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HIS113 - World Civilization I

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**Primary Source 7: Wise Practitioners: *The Arabian Nights***

1. What does the story tell us about merchant practices and network operations in the heart of Islamic civilization? What seems to be the status of merchants in the society? What values guide merchant activity?

Merchants have a very important role in society during these times. They prepare and set off to attend pilgrims. After they finish the ceremonies or rituals, these merchants bring out the products they brought from their country. They bring goods that are profitable to be sold or exchanged. As entrepreneurs, these events are opportunities for them to gain profit and market their products. Many people are visiting which are likely to be their clientele or consumers. Merchant trades in Islamic civilization have built strong foundations since they are Muslim themselves, which means their Muslim brothers and sisters can trust them since they both believe in One God. These people rely on trust to be able to bargain and trade with other networks. They help each other out by partnering with each other to transport each other's goods or help them sell their products.

These people are beneficial to society, for they bring profit to their country. They are regarded as one of the elites. They are well-respected because Muhammad himself was once a merchant. And people who are higher than them support their activities as well. Their values were centered on Islamic Law which means that they should abide by the rules of the Quran. And also, as I have said a while ago, merchants rely on trust. They trust other merchants with their goods, and that works for the other party as well. It is a relationship built on trust.

2. What does the judgement in Ali Cogia's court case tell us about the relationship between the Islamic hierarchy on one hand and merchants and network activity on the other? Do state officials and merchants seem to share a common cultural frame?

The people of the law take merchant activities seriously. He went to the qadi to resolve the case. However, the qadi asked if Ali Cogia has a witness who could testify that he had the gold in a jar. But since he was not able to give him a person who could attest, the qadi dismissed his case and his friend. Then he reached out to the higher-ranking officials (the caliph) who took this matter seriously and decided that they (caliph and other officials) should disguise themselves while roaming around the town. Soon the caliph found children reenacting the scene that happened between the qadi, Ali Cogia, and the other merchant. With what he had seen, he was able to decipher the case. He brought the children with him in the trial to reenact the play that they just did. He was truly amazed by the boy's wisdom which he soon used as a lesson for the qadi.

Officials and merchants are both essential for the community to work in harmony. In my opinion, they both work hand in hand to help and build each other. Capitalism was already on the rise that is why officials give importance to these people (merchants). They benefit from each other. Other than that, they both give importance to Islamic Law. They are radical and follow what is just. They help when someone needs help. These were some of the significant acts that were shown in the story.