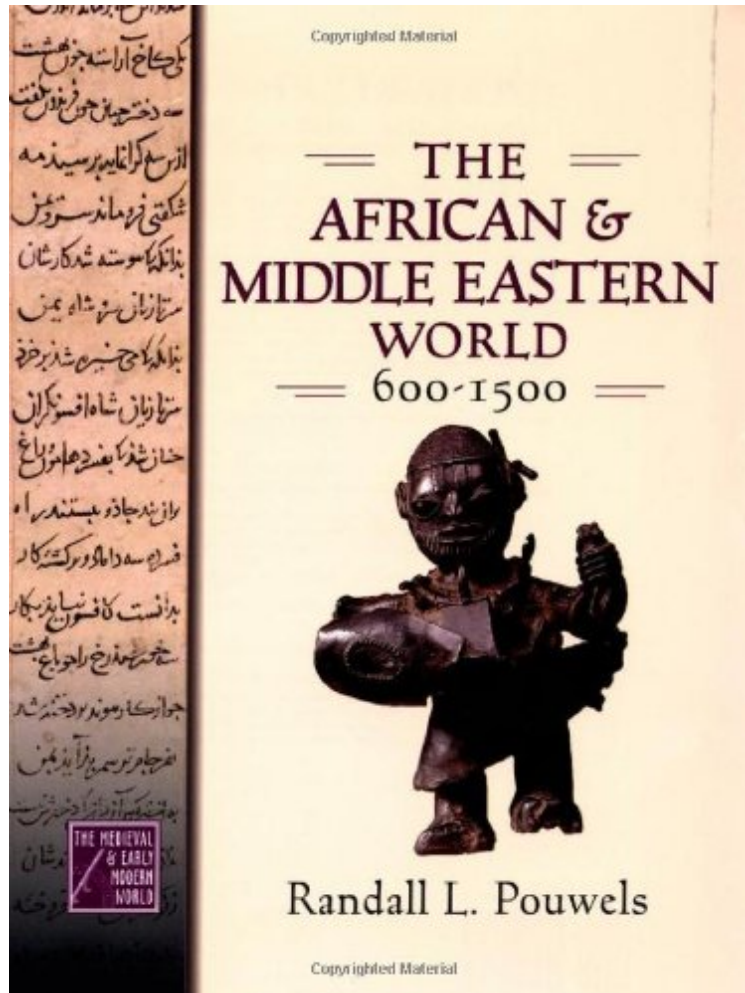


The African and Middle Eastern World, 600-1500 (Medieval Early Modern World)

Randall L. Pouwels

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Randall L. Pouwels : The African and Middle Eastern World, 600-1500 (Medieval Early Modern World) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The African and Middle Eastern World, 600-1500 (Medieval Early Modern World):

1 of 30 people found the following review helpful. The African to Middle Eastern World By Linda S. Burks I ordered the book with the understanding it was in large print, since I can only read large print, but the book was in small print.

The history of the African and Middle Eastern world is, to a large extent, the story of a religion-Islam-and how it claimed millions of followers across empires and kingdoms. First proclaimed by the Prophet Muhammad in the seventh century, Islam quickly spread, through trade and conquest, from the Arabian Peninsula to vast sections of Asia

and Africa and even to parts of Europe. The cast of characters in this story is fascinating: from the Prophet himself to Abu Bakr Muhammad ar-Razi, a Persian physician who compiled a multivolume medical encyclopedia; Mehmed II, an Ottoman sultan who conquered Constantinople and brought the Byzantine Empire to an end; Mansa Musa, a West African emperor who distributed gifts of gold all along the route to Mecca; and Ibn Battuta, a Moroccan Berber whose travels through the Islamic world in the 14th century covered 75,000 miles. The pages of *The African and Middle Eastern World* tell not only about these figures and many others but also about Islamic principles and laws, the religion's different branches (including the Sunnis and Shiites), and the widely varied geography and cultural practices of this world. Also covered are people like the Shona of Southern Africa, who remained outside of Islam's long reach. Numerous primary sources—including excerpts from an eighth-century biography of Muhammad, "The Tale of King Sinbad and the Falcon" from *The Thousand and One Nights*, and a story about leadership from the West African oral tradition—further illuminate this history.

From *School Library Journal* Grade 9 Up—By bringing to life major figures in the medieval Islamic world, Pouwels presents a unique perspective on the Muslim world and the early development and spread of Islam throughout the Middle East and North and West Africa. Through his descriptive text, the author places readers in the midst of the action, allowing them to witness what it might have been like to live as a young caravan guide in A.D. 600. Thereafter, chapters are enlivened by the lives and exploits of Muhammad and his various successors, an in-depth discussion of the appeal of Islam, and a review of the leadership of men such as Mansa Musa and Sundiata. Throughout the book, the author skillfully weaves descriptions of Islamic contributions to the arts, science, and philosophy and includes excerpts from primary sources and highlighted quotes. The informative, eclectic illustrations have detailed captions and include color reproductions, maps, and photographs of sites and artifacts. This accessible and attractive volume is a wonderful introduction to the medieval Islamic world.—Carol Jones Collins, Columbia High School, Maplewood, NJ
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About the Author
Randall L. Pouwels is a Professor of History at the University of Central Arkansas. His books include *World Civilizations Volume I and II* and *History of Islam in Africa*.