be adapted to the secondary level. These materials include an eight-page brochure featuring classroom projects, a vocabulary and definitions of important terms, a lesson plan on sericulture (raising silkworms to produce silk cloth), storytelling, and resources (suggested books for young readers and adults, and a list of Internet sites). Six five-by-eight-inch color images on card-stock depict three ceramics (a Turkish plate, a Chinese amphora, and

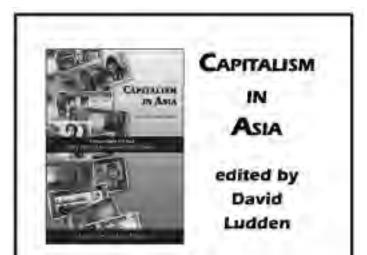
RESOURCES

CURRICULUM MATERIALS REVIEWS

a tomb sculpture), a hunting dog carved in jade from China, and two Buddhist images (from China and Japan). The reverse provides a description, "fun facts," and discussion questions. A CD, Silk Road Stories, has eight oral narratives by young volunteers from the Washington, DC area who tell a variety of tales from their homelands. The narrators (trained by a professional storyteller) are from China, Japan, Tibet, Bangladesh, and Turkey; the stories range from 1:05 to 11:39 minutes (total 64:44 minutes). A folded poster, "Museum Connections: Smithsonian Along the Silk Road" (34 by 22 inches) is a bicolor physiographic map of the region from Italy to Japan and depicts major overland trade routes. Superimposed on the map are seventeen color images of objects from various Smithsonian museums and one animal from the National Zoo. The associated captions ask: "What am I?" Among the artifacts are a glass bowl, postage stamps, coins, gems, ethnic dress, a porcelain jar, sword hilt, kites, and a Red Panda. The answers are on a Smithsonian Web site. These accurate materials are recommended for grades three through seven.

CHARLES C. KOLB holds a PhD in Anthropology and Archaeology from The Pennsylvania State University and has conducted field research in Central Asia, Mesoamerica, and eastern North America. He taught graduate and undergraduate courses in anthropology for sixteen years at Penn State and Bryn Mawr College, served as Director of Research and Grants at Mercyhurst College for six years, and has been at the National Endowment for the Humanities since 1989. Kolb has authored six monographs, 125 book chapters or articles, thirty-eight encyclopedia contributions, and more than 400 book, film, video, and Internet site reviews for professional publications. He also serves as





The eleven articles in this collection, edited by David Ludden, were originally published in the Journal of Asian Studies (JAS). They are among the countless articles and book reviews on features of capitalism in Asia published in the JAS over the last sixty years. The essays selected for this volume are supplemented by the editor's introduction, which describes differing concepts of capitalism and globalization and their relationship to studies of Asia. A selected bibliography ("Additional Readings in the Journal of Asian Studies") is also included, providing students and scholars a guide for further research.

These articles represent scholarship in the humanities and social sciences (geography, sociology, anthropology, political science, and history), and they illustrate intellectual changes that occurred from the 1950s through the 1990s. Demonstrating the broad geographical and intellectual scope of the *JAS*, these essays deal with economic themes related to selected countries in South, Southeast, East, and Northeast Asia.

ISBN 924304-45-6 List Price: 428.00 (AAS Member Price: \$22.50).

> Association for Asian Studies 1021 East Huron Street Ann Arbor, MI 48104 USA bookorder@aasianst.org www.aasianst.org

RESOURCES FOR TEACHING ABOUT ASIA