

Portrayal of Jews, Jihad, Infidels and Israel in Qatari Textbooks

Examples from the Textbooks

1. Antisemitic Tropes

Jews control the global economy

- Jews exploited the post-First World War economic crisis and used their control of the global economy to affect Britain's foreign policy for their own self-interest.
- Jews are to blame for the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany. They manipulated financial markets after the First World War that led to the creation of a poor economy while achieving great wealth for themselves.
- Jews played a large role in Germany's ultimate defeat and downfall during the First World War.
- The First World War benefited the Zionist movement. "Capitalist-Jewish support" helped achieve the movement's Zionist ambitions. Britain sent the Balfour Declaration to "one of the rich Jewish leaders in Britain." The British wanted "Jewish financial and political support."

Jews have infiltrated Congress and seek global control

- In an explanation of the history of Palestine, the text explains that in order to gain US support to establish the Jewish state, Jews "infiltrated to the decision-making centers, such as the American Congress, using their active propaganda and vast influence in the USA."
- Zionism aims at achieving Jewish global dominance.

Jews tried to kill Jesus and killed other Prophets

- In a chapter about Jesus' life, Jews are portrayed as sinners who practice polytheism, ignored his preaching, and conspired to kill him.
- While teaching about the Prophet Daoud (Biblical: David), the text reports that Jews are evil and have bad morals. They commit sins and even act against David and other Prophets, sometimes killing them.
- A chapter about Judaism and Christianity presents a detailed theological criticism of Jews for inserting changes that corrupted their religion, such as the belief that they are rewarded or punished in this world. The text accuses them of trying to kill Jesus.

Jews are war mongers, inherently treacherous and betrayers

- The Banu Nadir Jews' treachery is one of the reasons for the Battle of the Trench.
- A chapter about the historical Battle of Khaybar describes Jews in detail as treacherous haters of Islam and Allah and as a threat to Muslims; they are weak cowards who prefer to hide in their fortresses rather than fight, and for this reason the text states that Muhammad ordered punishment upon the Jews for betraying the Muslims. An entire chapter about Muhammad's covenant with the Jewish tribes in Medina is mostly dedicated to describing the ways in which the Jewish tribes breached the covenant and betrayed the Muslims, which ultimately led to the Jews' defeat by the Muslims.
- Students are asked to appreciate the killing of a Jew—women's bravery during the historical Battle of the Trench is taught through an example of Muhammad's aunt who killed a Jew.
- Jews prefer falseness over truth, were punished by Allah for deviation, rejected Jesus, and are likened to infidels and polytheists, who are "wicked sinners."

Jews are erased from the "community of the good"

- Jews are ignored in a passage that emphasizes a peaceful and tolerant relationship between Muslims and Christians. In a section about the threat levelled by the Crusaders against Jerusalem during the Abbasid period, a passage is inserted, emphasizing coexistence between Muslims and Christians, but nothing is said about the Jews.
- The Jews are ignored in an explanation about Salah ad-Din's generosity; students are taught that after defeating the Crusaders and conquering Jerusalem, he ordered the Muslims not to destroy the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and to be tolerant toward Christians. However, the text does not mention the fact that he also allowed the Jews to resettle in the city.

Antisemitic tropes related to Israel and Zionism

- Israel seeks to completely destroy the Palestinian people.
- Jews settled in Palestine and "set up terrorist gangs" to deliberately kill Palestinians.
- The ancestry and Jewish identity of today's Jews is questioned. It is determined that not all are descendants of the ancient Children of Israel, but instead are descendants Jews who "blended."
- Eastern European Ashkenazi Jews are descendants of the Khazars.

- They do not have the characteristics of a nation, share any connection to each other, nor do they have a shared history, a cultural heritage, or shared customs and traditions.
- Jews are not indigenous to the land and rather came after the “true indigenous people” and thus have no real right to the land.
- Students are taught that Israel and Jews demonically attempt to Judaize Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa in a poem that encourages the Arab nation to “lend their cannons” to the Palestinians in their struggle.
- Zionists (Israelis) deliberately destroy Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem in an effort to Judaize the city and disconnect it from Islam and Christianity.
- The antisemitic myths of the “intentional torching of the Al-Aqsa Mosque by the Occupation’s authorities” in 1969 and digging under the Al-Aqsa Mosque are repeated.

2. Anti-Israel Hate

- Hamas’ firing thousands of rockets into civilian populations forcing “Zionist citizens to enter shelters” and stopping “airplane traffic to and from Israel” is glorified and described as “brave” and “remarkable.”
- The Zionist movement is “a hostile political movement that is founded on settler, racist and colonial principles, and that is based on false historical and religious claims.”
- Israel is labeled an “entity” and an “occupier” that deliberately created a catastrophe for the Palestinians in a diabolical effort to remove them from the land and Judaize it.
- The protection of Palestine is a religious duty to all Muslims. Israel is considered an evil aggressor that must be confronted and stopped at all costs. The entire land is considered Islamic and Arab and no part of it can be surrendered.
- A poem entitled “Jerusalem is Arab” stresses Jerusalem’s Arab identity while denying its connection to Judaism. It demonizes Jews as perpetrators of crimes and occupiers of other people’s land.
- Students are taught to defend Palestine and Jerusalem from “the oppressors.” Palestine is “the beating heart of the Arab-Islamic homeland.” Zionists are occupiers and enemies.

3. Hate of Infidels: Christians, Jews and Polytheists

- Students are repeatedly taught, throughout all grades, that (wicked) infidels (Christians, Jews, and polytheists) will be punished on the Day of Resurrection with eternity in Hell. Other punishments for the infidels are grief, humiliation, and the failing of their deeds.
- Christianity and Judaism become corrupted religions that included themes of polytheism.
- Students are taught that Allah wants believers to hate infidels, since they anger Him.
- The People of the Book (Christians and Jews) are chastised for going against Allah's Word and are seen as deserving of a great punishment.
- A text forbids sympathizing with infidels and polytheists, promising double punishment both in life and in death.
- Polytheists are seen as evil and as committing the greatest sin imaginable, leading them to Hell. They are frequently portrayed as liars and immoral people who commit obscenities and atrocities.

4. Jihad, Martyrdom, and Violence

- Students are told that *jihad* is the climax of Islam and “the highest and most paramount of the qualities of religion.”
- Waging war and sacrificing their lives and property in the name of *jihad* will abolish all sins and grant happiness in the afterlife.
- Participation in fighting, with permission of the ruler, is “the highest type of *jihad*.”
- Jews are criticized for relying on this world and for not wishing for death in a section that both attacks Jews and teaches students that Islam encourages its believers to prefer death to life.
- A woman's fundamental role is to raise children and teach them to love *jihad*; a lesson taught through Nusaybah bint Ka'ab, whose three children “died as martyrs for the sake of Allah Almighty.”
- Islamic figure Ali bin Abi Talib is glorified for killing polytheists and Jews. The “usable lesson” is self-sacrifice for the sake of defending religion.
- Martyrdom and *jihad* are taught through the role model of Izz ad-Din al-Qassam, founder of the *jihadi* movement and after whom the Hamas military wing is named. He is glorified as a symbol of determination and courage. His death “ignited the ember of *jihad*” and “kindled the spirit of self-sacrifice.”

- Students are taught to do what is necessary in order for Islam to emerge victorious, including *jihad* and combat.
- Eighth-graders learn that Allah loves *jihad* warriors who fight for his sake.
- Allah will reward men and women who fought and died for Islam and will allow them to enter into Paradise.
- *Jihad's* “sublime purpose” is the conversion of non-believers to Islam, used to justify Islamic violent conquest.
- In teaching about the Kashmiri *jihad* movement, “the *jibadi* warriors were able to kill more than twenty-six thousand Indian soldiers.”

There is much to be concerned about in the Qatari curriculum. For years, the leaders of Qatar have allowed their children to be exposed to one of the most radical *jibadi* curriculums in the world. Jew-hate remains a central element of Qatari education.

The qualified review of 238 textbooks for the calendar years 2016–20 uses international standards based on UNESCO and UN declarations and other recommendations and documents on education for peace and tolerance. We have determined that the Qatari curriculum does not meet international standards, despite some improvements having been made in this last academic year.

It will lay to rest any debate regarding the motivation behind Qatar's support for radicals and the resources it invests to undermine Arab countries, while aggressively interfering in Europe, the US and elsewhere. Qatar will likely continue on its determined course to engage the world and while the current changes seen in the curriculum point to a process of reassessment, they are partial and reversible.