His Highness the Aga Khan on the absence of Muslim culture and heritage in school curricula

by NANOWISDOMS ARCHIVE

"From the seventh century to the thirteenth century, the Muslim civilisations dominated world culture, accepting, adopting, using and preserving all preceding study of mathematics, philosophy, medicine and astronomy, among other areas of learning. The Islamic field of thought and knowledge included and added to much of the information on which all civilisations are founded. And yet this fact is seldom acknowledged today, be it in the West or in the Muslim world, and this amnesia has left a six hundred year gap in the history of human thought....

"Little of what was discovered and written by Muslim thinkers during the classical period is taught in any educational institutions. And when it is, due credit is not given. This gap in global knowledge of the history of thought, and the faith, of a billion people is illustrated in innumerable ways, including in such diverse worlds as that of communication and of architecture. Our cultural absence in the general knowledge of the Western world, partially explains why your media sees Islamic world and its thought as an ideological or political determinant in predominantly Muslim cultures, and refers to mere individuals affiliated with terrorist organisations as Muslim first and only then by their national origin or ideological or political goals."

His Highness the Aga Khan's 1996 Brown University Commencement Address (Providence, Rhode Island, USA)

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