

Medieval Islamic & Western Medicine

Comparing public representations in two films

Class discussion guide

Documentary. The Bridge. How Islam Saved Western Medicine

Available through the library



Historical drama - The Physician

Available in the library. Possibly at womovie.co



What are the
inconsistencies
in each film?

- What liberties did the producers take with history?
- What are the effects of inconsistencies on the veracity of the films?

Which film is more truthful?

Is there a middle ground between the two films/reconstructions?

Did Arab and/or Jewish and/or Christian doctors develop enlightened approaches to cataracts, side sickness, leprosy, typhoid, and plague?

Are there traces of Islamophobia
in either film?

Islamophobia -- some of the phobias

- "Islam is monolithic and cannot adapt to new realities"
- "Islam as a religion is inferior to the West. It is archaic, barbaric, & irrational"
- "Islam is a religion of violence and supports terrorism"
- "Islamophobia is a contrived fear or prejudice fomented by the existing Eurocentric and Orientalist global power structure ... "
- Source: Centre for Race & Gender, U. Berkley

'Reading history
backwards' versus
looking through
'medieval eyes':

- Do the filmmakers *read history backwards?*
- If so, do the interpretations influence the legitimacy of the films?