UNDE RSTANDING QATARI AMBITION
The Curriculum 2016–20

An updated report with a
Foreword by David B. Roberts, PhD

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June 2021
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Executive Summary

The Qatari curriculum appears to be in a phase of transformation. While slightly less radical than previous versions, the process of moderation is in its infancy. Since 2019, the national curriculum is no longer accessible to the general public; despite this, IMPACT-se was able to procure the most recent curriculum almost in its entirety. There are five textbooks, two with problematic material, for which updated additions (2020–21) were not found. We were therefore left to analyze the available textbooks and work under the assumption that the two previous editions of these books are those still in use until proven otherwise by Qatari authorities. While some offensive material has been removed after decades of radical teaching in Qatari schools, the curriculum is still far from meeting international standards of peace and tolerance.

- Antisemitism is central to the curriculum. Students are taught that Jews played a large role in Germany’s defeat and downfall during WWI. Jews are to blame for the rise of the Nazi Party by manipulating financial markets and creating wealth for themselves. They are personified as having global control. Jews tried to kill Jesus and killed other prophets, are warmongers and inherently treacherous and betrayers. The Holocaust is ignored.
- Pan-Islamic and pan-Arab nationalism are evident as are elements of the Wahhabist creed of Salafism and the Muslim Brotherhood, which dominate the religious tenor of the curriculum. A Muslim Brotherhood approach to the behavior of Muslims in non-Muslim countries is taught.
- Prosperity is tightly linked to cultural and scientific interaction with the world. However, Qatar's involvement in world affairs includes the global spread of political Islam.
- Qatari education is heavily influenced by Western educators, but serious issues exist regarding peace and tolerance. In Islamic religious studies there is very little improvement. Jihad war, martyrdom and violent jihadi movements are praised. English language textbooks are the most moderate.
- Women are encouraged to be brave, serve their homeland and families, and have many children. Despite women's "empowerment," careers are not a priority.
- Christians are characterized as "People of the Book," but blamed for causing divisions among Muslims; most of them are considered immoral and infidels. While describing the challenges facing Muslim minorities, Christianization is portrayed as a major threat, described as a "political and colonial movement." Some anti-Christian material has been removed.
- Israel remains illegitimate, often labeled the Zionist Entity. There are references to diplomatic solutions but violence is glorified, including Hamas rocket attacks.
- Normalization between Israel and Arab nations is rejected.
- The curriculum does not teach the history of minorities in the region or their cultural affinity. The demise of Jewish communities in the Arab world is ignored.
- Democracy and political participation are praised within the curriculum. Students are taught to have tolerance toward the expatriate community, in contrast to the often-appalling treatment of immigrant workers throughout Qatar.
- The US, Britain, Turkey, Iran, China and Oman are considered friendly actors.
National Identity

A fortunate discovery of fossil fuels in the late 1930s transformed one of the world's poorest countries into one of the richest. Qatar aspires to become a regional and global hub with a highly visible profile, specializing in media, education, sports, the knowledge economy, transportation and diplomacy; yet it continues to face internal challenges, in part resulting from the limited ability of its minority citizenry to vote (only in local elections) and the untenable relationship it has with its almost 90 percent non-citizen population.

The curriculum emphasizes nationalist identity and encourages patriotic sentiment over tribal affiliations. Pan-Islamic and pan-Arab nationalism is also evident as are elements of Salafism and the Muslim Brotherhood. There is a slight movement away from radical jihadism but a great amount remains. Nevertheless, Qatar's curriculum is heavily influenced by Western educators—displaying the Qatari gift for embracing contradictions.

In previous curricula, students learned that democracy was incompatible with Islam; that befriending non-Muslims was a sin; that a Jewish world conspiracy aimed at taking over the world; that the Jews were treacherous by nature and were using women to sabotage Islam; and that the Church, Crusades, charities, missionary work, Middle Eastern studies and modern Western and Arab liberal thought had all been part of one grand scheme aimed at destroying Islam.

Attitude toward Others

The curriculum now praises democracy and encourages participation in school elections. Peace education is taught in a platitudinous manner. A new textbook covers the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians but glorifies violence. It conveys an idyllic openness characterizing Medieval Islamic states, and recognizes the role of Christians, Jews and others in the translation movement during that period (former editions represented minorities as collaborating with the enemy). Some offensive material (such as the Protocols of the Elders of Zion) has been removed or replaced, but a great deal of hatred of the Jews remains. The persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany is justified by blaming Jewish greed for the downfall of post-World War One (WWI) Germany as well as their imagined political influence.

The textbooks echo Western antisemitism, ignore the Holocaust and the condition of Jews in Islamic lands, particularly in the recent era, which saw mass exodus from Arab countries. While the Turks and Iranians—and even the British and Americans—are respected, Middle Eastern minorities (such as Amazig, Yazidis, Kurds and Maronites) are largely ignored. Demonization of Israel remains part of Qatar's Arab and Islamic identity in what they consider to be support for the Palestinian cause.

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3 Ibid., p. 57.
With respect to gender, the Salafi voice remains intact. Instead of jihad war, women are expected to go on the [pilgrimage of] the hajj or the umrah. They are encouraged to be brave, serving homes and homeland, loving their husbands while having many children. Students learn about the empowerment of women from their supporting roles during the early stages of Islam; in Qatar, empowerment should not supersede traditionalist beliefs, nor should it upset the economic balance of the country. The curriculum rejects non-traditional gender roles (including actors playing opposite-gender roles).

Changes are slow and inconsistent. Prosperity is tightly linked to opening education and cultural interaction with the world. However, such behavior is new. Until very recently one could see vicious attacks against Western civilization. Islamic Education textbooks have been fashioned by Muslim Brotherhood affiliates targeting Jews, Crusaders, missionaries, secular-modernists and secular Arabs. Democracy was seen as contradicting Islam. Modern ways were thought to encourage debauchery and extinguish Arab identity.4

A History textbook points to Muslim Brotherhood thinker, Yusuf Qaradawi, making conversion more attractive in the West. The textbook does not advocate for the conversion of non-Muslims although da’wa (call to Islam) is the mainstay of Qaradawi’s legal theory.

Financing Islamic education and institutions in the West and setting up independent media sources to help the situation of Islamic minorities is covered in the curriculum.

A new twelfth-grade textbook teaches that rich and powerful Muslims should use their privilege to intervene on behalf of Islamic minorities in non-Muslim countries. They should spread the faith by helping minorities receive Islamic education in Muslim countries, form ties with organizations representing Muslim communities, and send "the most suitable individuals" to "raise the awareness of minority Muslims.” Well-positioned Islamic states should also take advantage of their diplomatic influence to "intervene in a positive, balanced and calculated manner" to support Muslims overseas.

Projects such as hosting the FIFA World Cup and funding the first mosque and Islamic center in Denmark are praised. The curriculum maintains that the Copenhagen mosque is "disseminating the culture of peace" and correcting "the distorted image of Islam."5 However, it omits Qatar’s controversial treatment of local workers building World Cup venues,6 and makes no mention of the concerns of Danish politicians regarding the foreign funding of Danish institutions— earlier this year.7

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Some anti-Christian material has been removed. But Christians, along with Jews as "People of the Book" are blamed for causing divisions among Muslims. The curriculum appears to respect Western scientists and scholars. Britain, the US, Turkey Iran, China and Oman are viewed as friendly actors. But China's abuse of its Muslim minority is criticized as is India’s; jihadism in Kashmir is applauded. Textbooks teach that European governments strive to assimilate their Muslim populations and that Muslim minorities are persecuted in many countries. The curriculum acknowledges the centrality of Britain to securing Qatar's independence and the struggle against the slave trade. Until 2019, textbooks referred to the Ottoman Empire as an "Islamic State." This was apparently removed from 2020 textbooks.

Some antisemitic myths were removed from at least one textbook, but the description of Zionism as a racist movement was reintroduced. The curriculum labels the Jewish national movement as a "colonial-settler enterprise."

There is no anti-Shi’ite material, perhaps in deference to the large Shi’ite population and the current close relations with Iran. Criticism of the Arab siege countries is restrained, leaving open avenues for dialogue. The siege of Qatar—now resolved—was dealt with in a relatively positive manner, allowing Qatari leaders to display magnanimity toward their rivals.

**The Expatriate Community**

Finally, the curriculum teaches students to show tolerance to the expatriate community. It encourages students to respect all members of the Qatari population and cautiously fosters the idea that democracy represents the future. Yet, numerous reports including those of Amnesty International and major news organizations have documented the abuse of workers by various companies in Qatar.

The Qatari curriculum *appears* to be in a phase of transformation. Qatar's involvement in world affairs includes the global spread of political Islam. As one might expect, there are many contradictory signals attending such outreach.

Such international preoccupation tends to muddy the foremost problem faced by Qatar's regime: namely, the expatriates living and working in the peninsula. A more serious attitude toward improving conditions for the majority of its population may or may not be in the works. However, such changes, if real, could help Qatari leaders to channel their global ambitions into more meaningful and beneficial arenas, ultimately manifested in an improved curriculum.

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9 *Social Studies*, Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2019, p. 113.
10 *Social Studies*, Grade 10, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 94.
Foreword

From Textbook to Policy: Reflecting on the Links between the Qatari Education Curriculum and State Foreign Policy

By David B. Roberts, PhD

Introduction

Elite levels, policymaking milieus, and the machinations within institutional infrastructure are commonly referred to in political and international scholarship as "black boxes." This sentiment signifies that the outsider struggles to develop a granular picture of how these varied institutions and bodies work and come to their decisions. Consequently, policymaking remains relatively mysterious, and the decision as to why a state undertakes a specific decision and foreign policy becomes the subject of debate, discussion, and disagreement.12

Some scholars dismiss this focus as irrelevant. This line of logic argues that it does not matter whether the leader or decision-making bureaucracy is liberal or conservative, efficient or wasteful, benevolent or egomaniacal. This is because the state's actions are near preordained by wider factors beyond the control of the state, such as its relative power and position in the international system.13 Such a view is, of course, rejected by other theoretically-rooted approaches, some of which argue that individuals, the character of bureaucracies, and a socially constituted understanding of the state and its role are critically influential factors shaping state policy.14 These contrasting approaches are principled disagreements rooted in near-irreconcilable philosophical differences. Few scholars are absolutists, and analyses vacillate on the spectrum.

Area studies scholars tend to congregate towards explanations privileging local criteria, differences, people, and institutions over-generalized, impersonal, and systemic levels of analysis. Gulf scholars are no exception. Indeed, the near-universally received wisdom is that the Arabian Peninsula is a region where leaders have played unquestionably decisive roles.15 Individuals like Ibn Saud in Saudi Arabia, Mubarak the Great in Kuwait, Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in the UAE, Hamad bin Khalifah Al Thani in Qatar, and Sultan Qaboos in Oman, are universally regarded as deeply pivotal, shaping

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13 For the quintessential work examining these issues see Kenneth Neal Waltz, Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).
15 Nor is the importance of leaders limited to the Gulf Arab States. See Margaret G. Hermann and Joe D. Hagan, "International Decision Making: Leadership Matters," Foreign Policy, no. 110 (1998).
individuals. Without these men, it is quite likely that these contemporary states would look vastly
different, if they existed at all in their current guise.\textsuperscript{16}

Yet, remembering the spectrum of explanation, analysts need to carefully interrogate their
preconceived ideas, not least because two things can be true at the same time. Leaders can be
decisively important. Gulf history proves this time and again. Yet simultaneously, this is not to
say that leaders are \textit{always} deeply influential. Analysis needs to systematically resist quasi-
Orientalist assumptions about authoritarian monarchies in the Gulf that can over-privilege the
role of leaders. The point is that, yes, leadership is crucial, but each leader, no matter how
powerful they are or appear to be, only has a certain amount of political capital that they can
spend. Gulf leaders are monarchical autocrats but none are totalitarian dictators. All leaders are
subject to a complex and interlocking matrix of subtle, often informal, series of checks on their
power in the shape of institutions, local politics, family politics, regional pressures, or
combinations thereof.

These academic debates matter directly to this article as the goal is to examine the impact of
Qatar's education curricula on the state's foreign policy. This, in turn, demands a reflection on
how Qatar's policies are made, which inevitably focuses on the role of leaders, bureaucracies,
and wider institutional and systemic factors. The implicit hypothesis underpinning this
investigation is that contemporary Qatari foreign policies, whereby the state consistently—
though not uniquely—engages with actors on the Islamist spectrum, emerge from or are
otherwise shaped by the state's education curriculum. Though curricula have changed
significantly in recent decades, there remain dozens of elements littered throughout Qatar's
education documentation that do not meet UNESCO's definitions of suitable elements of a
curriculum. More to the point, many such elements promote a particularly austere, Manichean,
and extreme-leaning worldview that are associated with (often quite extreme) Islamist groups
and their ideas. As such, it is natural to wonder whether Qatar's myriad links and associations
with a motley array of (sometimes extreme) Islamist groups emerge from this history of
parroting lines, ideas, sentiments, and beliefs of such groups to Qatar's youth.

To investigate this hypothesis, this paper first outlines the broad contours of Qatar's recent
foreign policies with a focus on occasions when Qatar engaged with actors on the Islamist
spectrum. Subsequently, the Qatari foreign policymaking milieu will be unpacked, reflecting on
the role of ideology, pragmatism and chance, and factors unique to Qatar. To conclude, this
paper argues that there are unquestionably unsavory elements remaining within the Qatari
education system that contravene UNESCO standards. Judging their impact on Qatar and its
foreign policy is difficult. It is likely that decades of such extreme and relatively extreme
educational sentiments contributed (probably significantly) to a population at ease with Qatar

\textsuperscript{16} David B. Roberts, "Qatar and the UAE: Exploring Divergent Responses to the Arab Spring," \textit{The Middle East
engaging with Islamist actors. And a government, even in an autocracy like Qatar, strives where possible to please and placate its people. Nevertheless, this article argues that the more persuasive rationales underpinning Qatar’s engagement with Islamists are rooted in pragmatic issues related to access to particular individuals, a pragmatic desire to augment the state’s reach and power, and the reality that there was, in essence, only one way to do that and that was via an array of long-established contacts with Islamists.

Qatari Foreign Policy

Qatar often gets tarred as a state that consistently engages with actors on the Islamist spectrum, many of whom are widely considered to be relatively or undoubtedly extreme in their views. Such critiques have come from Western governments, (often) right-wing international media sources, and, during the Gulf blockade in particular, from erstwhile allies on the Arabian Peninsula and elsewhere in the Middle East. Thus, there is, to put it mildly, often significant motivated reasoning behind the multifarious accusations by actors who seek to demonize Qatar for their own ends.

Nevertheless, there is a reality to contend with. Qatar quite demonstrably has a history of engaging with an array of actors on the Islamist spectrum. Back in the 2000s, Qatar was increasingly seen as a mediator of regional conflicts and the state boosted its relations engaging with the various protagonists. This meant that Qatar hosted delegations from Islamist forces from Darfur accused of committing a range of egregious crimes. One of Qatar's major foreign policy triumphs was reaching a modus vivendi in 2008 between various actors in the Lebanese government. In particular, this involved Qatar corralling multiple elites together and extracting concessions. This led to accusations that Qatar had developed particularly close relations with Hezbollah, the group viewed as a terrorist organization by many, but which is also an integral part of the Lebanese government. These accusations included inter alia allegations Qatar spent money on Hezbollah to boost their relations. In mediations in Yemen at the end of the 2000s

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17 For a compendium of such challenges, see Elizabeth Dickinson, "The Case against Qatar," Foreign Policy (September 30, 2013), http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/09/30/the_case_against_qatar_funding_extremists_salafi_syria_uae_jihad_muslim_brotherhood_taliban.


Qatar's engagement led to accusations it was overly supportive of the Houthis, a group on the Islamist spectrum often considered to be Shia in orientation with links to Iran.\textsuperscript{23}

During the Arab Spring, Qatar's reputation as a state consistently and frequently connected to Islamists became cemented. Any semblance that Qatar was developing a reputation as a neutral actor was undermined by the way the state conducted its business, clearly favoring specific sides with military, political, financial, and/or diplomatic support.\textsuperscript{24} Indeed, the record of Qatar's engagement is quite clear. From late 2010 onwards, the state of Qatar tended to engage heavily with emergent forces on the Islamist spectrum. In Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria, Qatar frequently engaged with individuals implicitly or explicitly linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, a force considered by some to be extreme and by others to be broadly moderate, but with some more extreme elements.\textsuperscript{25} Qatar also has longer-term and conspicuously close relations with Hamas, while Qatar stands accused of supporting and funding the far more extreme Jabhat Al Nusra, an Al Qaeda affiliate, in Syria during the Spring.\textsuperscript{26}

One of the great difficulties in evaluating Qatar's history of engagement with actors on the Islamist spectrum is that the state so rarely speaks candidly about these relations. At the time of the Arab Spring, there was no ministry spokesperson, nor were there any foreign policy documents, white papers, or strategies. The government-to-government relations, as in Egypt under Mohammed Morsi or in Tunisia engaging with \textit{inter alia} Rachid Ghannouchi, are relatively straightforward. Yet such relations were but a part of the whole, and those forged (not only by Qatar) with substate actors during the Arab Spring's civil wars far more complex.

Qatar's relations with Jabhat Al Nusra in Syria provide an instructive microcosm of the issues at play. It seemed increasingly obvious that the state of Qatar enjoyed unusual levels of access to areas controlled by Jabhat al Nusra in Syria. Such sentiments were corroborated by Qatar's ability to procure hostages from motley actors within these territories, while rumors persisted

\textsuperscript{23} On this debate see Thomas Juneau, "Iran's Policy Towards the Houthis in Yemen: A Limited Return on a Modest Investment," \textit{International Affairs} 92, no. 3 (2016). To some, the Houthis' Shia character is not as straightforward as it is portrayed. Zaydi Shi'ism, the sect to which the Houthis belong, is arguably Shia in character, but certainly far different to the "standard" Twelver Shi'ism of Iran.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
that Qatar was funneling material support to Jabhat al Nusra, even though it was, at the time, openly aligned with Al Qaeda. Sealing the sentiment of an unusually close relationship between the group and Qatar, its leader Al Jolani was interviewed on Al Jazeera at length, multiple times. People could easily have assumed from this that, although Al Jazeera is far from "Qatar Foreign Ministry TV"—as one disgruntled Doha-based Arab Ambassador once described the station to me in 2009—for the leader of such a group to be offered multiple extended interviews may well have meant that the group enjoyed either close connections within the Doha government, or at the very least, was not acting against Qatar's regional policy goals.\(^\text{27}\)

To this escalating series of assumptions, the Qatari government barely offered any clarity or explanation beyond the usual generalizing platitudes. Into this vacuum, speculation mounted as reporters put what they thought was a simple story together. A Wahhabi state, Qatar, was quasi-secretly enabling an Al Qaeda associated group. Ergo, amid a storm of critique—usually from the US—as to lax counter-terrorist financing issues across the Gulf, Qatar's leaders wanted to covertly promote this group and its aims. Some scholars elsewhere put one plus one together to come to the assumption that it was plausible if not likely that Qatar was aiding Al Qaeda affiliates in Mali, despite the almost total lack of persuasive evidence.\(^\text{28}\)

As the IMPACT-se report notes, many artifacts of extremism can be found in Qatar's education curricula, and during the Arab Spring, Qatar seemed to, time and again, support Islamist groups. The narrative was clear. Qatar clearly, it seemed, went out of its way to repeatedly support often extreme groups because of some innate desire to see such ends furthered. The above logic is, in its own way, flawless. But, as this wider paper demonstrates, it ignores an entire tranche of argumentation, which offers a similarly coherent, logical, and plausible alternative explanation for the facts at hand. Neither side of the argument is complete without the other being explored in the open.

Making Qatari Foreign Policy

Ideology

The role of ideology as a driver of foreign policy remains the subject of much debate.\(^\text{29}\) In Qatar's case, the consistency or at least frequency with which the state engages with Islamist actors leads many to the not unreasonable conclusion that there is an evident desire within the


Qatari elite to actively support this kind of actor.\textsuperscript{30} However, if this were the case, one might reasonably expect the state to exhibit important artefacts of Islamically rooted infrastructure in such a position as to influence state policy. But this is not the case.\textsuperscript{31} Unlike Saudi Arabia, for example, Qatar has no position of Grand Mufti or some similar figure who occupies a state position as a meaningful and titular head of state Islamic affairs. It has, of course, a Ministry of Awqaf [Endowments] and Islamic Affairs, even though this was only established in 1993. Indeed, in Qatar any kind of an Ulama class "has historically not existed' and contemporary Ulama comprised of mostly foreigners enjoy only a "surprisingly limited role."	extsuperscript{32} Overall, Baskan and Wright argue that "the lack of a native Ulama class . . . has translated into the government being under little if any organized pressure to give religious scholars a voice in public policymaking."\textsuperscript{33} There is no kind of religious police in Qatar.

Were there a real trend of state-structured Islamic influence in Qatar, one might reasonably have expected institutionalized religious offices to have been established years or decades previously. Though an absence of evidence is not evidence of absence per se, throughout a decade of working on Qatari foreign policy, including years living and researching in the state and hundreds of interviews throughout state apparatus and civil society, I am yet to come across anyone even slightly intimating that, for example, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs has any kind of a meaningful influence on Qatar's foreign policy. Nor am I alone in forming such conclusions.\textsuperscript{34}

Those presupposing a staunch or even extremist tilt in Qatar's foreign policy must also explain away a litany of state policies and approaches that are diametrically opposed to such stylized conceptualizations. Qatar for many years had cordial and pragmatic (if off and on again) relations with Israel including the hosting of an Israeli trade office—akin to a de facto embassy—in Doha from 1996 to 2008. Domestically, the state is the sole supplier of alcohol and pork products. From the 1990s onward, Qatar was home to one of the most powerful women in modern Middle East history, Sheikha Moza bint Nasser al Misnad. Her programs, notably in education and social affairs, promulgated a near explicit Westernization of elements of the education curriculum, including the shift of the language of instruction from Arabic to English, as well as the removal of a litany of antisemitic and extremist-orientated material.\textsuperscript{35} Such factors,


\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., p. 97.

\textsuperscript{33} (100).


\textsuperscript{35} Gail L. Zellman et al., "Education for a New Era: Design and Implementation of K-12 Education Reform in Qatar," (Santa Monica, CA: RAND-Qatar Policy Institute, 2007).
of course, do not prove that the Qatari state does not seek to support Islamist-leaning sets of ideas. It could be argued that the state is balancing different views in its orientation. But, at the very least, these policies, approaches, and realities militate against the sentiment of the Qatari state as some slavish Islamically orientated actor.

While there may be a near-complete lack of structural elements of Islamic influence on Qatar's policies, there are a range of informal Islamic influences in Qatar that warrant discussion. As across the Gulf, in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, there was a significant influx of (often) educated individuals, many of whom were on the Islamist spectrum, from the likes of Iraq, Syria, and Egypt. Often exiled from their homelands because of their Islamist views, these people found gainful employment in the Gulf states. Their skills rooted in working in ministries back home were in critical demand in Gulf monarchies that were building these very institutions for the first time. From the earliest days of the creation of many (if not most) Gulf ministries, therefore, Islamists were important in shaping their emergence. This story has been covered in extensive detail, particularly in the case of Saudi Arabia and its influx of members of the Muslim Brotherhood who went on to mix with local Islamists to form the Sahwa movement.  

A litany of such individuals moved to Qatar to form government ministries and they enjoyed a particular influence—again, as in all Gulf monarchies—in the nascent education system. The most prominent of these individuals is Yusuf Al Qaradawi, widely regarded as one of the most influential imams and personalities in the Arab world. He enjoyed various roles in Doha, from founding local religious institutions, fronting a popular local TV show answering questions about the role of Sharia in modern life in the 1970s and 1980s, and establishing and running the College of Sharia at Qatar University. Informally, it has long been assumed that Al Qaradawi enjoys some sense of a close relationship with elite policymakers in Doha, though the details of any such relations remain unclear. It is certainly true that Al Qaradawi has been facilitated to become, as noted, one of the most influential "talking heads" in recent Arab history from his perch at Al Jazeera in Qatar. Many may wish to draw links between his position, his presumed influence, and Qatar's wider foreign policies that so often engaged with actors on the Islamist spectrum. Such a link is logical but remains, however, tentative and speculative. More to the point, there are a range of issues and rationales that offer more persuasive explanations for Qatar's engagement with Islamists.

37 David B Roberts, "Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood: Pragmatism or Preference?," *Middle East Policy* 21, no. 3 (2014).
40 Gräf, *Global Mufti*. 
Pragmatism

The concept of pragmatism offers a powerful logic underpinning Qatar's relationships with Islamist actors. Particularly during the Arab Spring's initial years, it looked, in essence, like the time had finally come after decades of mobilization and repression for a litany of civil society-rooted actors to take a more meaningful role in Middle East politics. The long-predicted and expected fourth wave of democratization was, it seemed, finally rolling around the Middle East from state to state. In these earliest days, Al Jazeera covered these moments with saturation coverage. One doesn't require any conspiracy theories to work out why it did this. No one needed to tell a television station full of Arab journalists from these very countries that something momentous was happening, and that it needed to be covered.

Moreover, Qatar as a state soon swung into action backing what were widely seen as wildly popular uprisings. In this sense, at the very beginning, the Qatar mantra that it "supported" the people chimes with the reality. Such a transition in foreign policy approach—from supporting status quo state leadership around the region to supporting the fast-materializing opposition movements—is only possible because Qatar is such a small state, and where it's elite dominated and where they feared no local security concerns at all. 41 Indeed, per capita, Qatar is by far the richest state in the world, a situation engineered by Hamad bin Khalifah Al Thani, the emir from 1995 to 2013. Also, as a homogenous Sunni state, domestic opposition in Qatar simply did not exist in any coherent sense. Externally, Qatar enjoyed the presence of a vast US military base mere kilometers from the Emiri Palace. Unusually unencumbered, deeply secured, and with near enough literally more money than the state could spend, 42 Qatar was in an unusual situation and so, watching the unfolding of the most widespread uprisings in the contemporary history of the Arab world, Hamad bin Khalifah acted and engaged.

The question then becomes how could the state of Qatar engage? As a state with a population of only a quarter of a million nationals at the time, if Qatar wanted to engage on any kind of a widespread of systematic level—which it most certainly did—it needed a raft of intermediaries and proxies. To this demand, the supply came typically from Islamists. There are at least two interrelated reason why this is the case.

First, there were not many options. There was, in essence, only one large-scale organization active in the Middle East that had tens of thousands of members, a history of organization going back a century, and a presence in most (if not all) Middle East states: the Muslim Brotherhood. There was no alternative. As a means to an end, working with the Muslim Brotherhood and its affiliates, made sense. Second, the factor of pre-existing relations is critical. Like all other Gulf

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41 Roberts, Qatar: Securing the Global Ambitions, pp. 123–49.
42 This is a slight exaggeration but not by much. Inflation was running high at this stage such that extra local spending would have been difficult. And the flowing in of LNG revenues from the 2000s onwards engendered Qatar to establish, for the first time, a real sovereign wealth fund. The point is that the opportunity cost for Qatar spending heavily abroad was minimal.
monarchies (with the limited exception of Oman), Qatar had extensive contacts throughout the Muslim Brotherhood organization bequeathed by the presence of so many (often fairly senior) leaders who lived and worked in the state often for decades. Such personal links proved critical. Libya is a case in point. The critical reason why Qatar threw its weight and support behind Ali Al Sallabi and Abdulkarim Belhadj was because Ali was a TV commentator on Al Jazeera through which he developed a local reputation as someone who knew the politics of the region. As such, when it came to finding an interlocutor, he was ideally placed and became the critical lynchpin in Qatar's Libya operations.

Pragmatism also offers arguably the more compelling rationale as to why Qatar engaged. As I argued for the BBC, given the wider tenor of Qatari foreign policy, the most plausible explanation for Qatar's engagement with Jabhat Al Nusra was pragmatic.43 The group was arguably the largest and most important rebel group in Syria, and thus supporting it was critical if Assad was to be challenged effectively.44 Qatar, like many in the international community, was at one stage set on unseating Assad. Jabhat was a critical means to (trying to achieve) this end. Moreover, given that Qatar is not some secret Al Qaeda supporter, I mooted the idea that the state was in the process of trying to bring the group "in from the cold" and to ditch their Al Qaeda affiliation, which is what transpired fourteen months after I published my article.

**Linking Education to Foreign Policy**

Arguably, the weight of evidence intimates that more pragmatic rationales offer more explanatory power when it comes to determining the shape and direction of Qatar's foreign policies. Equally, as the IMPACT-se report exhaustively documents, there are a litany of problematic elements in Qatar's education curricula. Many highlighted issues when it comes to discussion of Jews, antisemitism, Zionism, jihad, martyrdom, the just use of violence, Christians, Infidels, and Polytheists contrast the stipulated norms and international standards of UNESCO. For a state that so regularly engages with Islamists who would embrace many of these contraindicated ideas, and who likely proselyte yet more extreme ideas, the presence of these artefacts of extremist ideas in the Qatari education curricula will understandably be seen as two sides of the same coin. Indeed, even if the critical links and rationales underpinning Qatar's foreign policies are pragmatic and geostrategic in nature, generations of teaching such extreme and relatively extreme sentiments has surely had some impact, somewhere, on the decision-making chain.

43 Roberts, "Is Qatar Bringing the Nusra Front in from the Cold?"
There is little doubt that some Qatari elites have harbored extremist views over the decades, whether they picked them up from the education curricula or elsewhere.\footnote{More details will be provided upon request.}

As to whether senior Qataris were influenced by the education curricula of their upbringing is an imponderable question. The general tenor of Qatar's policies under Emir Hamad bin Khalifah suggests enough complexity to say with some certainty that he was far from some kind of single-minded individual pursuing Islamist causes. Equally, there is also little doubt that he was firmly minded to engage with Arab and Islamic causes broadly conceived when he felt the need or the opportunity arose.

Despite the hyper-controlled nature of Qatari policymaking and its relative insulation from local pressures, no leader - however autocratic - is entirely unmoored from public opinion. And a local population raised on an educational curriculum of this nature is sure to be well disposed to its state engaging and supporting Islamist-oriented causes broadly conceived. Whether in Darfur, Yemen, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Libya, or Egypt, the state can point to evidence whereby it sought to—often in conjunction with key members of the international community—ameliorate the plight and enhance the power of actors on the Islamist spectrum. Such support is important for Qatari leaders. Certainly, there are examples whereby local sentiment has strongly influenced national policy. Many of the educational reforms alluded to earlier driven by Sheikha Moza were reversed (notably issues to do with the language of instruction) because of significant local pressure.\footnote{Eiman Mustafawi and Kassim Shaaban, "Language Policies in Education in Qatar between 2003 and 2012: From Local to Global Then Back to Local," \textit{Language Policy} 18, no. 2 (2019).}

The other obvious example is the zealousness with which most Qataris want to retain the kefala system of local employment. This stymied years of government attempts to alter these conditions, despite the enormous international opprobrium that this situation draws on Qatar. The point is that the government is not immune to local pressures. Equally, one needs to draw careful conclusions about the links between wider public support for a given subject and a state’s foreign policy. An apparent local population with Islamist sympathies (in Qatar or elsewhere) cannot be the causal variable directing or behooving \textit{both} the state’s engagement with Islamist groups \textit{and} a range of foreign policies typically understood as countering such a worldview, like friendly engagement with Israel or profoundly enabling the US and its wars against Muslim majority countries like Afghanistan and Iraq.

Ultimately, a state's education curriculum feeds the waters in which state policy-makers swim. To continue the metaphor, the waters can be made warmer or cooler, depending upon the nature of the input. And, theoretically at least, this will have an effect upon the leaders, engendering them to swim more in one direction rather than another. Nevertheless, leaders retain in Qatar and likely elsewhere, especially in foreign affairs, a significant freedom of action to cut against the
flow. In foreign affairs, Qatar's deeply iconoclastic engagement with Israel in the early-1990s is the quintessential example of its leadership ignoring local sentiment, swimming against the local tide. Yet this was, as noted extensively, balanced with other relations. The point is that cooling the rhetorical temperatures is likely to have an effect in the longer-term. But reaching a critical mass takes a surprising amount of time. Institutions in Qatar and elsewhere retain a preternatural intransigence to change. So, while such changes ought to be encouraged, the Qatar example at least suggests that the link between education and foreign policy is indistinct, far from direct, but not entirely irrelevant.

David B. Roberts is associate professor and senior lecturer in the School of Security Studies at Kings College, London and the author of Qatar: Securing the Global Ambitions of a City State. March 2021
Series Preface

The present report on the Qatari curriculum is the second in a series of publications aimed at better understanding the relationship of curricula with domestic and foreign policy priorities.

To date, IMPACT-se has focused mainly on assessing curricula and their correspondence with international standards of peace and tolerance. This type of research aims at contributing to peace education by providing much needed information to help affect change. The findings have repeatedly shown that curricula reflect deep trends within governments and societies on many levels, and often appear to anticipate events.

For example, as noted in the interim edition of this report (August 2020):

Criticism of the Arab siege countries is restrained, leaving open avenues for dialogue. The siege of Qatar is viewed somewhat positively, strengthening patriotic sentiment and allowing Qatari leaders to display magnanimity toward their rivals.47

Among other things, Arab siege countries—Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt—were described as "sister states" [duwal shaqiqa] and their complete names were mentioned respectfully.48 Four months later, in January 2021, Qatar and Saudi Arabia agreed to resolve their three-and-a-half-year conflict.

While such anecdotes were frequent over the years of curriculum research, our expectation with this series is to gradually and cumulatively develop a clearer understanding of the connections between curricula and the world at large. The structure of each project has been left to the discretion of authors in the hope of fostering creativity and identifying new possibilities for curriculum-derived insights.

In his foreword to this report, Dr. David B. Roberts systematically dissects—in a descriptive and theoretical manner—the proposition that the country's engagement with actors of the Islamist spectrum, "emerge from or are otherwise shaped" by the state's education curriculum. He concedes that "decades of extreme and relatively extreme" educational sentiments contributed (probably significantly) to a population at ease with Qatar's engagement with Islamist actors. The best explanation for these policies in his view is pragmatic, a desire "to augment the state's reach and power." Roberts suggests that while elements of the curriculum "promote a particularly austere, Manichean and extreme-leaning worldview," its impact on the population is overshadowed by the near-complete freedom of action enjoyed by the Qatari leadership.

48 Ibid., p. 70.
Realistically, he argues, there is no threat to the Qatari leadership or constraints on its decision-making from the country's Sunni citizens. The link between education and foreign policy is thus "indistinct, far from direct, but not entirely irrelevant."

Roberts also provides longer-term historical perspectives on the topic at hand. Along with Qatar's current pragmatic considerations, he views the curriculum's authorship by radical Islamists as a by-product of their early immigration and employment in the state's apparatus since the 1950s; hence, their availability, influence and impact on the public's worldview. Looking to the future, he submits that cooling the rhetorical temperature (in education) "is likely to have an effect in the longer-term."

One takeaway from this analysis is that the development of the curriculum is a very long process. It is not entirely clear why Qatari cultivate these radical immigrants for decades and let them educate their children. Roberts leans toward pragmatic considerations. In my author's preface to the original interim report, I speculated that Qatari decision makers were radicals in their hearts and wished to impart their worldview to the next generation.49 In contrast, the first publication in this series, dealing with the radicalization of the Turkish curriculum, reminds us that Islamization of the curriculum in that country began under secular governments (1980–2002) for various pragmatic reasons.50 This "secular Islamization" contributed to the ascent of Erdogan's Islamist-leaning party and consequently to Turkey's current imperialistic fascination with "reach and power" (Islamist, Ottomanist, globalistic pan-Turkish).

This leads to another upshot of Roberts' thesis: the constraints imposed on decision-makers by public opinion (having been fashioned over time by consecutive national curricula, among other factors). Roberts teaches us that in the Qatari case such constraints, though comparatively weak, still exist. The objections to Anglo-Western educational reforms provide one example. Similar constraints on educational changes were observed in Turkey, as well. Cautious Islamization continued in Turkey after 2002, but was also accompanied by more moderation and openness, as public opinion dictated.

In the Qatari curriculum too, there is moderate messaging. The IMPACT-se report notes that large segments of the curriculum, particularly courses taught in English language, display much openness. The initial report identified a reduction of radical Islamist messaging, paired with what appeared to be genuine longing for an open and tolerant approach to the teaching of Islam, with an emphasis on democracy and the acknowledgement that all Qatari inhabitants (including

49 (5).
expatriates) deserve to have rights. The report also identified a sober, at times friendly, attitude toward past colonial powers.

The curriculum reflects, at least partially, the complexity of Qatar's foreign policies and ambitions, and its ability to talk to different actors in different languages. The discussion of tolerance, cultural openness, and perhaps democratization, is calibrated to prepare the ground for constitutional changes in the event pressure from the large non-citizen population and international circles becomes a threat to stability.

What continues to be worrying, in both the Turkish and Qatari curricula, is an embedded global Islamist fervor, inculcating a problematic worldview to students. Such a worldview is obviously dangerous for the long term, but more so in the present, translating to actions both at home and globally, apparently as allowed by pragmatic real-world considerations.

Eldad J. Pardo, PhD
IMPACT-se Director of Research
Series Editor
Preface/Acknowledgements

The added material in this updated report does little to allay previous concerns about the Qatari curriculum. Most troubling is the realization that the leaders of this proud and unique country have allowed their children to be exposed for years to one of the most radical jihadi educations in the world. It is hard to conceive that there are still countries on this planet in which more than 95 percent of the workforce have no citizen rights and can be deported in a moment. Some have been treated no better than slaves. More worrying, for many, this has been until very recently, internationally legal and "acceptable." One does not expose the souls of one's young children to a radical curriculum written by radical individuals unless one is a radical.

But we still sense that the curriculum is in a change-mode, moving in a direction from jihadi radicalism toward open engagement with the world. To its credit, and with the exception of antisemitism and the Jewish/Israeli Other, the textbooks bravely touch upon the most sensitive issues: citizens and non-citizens, mosques in the West, slavery in the Gulf, Islam as a civilization which learned from others, tribal affiliation, enemies that are brothers, non-Arabs that helped build Islamic civilization, and discussions of democracy in a country that is, objectively, little more than a privately owned family business.

To be fair, when it comes to Israel and the Jews, the report identifies some new elements. Most important are the recognition in the curriculum of reasonable solutions to a host of issues by Israel and the Jews, later rejected by Muslims or Arabs (and ultimately leading to war and tragedies). This includes Herzl's support of the Ottoman-Muslim order in the Middle East, the acceptance of the partition plan in 1947, and the Arab blockade of the Tiran Straits in 1967 for no apparent reason. While peace treaties and processes are depicted favorably, the curriculum continues to cast Israel as illegitimate; the subject of Qatari-Israeli relations is thus ignored.

But the Qatari enigma goes further. There appears to be a mixture of ways to relate to Israel, depending on context. There is the "Peace Treaty between Egypt and the Zionist Entity"; the "Arab peace process with Israel" comprised the framework for the 1991 Madrid Conference; the Oslo agreement was a corollary of "secret negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis"; there have been many rounds of "negotiations between the Arab and Israeli sides"; the 1994 "Jordanian-Israeli-Peace Treaty" was in fact a treaty between "Jordan and the State of Israel"; and the 1996 opening of an Israeli trade office in Doha is disregarded in favor of Qatar's "steady position" toward the "practices of the Zionist Entity."

And then there is the open recognition of Britain's role in securing Qatar's existence, the presentation of Britain as saving Arab tribes from fighting against each other, Ottoman intervention, insecurity on the seas, arms trafficking and the slave trade. All this flies in the face
of the pro forma anti-colonialist declarations one hears so often in the Middle East; in truth it persists even in some parts of this curriculum.

A hallmark of the Qatari conduct tends to look favorably at foreign powers securing the peace in the Gulf, allowing Qataris to focus on their own interests. Much attention in this curriculum is given to the composition of Qatari national identity: Islamic, Arab, and global. The peninsula seems committed to having a finger in every pie while advancing Qatari-Arab and Islamic culture worldwide. And after decades of radical Islamist teaching, Qatari students now learn the first article of the constitution includes the idea of democracy.

Qatar is a sovereign independent Arab state. Its religion is Islam and Islamic Sharia is a major source of its legislation; its regime is democratic, its official language is the Arabic language and the people of Qatar are from the Arab nation.

Thus, Islamic Sharia is a major source for legislation but not the only one. The constitution declares: Qatar's "regime is democratic" And though the world (and students) know Qatar is far from democratic, its vision, as taught in school textbooks, includes democracy.

The updated curriculum does not show any substantive changes that would place it in the category of conforming to international standards of peace and tolerance. Reading the texts, however, one cannot help but have a semblance of the direction in which the Qataris would like to see their curriculum develop. There is almost a sense that at least some of the authors are venturing into the dark, cold water, dipping their toes and then abruptly pulling back; the water's too cold, uncomfortable and still too much of an unknown. So, we see a step forward and two or three steps back. But the step forward cannot be ignored—nor should it be.

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.

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The challenges of researching Qatar's curriculum persisted for this updated report. The unavailability of some key textbooks originally necessitated an interim report although the seventy-plus books we collected for the update proved sufficient for our current overall findings. We were indeed laser-focused on prospective hoped-for changes in the year since the interim report. And while Qatar made some progress, it is still far from meeting international standards of peace and tolerance—all the more required of a nation with global ambitions.

Many individuals contributed to this report, led by our IMPACT-se team members, including Asher Spekterman, Dina Tsamir, Jordan Kastrinsky and Itam Shalev who provided Arabic translations and extensive textbook research. Thanks as well to Ariel Brodkey for his valuable operations skills and to Dina Gitlin-Leigh for her proofreading. We were fortunate to have the
expert research support of Tomer Amrani, Maayan Gal, Shahar Goldshtein, Alon Gur, Shir Kremer, Sharon Mor, Stav Nacson, Matan Peer, Rotem Sar Shalom, Oded Schurr and Amos Taron. IMPACT-se COO Arik Agassi’s unending efforts to find textbooks—along with a relentless pursuit of perfection—made the initial interim report and this updated version a reality. Our heartfelt appreciation goes to Dr. Jade McGlynn of the Henry Jackson Society, for her thoughtful and professional review. Finally, our thanks to IMPACT-se's CEO Marcus Sheff, for his leadership and insight on the continuing enigma that is Qatar.

Eldad J. Pardo, PhD
Research Director, IMPACT-se
Introduction

This updated report focuses on Qatar's school curriculum for grades 1–12. IMPACT-se's goal is to provide an assessment by analyzing as many textbooks as possible using international standards based on UNESCO and UN declarations and other recommendations and documents on education for peace and tolerance. Our qualified review of 314 textbooks for the calendar years 2016–20, determined that the Qatari curriculum does not yet meet international standards. It should be noted that the final assessment will ultimately depend on numerous changes unfolding throughout the curriculum and the emirate.

Beyond compliance with international standards, our reports strive to attain some understanding as regards the significance of our findings. Curricula often reveal the contours of how a given nation sees itself, the Other, and hopefully, a future direction for the society. Thus, a curriculum translates into a national project—a survey of sorts—that may reflect the intentions of a nation, but possibly goes far beyond. In Qatar, the ultimate authority rests with an emir. Nevertheless, tribal, constitutional and Islamic traditions require the consultation (shura) of others. Such consultative values extend to Qatar's curriculum where certain democratic values are explicitly described and inculcated in the textbooks. The researched corpus clearly reflects input emanating from a plethora of groups and individuals within the citizenry, expatriate community and also foreign advisors and participants from the Arab and Western worlds.

The scope of the curriculum's contributors ranges from the RAND Corporation to a host of authors affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood and the Qatar-based Egyptian Islamist Sheikh Yusuf Al Qaradawi, for many years assigned to construct the Islamic Education textbooks. An updated History textbook describes the participation of a group of anonymous University of Qatar experts on the curriculum.

Although the report notes the curriculum's many positive changes in recent years, some are not conclusive; there are certainly problematic directions as well. Moreover, the cumulative incitement of past years may have left an indelible effect on Qatari hearts and minds. As an

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Illustration, the percentage of Holocaust denial in Qatar is among the highest in the world (79 percent).  

And while the Weill Cornell Medical College in Doha hosts the Oxford University Press journal—*Holocaust and Genocide Studies*—it is doubtful whether this has any impact on the general public. More likely to be read is the Arabic version of the antisemitic *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, found in Qatar's National Library.

Until recently, the curriculum was rife with *jihadism* and contained numerous antisemitic and anti-Christian tropes. Recent editions appear to demonstrate a desire to move from isolationist and xenophobic attitudes to a more culturally interactive view. This is perhaps predicated on Qatar's 2030 Vision, its efforts to secure a knowledge-based economy, and the branding of the Qatari mini-state in ways to permit an active and continuous role in world affairs.

Despite positive changes, our analysis of the curriculum does not offer a clear path to decipher the Qatar enigma. In any discussion of Qatar, one is likely to touch on the question of whether support for Islamist movements around the world reflects a genuine inclination to Islamism or just stems from the pragmatic security needs of a small country surrounded by real or imagined enemies. To what extent does Qatar's participation in destabilizing a host of Arab countries and supporting anti-Israeli terror groups an ideological consideration, or purely pragmatic or opportunistic gamesmanship that should be seen in a wider context?

Some analysts believe these policies emanate from such realpolitik considerations. Yet, for many years Qatari children were taught a curriculum largely authored by the radical Muslim Brotherhood. This should be evident when considering Qatar's motivation in supporting a host of

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55 Ibid.


radical Islamic groups in the region and throughout the world. Delegating the education of the country's children to radicals demonstrates that radicalism is—or at least was—for many years at the core of Qatar's worldview. It is also true that the official Islam recognized in Qatar is the Wahhabist creed of Salafism, although the curriculum follows more orthodox Salafi tenets. Unlike Saudi Arabia, the Ministry of Education in Qatar controls all state schools, possibly because there is no powerful class of local religious scholars (ulama). The Ministry allows Muslim Brotherhood-inspired education in the school system. The numbers of Qatari teachers in the Religious Institute, a secondary government-supported school founded by Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, skyrocketed from zero to 40 percent. Qaradawi's views on Muslim minorities worldwide are reflected in the curriculum.

In previous years, students learned that democracy was against Islam; that befriending non-Muslims was a sin; that there was a Jewish world conspiracy in place aimed at taking over the world; that the Jews were treacherous by nature and have always been so; and that the Church, Crusades, charities, missionary work and Middle Eastern studies and modern Western and Arab liberal thought—had all been part of one grand scheme aimed at destroying Islam. Minorities were described as unreliable and believed to collaborate with the "enemy." The attitude toward Israel was radical and verged on an eliminationist approach. Gender relations left much to be desired in past editions; current textbooks range between women's empowerment and strict traditionalism.

But there is much positive material in the current 2020 textbooks. The Qatari curriculum is mindful of contributions toward its independence and sovereignty by various nations (the Ottomans, UK, US) and their efforts to maintain peace in the Gulf. It avoids spewing hate against difficult neighbors. Democracy is lauded and revered. Schools have elections and citizens vote in local elections. Global cultural interactions and openness are emphasized. Much attention is given to the non-Muslim members of the eighth-century translation movement, which was mainly Graeco-Arabic but also included material from Sanskrit, Persian and Syriac. Modern Western scholars are praised. The Two-State solution is acknowledged, despite reservations, as a blueprint for future relations between Israelis and Palestinians. A new history

64 *Arabic Language*, Grade 2, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 16.
textbook while perpetuating the usual anti-Israeli canards also includes some surprising information one would not typically find in Arab textbooks.

The curriculum also warns against tribal and national chauvinism, as it emphasizes Qatari patriotism, loyalty and participation in local elections. English and science textbooks offer much content about the culture of peace and the need for prosperity and scientific collaboration. Yet, in an educational system that now appears to teach tolerance, among the population there has been serious maltreatment of the majority expatriate community; they remain without a path to citizenship. And while there seems to be no thinking of equal rights for all in Qatar at the moment, the curriculum, at least, seems sensitive to this huge social problem facing Qatar in the long term.

A brief introduction to Qatar's background is germane to the curriculum and may help readers identify nuances in the excerpts provided. Some general information about Qatari education is also included to compliment the reader's perspective of the curriculum.

**Historical Background**

On a peninsula of less than 4,471 square miles jutting into the Persian Gulf, with a population under three million (of which only 10.5 percent are citizens), and a tiny army with approximately 12,000 active personnel, Qatar is not only prospering but has become a global actor. The percentage of Qatari citizens is steadily shrinking, expat residents now comprise 95 percent of the workforce, a constant source of uneasiness for the ruling regime. As the world's 158th smallest nation, comprising, arguably, little more than a family business with a seemingly endless income stream, Qatar's impact in the region and beyond is considerable.

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65 The remaining 89.5% are expats. Numbers for Qatar's ethnic and religious composition vary. According to Priya D'Souza's website Qatar's population by nationality in 2019 included 333,000 Qatari nationals (10.5%). Among the expats the largest in quantity are: 700,000 Indians (1.8%); 400,000 Bangladeshis (12.5%); 400,000 Nepalis (12.5%); 300,000 Egyptians (9.35%); 236,000 Filipinos (7.35%); 150,000 Pakistanis (4.7%); and 140,000 Sri Lankans (4.35%). The rest (less than 2%) come from around 80 other countries. These include 60,000 Sudanese; 51,000 Jordanians; 40,000 Lebanese; 40,000 Americans; and 30,000 Iranians; Jure Snoj, "Population of Qatar by Nationality—2019 Report," Priya D'Souza Communications, August 15, 2019, https://priyadsouza.com/population-of-qatar-by-nationality-in-2017/;

By religion, the population is divided into Muslim, 67.7% (80% Sunni, 20% Shi'ite); Christian, 13.8%; Hindu, 13.8%; Buddhist, 3.1%; Other religion, 2%; https://armedforces.eu/Qatar.

66 Qatar's annual military budget is $19.3 billion for 11,800 active personnel, https://armedforces.eu/Qatar.

67 From 40% in 1970, to 24% percent in 2004 to 10.5% in 2019; Snoj, "Population."

Qatar’s economic success derives from the late 1930s discovery of petroleum and natural gas, which the peninsula began producing in 1949. With oil and gas exports, Qatar’s citizens soon achieved one of the world's highest per capita incomes. Before discovering the oil and gas fields, Qatar's income depended on fishing and pearl-diving; Japanese cultured pearls, introduced amidst a world depression, drove many poverty-stricken Qataris out of the peninsula.

As outlined in the national school textbooks, Qatar's existence as a political entity owes much to nineteenth century British policies which led to freeing the Gulf inhabitants from Ottoman control. British and later American policies aimed at the region had a dramatic role in creating Qatar and making it "the richest country in the world . . ."  

There have been consequences from this dramatic transformation. The change from the poorest to the richest nation—but with a weak military—has created a structural schism in the face of powerful neighbors not always harboring the best of intentions.

At home, stability is a consideration. The citizen population is heterogeneous with certain rights but not necessarily with access to political power. Yet, the return to aspects of tribal identity has apparently served as a source of pride and family-channeled political clout for the non-ruling citizenship. The bond of tribal belonging, (*asabiya* in sociology), has surprisingly reasserted

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72 *Asabiya* is a term coined by famous Arab social scientist Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406).
itself even in urban settings in Qatar. One explanation offers seven components of Qatari citizenry.

First, in no particular order, there is the Al Thani family, a family that traces its lineage back to the Najd of the central Arabian Peninsula. Second, there is the component of the citizenry who trace their lineage to one of the two Bedouin tribes indigenous to the Qatari Peninsula (Al Murrah and Bani Hajr). Third, there are those Bedouin tribes who trace their lineage to other tribes not indigenous to the Qatari Peninsula, many of whom arrived to serve and protect the ruling family and state in various political conflicts in the past. Fourth, there are various families and clans originally from Bahrain—pearling and merchant families who settled the northern peninsula. Fifth and sixth, there is the portion of the citizenry who trace their roots to Persia in some manner or another—those who claim Arab ethnicity, as well as those who do not. Seventh, there are several clans from Yemen who have a longstanding presence in Qatar. To this list, one might be tempted to add the descendants of the slave population brought to Qatar from Africa, but they are already integrated into the genealogical social structures described above.

Some experts argue that conflict between the Saudis and Qatar is tribal in nature, the Saudi royal family being part of the Anza tribes, while the Qatari Al Thani family belongs to the regional Banu Tamims. Qatar therefore supports clans belonging to Banu Tamim—Sunni and Shi'ite alike—inside Saudi Arabia. These ancient tribal conflicts, originating from struggles in the heart of the Arabian Peninsula, hover over the current conflict between Qatar and its Arab neighbors in the Persian Gulf.

An echo of this complexity reverberates in the country’s textbooks. Students are warned against highlighting their status and tribal affiliation. The GCC conflict is extensively covered.

Although Qataris are predominantly Sunni Muslims, the large Shi'ite population has developed unique and accepted forms of expression. Other groups may be categorized in various circumstances: from Bedouins to city dwellers and Persians to ethnic Arabs. But the dilemma

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74 Ibid., p. 57.
75 Inside Qatar itself, the ruling family has taken drastic measures against dissenting groups; in 1996, it stripped citizenship from thousands (although most later had rights restored). "Al-Ghufran: A Story of a Tribe Oppressed by the Two Hamads," Al-Ain News (Arabic), Mar 11, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NJXYKTDqc;
"The Gulf Hour: Withdrawing Citizenship from the Al-Ghufran (clan) in Qatar," Monte Carlo Doualiya (Arabic), July 2, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itYxh7hb2YY;
most critical for Qatar, stems from the majority population of non-Arab, non-Muslim residents forming a perpetual non-citizen majority.

One should consider the geopolitical position of life on a peninsula in the Gulf between a powerful rival on land and an even more powerful one just beyond the Gulf. Arguably, the vulnerability of living on a peninsula may have led Qatar to a proactive—even aggressive—mentality in dealing with the region and world.

**School Education**

Qatar's public school system has three components: six years of primary school; three years of junior high school (preparatory); followed by a three-year high school course.

The modern public school system emerged in the 1950s. Previously, there had been no formal education in the peninsula except for a few low-level kuttab (religious schools for young children). Girls' schools also started in the mid-1950s. Following the British pullout from the Gulf in 1971, Qatar decided not to merge with the UAE and hence became an independent country with a distinct educational system.

Schools in Qatar are regulated by the Ministry of Education and the Supreme Education Council. The 1980s saw approximately forty-six thousand students in a few hundred public schools. This led Emir Sheikh Hamad, in the mid-1990s, to develop an educational curriculum for the entire population. The Qataris eventually sought help from RAND Corporation, which in 2001 proposed *Education for a New Era*, a K-12 reform.

The results were significant, but problems lingered. International test scores were initially unimpressive. There were concerns that too many studies were offered in English at the expense of local language and culture. Since 2014 however, education quality improved dramatically at all levels with the development of school-wide learning portals (K-Net) and e-governance services (Hukoomi).78 Qatar ranks number one in the Arab world and fourth in the world according to the World Economic Forum's January 2019 Education Quality Index.79 While much help was received from a variety of sources, there remain serious issues in the curriculum regarding peace and tolerance.80

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80 Summary of the first years of the K-12 reform: Brewer et al., Education for a New Era, pp. 153–68.
The disparity of cultures and even language among teachers and students creates its own problems. Only one-quarter of the teachers in grades 1–12 are Qatari nationals. Teachers have a fairly low social status and non-citizen teachers can be deported at any time. Most of the foreign teachers are Arabs, but not from the Gulf, so they do not speak the khaliji (Gulf Arabic) dialect. This means that in some classes there are several versions of Arabic heard in addition to English. Fortunately, textbooks are written in standard modern Arabic, which serves as a common denominator. Most of the students come from a Salafi orthodox background and adhere to Bedouin traditions. Boys and girls study separately.

Qatar has become a vibrant international hub for education. Apart from 312 government public schools teaching the Qatari curriculum for citizens, there are 450 international curriculum schools, forty-seven Arab private schools and seventy foreign community schools serving the large expatriate and foreign student communities. Only government schools are free. The state curriculum is supervised by the Ministry of Education and includes the Religious Institute which teaches the national curriculum with added religious studies.

State schools are considered "independent"; while they must meet curriculum standards, they are free to write their own syllabi and create their own textbooks. Along with matters of security, US influence in education is also significant, even as large parts of the curriculum contradict American values. Qatar hosts branches of Western universities in Doha's Education City; many are American, which confirms the influence of Western values in Qatari society. With their large enrollments of international students, these transplanted universities are meant to supply the framework for Qatar's future knowledge-based economy. However, there is an apparent wide gap in such Western education values between the state colleges and universities and the education available in Doha's Education City.


82 Al Sharq, "Abdullah Al-Nuaimi."


[Professor] Leo Lefebure describes his class of Problem of God, at Georgetown University in Qatar: 'One student commented that in her earlier schools she had absorbed extremely negative attitudes toward all other religions from her teachers. Georgetown offered her the first opportunity to learn more about other traditions in a more open-minded atmosphere, and her attitude today is much more positive.'  

While this educational gap with Western values still lingers on the tertiary level, the current primary and secondary curriculum textbooks have shown themselves to be somewhat more open-minded.

Qatari education should be seen as part of the state's effort to gain worldwide visibility in what appears to be a concerted effort to make it a hub of education, knowledge education, media and diplomacy; using "subtle power" to attain a "tiny giant" effect is the goal. For example, since there is no Nobel Prize for education, in 2011, the Qataris launched their own equivalent prize, the WISE, worth $500 thousand. In another area garnering wide attention, sports, investments include the purchase of the Paris Saint-Germain Football Club (PSG) and Qatar's hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup (with much unintended bad publicity over the exploitation of foreign workers).

Qatari education for grades 1–12 has for years been radical, with abysmal attention to peace and tolerance. In the introduction to the interim report, we noted that while some adjustments were made toward moderation, they appeared incremental at best. The current update suggests that parts of the curriculum have been further reworked; nevertheless, radicalism remains.

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85 Leo D. Lefebure is a Professor of Theology at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, and a Berkley Center faculty fellow. Quotations in: Magdalena Rostron, "Liberal Arts Education in Qatar: Intercultural Perspectives," Intercultural Education 20, no. 3 (2009), p. 228 (see endnote 14).


89 Pardo, "Understanding Qatari Ambitions," p. 16.
Islam and Jihadism

Islam is a mainstay of the Qatari worldview and way of life. As such, it also encompasses Qatar’s essential political ideology. Both elements are abundantly present in the curriculum, which teaches a mixed Salafi–Muslim Brotherhood version of Islam.

Jihad is considered a masculine duty. The following text strives to show equality between the sexes in religious duties. While jihad war remains the male's prerogative, the jihad expected of women, for the most part, is to make pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj). Note that in other curricula, such as the Iranian and the Palestinian, the idea of female martyrdom in jihad wars is now acceptable. This does not appear to be the case with the Qatari curriculum.
C— Equality of Legal Responsibilities and Moral Obligations

Keeping the religious observances such as prayer, fasting and charity is equally required of men and women. However, Allah lessened her burden compared to what He had imposed on the men. Example: With jihad, He set woman's jihad as [pilgrimage of] the hajj or the 'umrah. He maintained her health in mental, menstrual and labor conditions, and eliminated her prayer and fasting. In addition, Islam created equality between men and women in morals and the rules of conduct, such as faith, modesty and integrity, which are demanded of women as they are of men.


Even if women are not required to perform jihad war, their roles include raising children to perform jihad and die as martyrs. This concept is taught in a chapter about 'Umm 'Umarah Nusaybah bint Ka'ab—shown praising her three children who "died as martyrs for the sake of Allah."

'Umm 'Umarah—A Role Model to Women in Raising the Sons:

Nusaybah bint Ka'ab performed the role of raising her children perfectly. She raised them to love Islam and to love jihad in order to elevate the words 'there is no god beside Allah'; and to invest extensive efforts for Allah, and the books of the Sirah [biography of the Prophet] teach us that her three children died as martyrs for the sake of Allah Almighty.

Islamic Education, Grade 6, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 139.

90 Hajj is an annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca performed on a fixed date with millions of pilgrims attending. Umrah can be accomplished at any time of the year. The Hajj celebrations are more elaborate.
The curriculum also includes the story of the first nurse and physician in Islam, Rufaida Al-Aslamia, "who treated the wounds of the Muslims in the raids commanded by the Prophet to spread Islam." The text notes that she participated in such raids of the Prophet as the Battle of the Trench and Khaybar.91

While recognizing that jihād war remains a masculine duty, the curriculum authors removed a large section on jihād war from the previous 2019 edition of Islamic Education textbooks. This is definitely a welcome step, although much content encouraging militant jihād still remains.

One removed section from the tenth-grade 2018 edition of Islamic Education narrates the heroic acts of the martyr (shahīd) Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah (583–639 CE) and why he is considered a martyr in the Way of Allah, even though he died from the plague in the Levant, during the Muslim conquest (p. 92). In the same 2018 textbook, a hadith is quoted, "Fight the polytheists with your wealth, lives and tongues" (p. 131). These examples of jihād war are not defensive, but relate to the spread of the faith (classic jihād wars). Another hadith, attributed to Zaid bin Khalid, points directly to the jihād fighter, as ghāzi, one who participates in a ghazwa (military expedition or raid) within a jihād war (p. 132). In other words, material relating to the jihād war (later removed) included offensive jihād, aimed at spreading Islam.92 Similar material still exists elsewhere in the curriculum.

To be fair, the hadith rendered by Zaid bin Khalid offers options how to support the war effort without necessarily participating in it. In other words, it does not convey the radical interpretation of jihād as a personal duty for all to: "go kill an infidel now." Moreover, Zaid bin Khalid himself—portrayed as a role model—lived a long life and authored many hadith traditions while serving as an example of a devout Muslim who was not a martyr.

From Zaid bin Khalid:

Allah's Messenger said, 'He who prepares a ghāzi [jihādī raider] going in Allah's Cause is given a reward equal to that of a ghāzi; and he who looks after properly the dependents

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91 Arabic Language, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 33.
of a ghazi going in Allah's Cause is (given reward equal to that of a) ghazi\textsuperscript{93} \textsuperscript[agreed upon].\textsuperscript{94}  


\textit{Jihad} war is compared to a transaction, which secures a ticket for paradise.

\textbf{C – Entrance to Paradise:}

Allah said: 'Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties [in exchange] for which they will have Paradise.' [Al-Tawbah: 111]


In sum, the obligation of \textit{jihad} war was instilled for many years in the hearts of Qatari students—both as defensive and offensive; protecting the homeland and spreading Islam; participating directly or in supporting roles—ultimately representing a transaction of martyrdom for a place in heaven.

Education for \textit{jihad} war remains in other textbooks. A self-evaluation exercise from 2020, asks male students to envision themselves performing \textit{jihad}. The exercise follows an anecdote from the battle of the Trench. There were no slaves available and the Muslims had to work hard digging the trench themselves.

\textsuperscript{93} Sunnah.com,  

\textsuperscript{94} “Agreed upon” is a technical term representing those traditions (hadith) with the highest level of reliability.
Self-Evaluation:

To what degree do I implement the moral skills and values that appeared in the field of Prophetic biography?

I follow the example of the Messenger of Allah in his steadfastness and Jihad—Always/Sometimes/Rarely.

I will defend the truth [i.e., Islam] with all the power I have—Always/Sometimes/Rarely.

*Islamic Education, Grade 7*, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 84.

Death is inevitable. Therefore, during *jihad* war one should follow the principle of death or victory. This is a poem by Abd Allah ibn Rawahah in the battle of Mu'ta, encouraging the Muslims to follow two commanders who died as martyrs early in the battle.

I will examine what was said by the great Companion Abdallah ibn Rawahah, and then I will answer:

O my soul, if you are not killed, you will die anyway
Here is the death you prayed for
What you wished, you now receive
If you follow the two [commanders], you will be rightly guided [to Paradise]
And if you hesitate, you will suffer [in hell]

Then the words of Abdallah ibn Rawahah resolved the situation: 'Oh people, we do not fight people with our numbers or force; we fight for one of the two rewards: victory or martyrdom.'


The value of sacrificing one's soul (martyrdom) for the sake of Islam is taught as a central lesson from a chapter about the historical Islamic figure Ali bin Abi Talib. Ali is known for his military prowess and heroism. In the following excerpt he is glorified for killing polytheist warriors including a well-known Jewish horseman in the battlefield.

3. His bravery:

Ali was a role model of bravery, sacrifice and courage, as witnessed by everyone who knew him. He participated in all the battles besides the Battle of Tabuk, by orders of the Prophet, and he faced many polytheist horsemen and killed them, such as Walid ibn Utbah in the Battle of Badr, Amr ibn Abd al-Wud in the Battle of the Trench, and Jewish horseman Marhab in the Battle of Khaybar.

Usable Lessons:

1. The merit of steadfastness for the truth.
2. Necessity of elevated values such as modesty and courage.


A chapter on jihad explains that participation in fighting is "the highest type of jihad." The text glorifies martyrdom and discusses the many rewards and blessings martyrs receive upon dying, which include entrance to "the highest level of Heaven." On the other hand, the text also qualifies participation in jihad to cases "performed under the ruler’s declaration of general mobilization."

Types of Jihad:

Jihad is divided into types according to its application, including:

1. Jihad with the soul [full commitment]: It is the act of investing one’s soul in active participation in fighting. This is the highest type of jihad, which is performed under the ruler’s declaration of general mobilization. The Almighty said: 'March forth whether it is
easy or difficult for you, and strive with your wealth and your lives in the cause of Allah. That is best for you, if only you knew.' [At-Tawbah, 41]

Martyrdom for the Sake of Allah:

The Grace of Martyrdom for the Sake of Allah:

Allah prepares for the martyr, who advances his soul through the path of Allah and defends the servants and the country, for great grace and extreme reward.

This grace includes:

1 - The martyr will be in the highest level of Heaven. The Almighty said: 'And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger—those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favor of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions' [An-Nisa, 69].

2 - The martyr will live with Allah Almighty. The Almighty said: 'Never think of those martyred in the cause of Allah as dead. In fact, they are alive with their Lord, well provided for' [Ali Imarn, 169].

3 - The martyr will perform intercession for seventy members of his family. The Messenger of Allah said: 'The martyr will perform intercession for seventy members of his family' (Narrated by Ibn Hibban).

4 - Every fault but a debt will be forgiven to a martyr. The Messenger of Allah said: 'Every fault but a debt will be forgiven to a martyr' (Narrated by Muslim).

Rules Relating to the Martyr:

He [His body] will not be washed, he will not be wrapped in shrouds, and no one will pray for him, as a token of respect and honor of his martyrdom for the sake of Allah. Proof of this is what Jabir reported, in which the Prophet 'ordered that the martyrs of Uhud be buried with their blood, without washing them or praying for them.' He [the Prophet] said: 'Wrap them up with their blood, for there is no wound incurred for the sake of Allah, but He will come on the Day of Resurrection bleeding with the color of blood, but its fragrance will be that of musk' (Narrated by Al-Nisa’i and Ahmad).


Fourth-graders learn to fear the fire of hell:

The Proof of the Judgment of Creatures on the Final Day:

The Qur’an has many verses that teach us Allah judges everyone on the Day of Resurrection and that loyal believers are rewarded with heaven and the punishment of wicked infidels is the fire of hell.

While Muslims will be tranquil and serene upon death, the non-believer (non-Muslim) will suffer anguish and pain at the hands of Allah in death.

**Situations of People in Death:**

**People Have Two Death Situations (Ways to Meet Death):**

**First: The Situation of the Believer in Death:**

Reassurance and tranquility will surround him [the believer] and make good his soul, and the angels will preach, just like He said: "Indeed, those who have said, 'Our Lord is Allah' and then remained on a right course—the angels will descend upon them, [saying], 'Do not fear and do not grieve but receive good tidings of Paradise, which you were promised'" [Fussialt 41:30].

**Second: The Situation of the Infidel in Death**

Anxiety and fear will surround him [the infidel] and malign his soul, and the angels will pull out his soul with reprimands and threats, as Allah said "And who is more unjust than one who invents a lie about Allah or says, 'It has been inspired to me, while nothing has been inspired to him,' and one who says, 'I will reveal [something] like what Allah revealed.' And if you could but see when the wrongdoers are in the overwhelming pangs
of death while the angels extend their hands, [saying], 'Discharge your souls! Today you will be awarded the punishment of [extreme] humiliation for what you used to say against Allah other than the truth and [that] you were being arrogant toward His verses” [Al-An'am 6:93].

**Believers:** Reassurance and Tranquility; Happy Soul; Enjoying Heaven

**Infidels:** Fear and Anxiety; Evil within the Soul; Threat of Fire


**Jihad: Vehicle to Spread the Faith**

The notion of spreading Islam by the sword is alive in the Qatari curriculum. A text introduced in 2019 about a female nurse and physician who participated in Islam's early wars, points to "the raids commanded by the Prophet to spread Islam." ⁹⁵

This early Islamic message conveys that *jihad* war for the spread of Islam is the right thing to do as long as it serves the interests of Islam and chances to win are good. Peace in that context of the classic division between The House of Islam (*dar al-islam*) and the House of War (*dar al-harb*) is reserved for the world of Islam, not the rest of the world.

In recent years, a new concept emerged: *Fiqh Al-Aqalliyyat* (the Jurisprudence of Minorities) was developed, which calls for replacing *jihad* war—at least temporarily—with peaceful ways of spreading the faith (*da’wa*). The reason for this new view, held by the Muslim Brotherhood and largely developed by the Qatar-based Yusuf al-Qaradawi, is that Muslims are now allowed to live in the lands of Christendom and spread the faith peacefully. ⁹⁶

But the classic paradigm regarding *jihad* continues to be taught in Qatar. Peace for the sake of peace is not enough. If a country refuses to allow "the call to Islam," it should be fought. One way the curriculum tries to instill this concept in students is in the study of Islam's history, ranging from early Islamic raids to medieval and pre-modern Islamic empires to contemporary examples.

In the following example from early Islamic battles, Islam and other religions are at war. But the lesson remains the same when teaching ancient history or when applied to the present. Introductions and interpretations from two chapters teaching Qur’an encourage students to do what is necessary in order for Islam to emerge victorious, including *jihad* and combat. Eighth-

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graders learn in these passages that Allah loves *jihad* warriors who fight in His Way, and that Allah defends Islam against the infidels who unite against it.

'Indeed, Allah loves those who fight in His cause in a row [battle array] as though they are a [single] structure joined firmly' [As-Saff 61:4].

- What is the wisdom behind comparing those who fight in the Way of Allah to a firmly joined structure?

After the Exalted warned those who say what they do not do, He followed by explaining who He loves—those who fight for the sake of elevating His religion. So much so that in their firmness, unity of the word and sincere truth constitute a structure whose parts are firmly joined together, so no one can undermine or destroy it.

**Usable Lessons from the Noble Ayahs** [examples]:

3. The love of Allah towards those who wage *jihad* in His Way.
6. Allah defends His religion, even if the forces of infidelity unite against it.

Surah As-Saff is a Medinan Surah, and it consists of 14 Ayahs. It emphasizes the victory that Allah Almighty will grant to the religion of Islam over the others. It also encourages people to adopt means for securing victory, as it warns the believers from breaking the promise, and motivates them to stand up for the religion of Allah to perform *jihad* in His Way.

The earlier noble Ayahs emphasize the victory that Allah will grant to the religion of Islam over the others. It also comes to encourage people to adopt means to secure the victory, as it warns the believers from breaking the promise, and motivates them to stand up for the religion of Allah and to fight in His way.


The following section from 2017—currently removed—extols the high moral ground of *jihad* war and Islamic conquests. The context is the conquest of Jerusalem.
When the Muslims conquered Jerusalem, they did not kill anyone in the city. They did not harm holy places, churches and places of worship.

When the Crusaders entered Jerusalem, they killed over 80,000 of its inhabitants, completely destroyed the city and ran rivers of blood in its streets!

**What is the difference between those who fight *jihad* in the Way of Allah and those who fight for other purposes?**


The current textbooks glorify martyrdom for the sake of Islamic victory during the period of Ottoman rule. In his will, Sultan Murad I asks Allah to let him "drink from the cup of martyrdom" in exchange for a victory for Islam.

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From the Will of Sultan Murad:

'I asked Allah to let me drink from the cup of martyrdom, if this means that Islam will be victorious by my martyrdom. Allah answered my prayer, praise be to Him and thanks to Him . . . .'

- **What are the most important qualities characterizing Murad I?**


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The following map and chart below, describes the much-revered Ottoman Empire in its golden age, showing the spread of the Empire "at its widest" in Europe, Asia and Africa. Through the map, the curriculum demonstrates how the Ottoman State (caliphate) spreads the faith of Islam. In the following chart, "the weakness of the Byzantine State" is contrasted with the "Strong Ottoman Sultans."

Observe the chart to know the factors that helped the Ottoman State to spread:

The Ottoman State’s Expansion and Development

- The desire to spread Islam.
- Existence of strong Sultans
- The Weakness of the Byzantine State
- Material and moral potential
- Political and military organization
- The strength of the Janissary army

That is how the strong Sultans of the Ottoman State could expand in Europe, Asia and Africa.

*Social Studies, Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 116.*
The term *jihad* is also used in the context of modern conflict. A 2017 *Social Studies* textbook explores *jihad* wars in Kashmir where, "the *jihadi* warriors were able to kill more than 26 thousand Indian soldiers."98 Izz ad-Din al-Qassam, who "founded the *jihadi* movement in Palestine," aimed at practicing *jihad* and *resistance* against the British and Jews. He is lauded as a symbol of "determination, courage and martyrdom" while his death is glorified as one that "ignited the ember of *jihad*" and "kindled the spirit of self-sacrifice."

His martyrdom ignited the ember of *jihad*. The Qassam revolution kindled the spirit of sacrifice and prepared for the great Palestinian revolution in 1936.  


The foundation for Qatar's *jihadi* education derives from a compendium of fundamentalist Islam from Wahhabism Salafism and the Muslim Brotherhood. The curriculum provides orthodox descriptions of believers and infidels (*kafirun*) and sinners versus those who are pious on the Day of Judgment. Fear from the eternal fire of hell is instrumental in such religious education and descriptions are meant to be taken seriously rather than metaphorically.99

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Toward Democracy?

All power in Qatar is hereditary and held by the emir and his family. While the majority of people living in Qatar are not citizens, the curriculum, paradoxically, applies democratic methods to educate.

Such contradiction between attention to democratic virtues in the curriculum and Qatar's actual environment is perhaps seen most in the centrality of its hereditary family. All authority rests in the emir, here shown winning rights to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

His highness assumed the rule in 1995 and accomplished many achievements. During his rule Qatar advanced in all spheres, and won [the rights to] organize the Football World Cup for 2022.

*Arabic Language, Grade 2, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 105.*

Despite the absence of an active national parliament or other such democratic institutions, schools are organized according to democratic practices.

*Values I Learn*

Political participation is a national right and duty; so I make sure to participate in the school elections.

*Social Studies, Grade 7, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 141.*

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100 Qatar is ruled by an emir from the Al Thani tribe which immigrated to Qatar in the eighteenth century from Najd (in what is now Saudi Arabia), Weber, "Education," pp. 63–64.
Notions of democracy can be seen in the 2003 referendum over the Qatari constitution, which formed the basis for a Consultative Council. Another way to demonstrate democratic spirit is to describe local elections that actually occur in Qatar. This manner of education seems to allow for the appearance of democracy while authorities strive to adjust to the impending structural challenges facing the nation.

- The referendum over the Qatari constitution is considered one of the most important forms of political participation.

The referendum on the permanent constitution was held on April 29, 2003. The turnout was high. This reflects the response of the citizens. The result of the referendum was 96.6% of the vote [in favor of the constitution].

- Participation in the municipal council elections is one of the most important forms of civil participation. The state of Qatar has announced its intention to move forward on the path of democracy in a gradual and careful manner that derives from the special characteristics of Qatari society. This will secure the elements of success along the road leading to the implementation of full democracy. The Qatari citizen plays his role as a voter, candidate, and participant within the Central Municipal Council. The elections for the first session of the members of the Central Municipal Council were organized in 1999, so that the sessions would follow every four years.

_Social Studies, Grade 7_, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 141.

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101 The emir holds veto powers over the Consultative Council, which was created in the 2003 constitution. The council will eventually include forty-five members (thirty elected and fifteen appointed). The first elections are scheduled for 2021. "The Qatari Shura Council: A Historic Decision by the Prince to Elect Representatives," _Alkhaleej-Online_, November 5, 2009, https://alkhaleejonline.net/.
Participation in elections seems important for the curriculum's authors. The textbooks inculcate this message early in primary school. Note the mosque in the background (while the child exercises his democratic right to vote).

I Color and Enjoy

Arabic Language, Grade 2, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 16.

A previous 2017 textbook featured a direct attack on democracy and concluded that Islam and democracy are incompatible. Qatar's parliament—yet to be convened—is called the Consultative Council (majlis al-shura), which as suggested here, may give counsel, but lacks sovereignty.


In this sense, the Shura [consultation in Islam] stands in contradiction to democracy, which means: The rule of the people, by the people, which means the rule of the majority of the people who make the laws and legislation, even if they contradict the provisions of the official religion in the state.

In the 2020 curriculum, The Islamic Sharia is "a major source for legislation," (it is not the law of the land). The constitution declares: Qatar's "regime is democratic." Qatari students learn in the first article of the constitution that Sharia is a major source of its legislation.

The first article of the Qatari constitution states that: Qatar is a sovereign independent Arab state. Its religion is Islam and Islamic Sharia is a major source of its legislation; its regime is democratic, its official language is the Arabic language and the people of Qatar are from the Arab nation.

– What are the components of the Qatari identity in light of the Qatari constitution? Social Studies, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 94.

Studying the history of the caliphates helps students conceptualize that a society can and should be tolerant and accepting to all. Well-defined classes and groups, based on ethnic origin and faith should be accepted, "without discrimination." Note that the description includes a box that connects the historical situation to the current timeline.
Aspects of Social and Cultural Civilization in the Abbasid State

In the first lesson, you learned about the political and economic aspects of civilization in the Abbasid state. In this lesson the social, cultural and scientific aspects are added.

First, Social Life:
Society in the Abbasid era consisted of Arab elements, and they formed the majority of society, and non-Arab elements such as the Persians and Turks. The groups and elements of society merged, and the dhimmis [protected non-Muslims] lived in the shadow of what had been guaranteed by the values of justice, mercy, equality and coexistence without discrimination.

Discuss with your teacher how the Abbasid state succeeded in establishing a thriving Islamic civilization, despite the diversity of the elements of society from Arabs, Persians, Turks, Dhimmis . . . and others.

Values I Learn
Be very careful to embrace tolerance and non-discrimination among your colleagues

An eleventh-grade Arabic textbook provides much more information on the translation movement during the Abbasid era. The textbook emphasizes the necessity of cultural openness with special attention given to the role of Persians, Christians and Jews.

Second: A Generation of Competent Translators is Available
A group of skilled translators and exquisite interpreters accomplished this civilized duty. The [translation] movement relied on their shoulders, and gave its fruits thanks to their efforts. These people belonged to different religions and races. So they were Muslim, Christian and Jewish, as well as Arab, Persian and Indian, even if they differed in the degree of their proficiency, levels of knowledge, and mastery of languages. Hunayn ibn Ishaq al-Ibadi is the most famous translator of that era.

Cultural interaction is extended to the modern era. Following is an infographic in an English language textbook depicting a number of non-Islamic (Western and Russian) scientific achievements. Another page describes a Muslim traveler and explorer, Ibn Battuta (1304–69).\textsuperscript{103}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Discuss:}
1. Above are names of people who achieved something great in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Have you heard of any of them? Match the names to the information and pictures a-e. Then listen and check your answers.
   - Yuri Gagarin
   - Marie Curie
   - Tim Berners-Lee
   - Roald Amundsen
   - Amelia Earhart
   - Do you know any people who have achieved something great in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century?

\textbf{In this module you will learn...}
- to talk about past events/experiences
- to talk and write about famous people in history and their achievements
- to express ability in the past
- to talk about technology you use
- to talk about events/experiences in the past and in the present
- to write and present facts about a planet
- to give and respond to good news
- to link your ideas with and, but, so and because
- to write an email to a friend
\end{center}

\textit{English, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 21.}

\textsuperscript{103} \textit{English, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 59.}
English textbooks seem to serve as an opportunity to open the gates to a more global mentality.
An Arabic language textbook warns against playing games too much on the computer because it harms students' eyes.

*Arabic Language, Grade 2, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 51.*

Students are thus taught to be aware that changes are coming in a variety of fields. Here is an excerpt dealing with demographic changes in contemporary Qatar:

2 Demographic (Population) Factor:
Qatari society has transformed in a short period of time from a simple society formed from several tribes, to a civilized society of city dwellers. The population's composition has changed due to the influx of large numbers of expatriates working in different economic activities. What resulted was a change and variety in lifestyles. *Social Studies, Grade 7, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 73.*

Oriental Studies (Orientalism)
There are hints of a gradual movement toward more cultural openness and away from culturally motivated hatemongering, although there is still considerable problematic material, including some newly added disturbing content. Qatar's investment in university education has included establishing branches of leading Western academic institutions in Qatar. The strong Qatari
relations with the West and its huge investment in education, sports and economic enterprises are well known.

However, an examination of material that was removed from the 2017 *Islamic Education* textbook represents at least part of the education received by many Qatari adults. The textbook taught that the West intentionally launched a cultural attack against the world of Islam. This concerted effort of Westernization began following the fall of Constantinople in the fifteenth century, culminating with the Islamic reform movement in nineteenth-century Egypt "by the British" and the later rise of Kemalism in Turkey.¹⁰⁴ The goal of this Western concerted effort has been to drive the Muslims away from Islam.

The Goals of Westernization

Westernization has a number of goals, including:

1. The removal of Muslims from the religion of Islam.
2. Encouraging debauchery to avoid Islamic Sharia law.
3. Blind imitation of the West in everything without distinguishing between what is allowed and prohibited.
4. Extinguishing Arab identity and lauding everything Western.


Previous textbooks also criticized some of the greatest Arab minds such as Rifa'a al-Tahtawi, Qasim Amin and Taha Hussein for their secularism. It blamed a Jewish world conspiracy—based

on the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*—intent on influencing Muslim women to destroy Islam. Westerners were accused of spreading alcohol and corrupting music which led to infatuating "materialism and desires." Movies, night clubs and fashion formed part of these horrors. The textbook openly attacked the movements for women's rights, both in the West and Arab world. Until very recently, Qatari education incited against the West, Christians, Jews and minorities across the region. Students learned of Ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328) against the background of the Mongols' invasions into the Islamic world. Ibn Taymiyyah was an anti-Mongol anti-Crusader religious scholar who continues to serve as a main source of inspiration for combative Sunni radicals. In this context, the textbook taught that the minorities collaborated with Islam's enemies and played an important role in turning them against Muslims, in addition to facilitating the incursions by the Mongols.

Likewise, minorities in Islamic society had an important role in inciting the enemies, helping them against Muslims. They facilitated their entry into the Muslim lands; all this leading to the emergence of disputes against which Ibn Taymiyyah came out.


The removed text concludes with a straightforward attack on democracy itself. However, science and English subjects often include messaging which lauds Western lifestyles. Western sports illustrate an example of such preferences supplanting the traditional. Healthy Western lifestyles are also much admired. But as we will subsequently see, attacks on this Western culture also exist.

Of particular interest is a chapter on Oriental Studies from a 2016 textbook, or the academic study of the East and Islam. This was presented as part of a renewed attack on Islam by Western academics and Christian missionaries and a continuation of a supposed Jewish struggle with early Islam as well as the Crusades.

105 Ibid., pp. 72–73, 154–56.
106 (85).
Since the beginning of the call to Islam (al-da'wa al-ilamiyya) in the Arabian Peninsula, there was the cry for religious unification (sayhat al-tawhid), liberating man from all kinds of slavery to other than Allah, proclaiming that all people are equal and achieving equality between humans.

Since those days there has been a struggle between the righteous path and straying from it, between truth and falsehood. The flag of falsehood was carried by the polytheists and their Jewish supporters. All the enemies of the [Islamic] nation allied with them. And so it went until the Crusader armies attacked the Muslim lands, driven by blind fanaticism aroused by the clergy of the Church among the European peoples by inventing the ugliest lies on the Muslims.

And Allah willed that these campaigns be defeated, so the enmity [of the Christians] continued under other banners infiltrating without the [Islamic] nation understanding what was happening. And so began the intellectual invasion through which the enemies raided the Islamic nation with hidden weapons and a variety of methods in order to destroy its culture and drive it out of its religion. It aimed at weakening the nation's inner powers and resolve while destabilizing its foundational principles and essential elements.

This invasion had several manifestations, the most prominent, strongest, and the most pernicious: Orientalism and Christianization.


This distorted version of Orientalism as an offshoot of the Church, and part of a Western attack using local minorities to support enemies is now removed.107 The 2020 eleventh-grade Arabic

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107 Susannah Heschel and Umar Ryad, eds. *The Muslim Reception of European Orientalism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), pp. 1–2. "... Oriental Studies [or Orientalism], the academic study of Islam was not simply the product of European scholars, but a joint enterprise that engaged Muslim, Christian, and Jewish scholars, from
Communication between the West and the East:

5. The Muslims were not alone in this regard. Western civilization had a tangible impact toward respecting the minds of others. [This occurred] as soon as Western thought began to move away from the despicable fanaticism stigmatizing it during Medieval times, and listened to what other civilizations contributed, especially Islamic civilization. Thus, we find channels of communication increasing between the West and the East; as the leading Western thinkers and philosophers recognized the merits of Islamic civilization. They learned from its sciences and this had a great impact on the modern European renaissance covering all fields.

6. These testimonies suggest the respect and appreciation of Western scholars for Arab and Muslim scholars, which makes the spirit of communication between the two civilizations great. It shows that life is cooperation, not opposition, complementarity not incompatibility, a give and take. The first [scholar] contributes and the follower [another scholar] continues so that the life cycle can proceed in harmony encompassing coexistence, enveloped by respect, and the wings of peace flapping up above.


Western and Eastern Europe and North Africa, the Levant, Iran, India, Russia, and China. . . . What emerged in their discussions was an "Islam" both elevated as a paragon of progressive, liberal religion and denigrated as a retrograde religious system impermeable to modernity. This conflicting discourse has shaped our politics, scholarship, and cultures ever since."
The next example explains the concept: "Dialogue of Civilizations" (also popular in Iran and Turkey). Unfortunately, the Qatari curriculum also praises French philosopher Roger Garaudy (1913–2012) who was convicted for Holocaust denial in his homeland and is known for being a radical antisemite.\textsuperscript{108} His appeal was rejected by the European Court of Human Rights.

The Dialogue of Civilizations

The Dialogue of Civilizations is a necessary human condition commanded to us by Allah in all heavenly religions, in order to establish principles of love, goodness and peace among the people on earth, for Allah commanded us to do so in the venerable verse: 'and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may know one another.' [Al-Hujurat 49: 13]

The subject of Dialogue of Civilizations, written by the French thinker Roger Garaudy, appeared recently as one of the areas that require attention to create a common ground for mutual understanding by the peoples of the world; and so it was called The Dialogue of Civilizations.

Defining Dialogue of Civilizations

The exchange of opinions and problems and offering solutions to these problems among the peoples of the world that differ from each other in their culture, or in origin, or in religion. [The goal of this dialogue is] that they will be able to know each other, communicate with each other, settle conflicts, and bring about a positive cultural interaction among peoples.

Infer from the above definition the main purpose of the Dialogue of Civilizations.

**Social Studies, Grade 10,** Vol. 2, 2020, p. 165.

A long discussion on Dialogue of Civilizations and non-violence ensues. Elsewhere, Islamic sources are provided for the importance of peace and dialogue. The curriculum teaches that respect and speaking kindly to one another are pivotal in Islam.

The previous examples show progress from previous years, after years of anti-Western, anti-Democratic, antisemitic and anti-minority education. But Christianization remains a concern in the curriculum. While describing the challenges facing Muslim minorities, Qatari textbooks portray Christianization as a major threat, portraying it as a "political and colonial movement."

C- Attempts to Convert Religion:

Muslim minorities are subjected to attempts to Christianize them and to convert their religion, especially in the continent of Africa.

**Concepts I Learn:**

Christianization is a religious-political-colonial movement that aims at spreading Christianity among various nations in general, and among Muslims in particular.

**History, Grade 12,** Vol. 2, 2020, p. 112.
National Identity

Qatari nationalism seems to be an ideological cornerstone of the curriculum. A number of examples suggest that neutral or pan-Arab material was replaced by nationalistic content in 2019. The toning down of some radical material on the surface implies a reduced commitment to radical Islamism. Time will demonstrate the depth of Qatar’s commitment.

Main Symbols

Many textbooks, particularly Arabic, begin with the triple national symbols of the Prince, the national anthem and the flag. The national anthem of Qatar is the Al-Salam Al-Amiri (Peace to the Prince). Instead of Al-Salam Al-Amiri, the title is "The National Anthem."

His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani
Emir of the State of Qatar
The National Anthem

I Swear, I Swear
Swearing by the one who raised the sky
Swearing by the one who spread the light
Qatar will always be free
By the spirit of the loyal
Travel the high road
Travel by the guiding light of the Prophets
In my heart, Qatar is a way that respects the achievements of our forefathers
Qatar is the land of the foremost men
Who protect us in time of distress,
Doves they can be at times of peace,
Birds of prey they are at times of sacrifice


Note that the national anthem is mostly nationalistic with no reference to Arabism and only touching on the divine in general terms. Independence and loyalty to the homeland are stressed.

The Arabian Oryx—Qatar's National Animal

The Arabian Oryx—Qatar's National Animal—is depicted throughout the curriculum, painted with the colors of the Qatari flag.


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Qatar Society and International Reach

The curriculum tries to project a well-calibrated balance between the various components of Qatari society. Above all, it teaches students to have an unshakeable commitment to the Al-Thani family as uncontested leaders of Qatar. Yet, it also stresses a commitment to democracy, and civil rights. What is conveyed is that citizens should feel at home in a Qatar that has begun to feature elections. Qatari citizens include various tribes and other Arabs. Limited permanent residency has been offered to a select few. But the inequities experienced by the huge majority of expatriate workers are perhaps only now starting to be addressed after enormous international pressure.

Qatar's extensive foreign policy efforts, including good relations with Iran, Turkey, the United States and Britain—and most especially the blockade on Qatar—appears to have energized the public. The Sunni majority and others receive the message that the government has a host of foreign friends. Remarkably this "majority" is a de facto minority in a country packed with immigrants and a large Shi'ite population. All these messages are nuanced throughout the curriculum.

The Gulf Crisis

The blockade by Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the UAE, was viewed by Qatar as an opportunity to bolster the country's national identity (implicitly at the expense of Arab and Islamic identities—see the national anthem). The four Sunni countries severed their relations with Doha in June 2017, "citing Qatar's alleged support for terrorism and its close relationship with Iran." Among other things, they demanded that Qatar shut down its Al Jazeera news network and stop supporting the Muslim Brotherhood. While it lasted, the textbooks treated the blockade as a mixed blessing, allowing effective and beneficial counter-measures to be undertaken by Qatar and thus indirectly bolstering a spirit of nationalism. On January 2021, Qatar and Saudi Arabia agreed to resolve their three-and-a-half-year conflict. The following examples reveal Qatar's sensitivity in dealing with other Gulf States prior to the resolution:

The Effects of the Gulf Crisis (Blockade on the State of Qatar)

Despite the bitterness unleashed by these steps, the common wisdom found in the Qatari society these days is: 'Blessing in Disguise,' a saying commensurate with the verse: 'But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you' [Al-Baqara: 216]. This crisis motivated the Qatari society to explore its hidden sources of strength in its unity, will power and determination.


Regional countries that are not members of the siege coalition seem to receive more attention, particularly in English textbooks. Blockading countries are excluded.

While the criticism of the "siege countries" is moderate, the quoted verse has jihadi connotations: "Fighting has been enjoined upon you while it is hateful to you. But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah Knows, while you know not." [Al-Baqara: 216]

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The Positive Effects of the Siege on the State of Qatar:
The Gulf crisis (the siege on the State of Qatar) has revealed many benefits, mainly:
1. Increase of the societal-political awareness and participation in crisis management.
2. Emphasizing the cohesion of the Qatari people and gathering around its calm wise leadership for the interest of the homeland.
3. The state has taken major steps toward self-sufficiency of food supply.
4. Adopting an economic strategy in which opening the Hamad port helped to increase trade services and facilitate import and export traffic.
5. The development of local manufacturing, especially the food and pharmaceutical industries. Rise in the number of companies carrying the slogan 'Made in Qatar,'
6. The emergence of a new spirit of motivation among the citizens and residents to actively participate in building the homeland.
7. The Qatari people gain respect from all the countries for its faithfulness to its values and morals.

Social Studies, Grade 10, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 94.

A 2019 Islamic Education textbook added a warning against tribal vendettas. Such warnings are in line with the downplaying in the curriculum of tribal affiliation while it enhances Qatari national identity.

Taming of the Tribe

Discuss with your group the dangers of the custom of revenge to individual and society.

A chapter explaining the dangers of extremism—removed from the 2019 and 2020 editions—specifies tribal violence as a danger.

7. A number of customs and traditions inciting for violence and the rejection of the other, such as tribal or communal fanaticism.


4. Renouncing fanatic tribalism and strengthening national cohesion, as the country is the homeland.

*Social Studies, Grade 7*, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 150.

An Islamic textbook is thus used to curb tribal impulses, while indirectly helping to bolster a Qatari sense of belonging.

But the tribes remain problematic to the regime. A historical review of the birth of the Emirate of Qatar reveals much about the thinking of the curriculum's authors. On the one hand, the pre-emirate Gulf tribes are cast negatively, fighting with each other amid Western meddling. But the Al Thani tribe is shown to be a deliverer from the conflict. Coming from without, they are shown to have ushered in a new era. The text is straightforward regarding the affiliation of the Al Thanis with the large regional Banu Tamim tribe, as well as their origin in the Najd area, of (current) Saudi Arabia. While emphasis on tribal origins (*nisba*) are generally not encouraged, they are openly highlighted with respect to the ruling Al Thani tribe. The textbooks also explain that local Arab tradition requires each tribe to be ruled by a sheikh or an emir as the sole decision-maker. Hence, the tribal tradition also lends legitimacy to the Qatari political system, in which the final word rests with the emir.

The textbooks seem to implicitly advance the notion that the Al Thani tribe is powerful because of their regional network. While not indigenous and definitely not the largest tribe in Qatar, they belong to the strongest regional tribal force. The moral argument seems to be that these "outsiders" brought peace to the locals, *because* they were outsiders.
First Lesson:
Sheikh Mohammed bin Thani and the Birth of the Emirate of Qatar


Before the establishment of the emirate, Qatar was subject to tribal immigration. The textbook explains: "... a tribal regime prevailed in most of the Arabian Peninsula. Each tribe represented a group led by a Sheikh. The tribes did not unite under a political regime."119

Sheikh Mohammed bin Thani and the Birth of the Emirate of Qatar

Since the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Arab Gulf region was subject to conflict and competition among the European powers in the region, aimed at controlling and colonizing it. The influence of these powers then disappeared, except for Britain, which succeeded in signing protectorate agreements with the emirates of the Arab Gulf.

119 Social Studies, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 60.
The region was also subject to tribal conflicts as each tribe tried to impose its control over the rest of the tribes.

*Social Studies, Grade 10*, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 60.

The immigration of the Al Thani family is seen as turning point in the history of Qatar.

![Map of the Journey of the Al Thani Family from Najd to Qatar in the Beginning of the Eighteenth Century](image)


In his great wisdom, Sheikh Mohammed bin Thani succeeded in uniting the Qatari tribes after a period of disturbance in the country. He was able to establish his position in Qatar, internationally and regionally.


**Patriotic Spirit**

In the following example, starting from 2019, an Arabic Language textbook replaced an Islamic religious text with a nationalistic one focusing on liberty and freedom. The example for the same content in the earlier 2018 version\(^\text{120}\) revolves around Islamic-style sentences taken from hadith.

\(^{120}\) *Arabic Language*, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2018, p. 70.
In the same textbook another Islamic-related text was replaced with one discussing the environment.\(^{121}\) Similarly, Arabic Language for the ninth grade also includes a number of changes, starting from 2019, suggesting greater stress on patriotic themes within the context of a slightly more secular identity.\(^{122}\)

Some of these changes are noteworthy, such as the inclusion of a segment on Nelson Mandela to replace part of the discussion on Omar al-Mukhtar (1858–1931), the Libyan anti-colonialist leader from the Senussi Order known as Shaikh al-Shuhada (Sheikh of the Martyrs).

The curriculum portrays the struggle of Nelson Mandela in South Africa as one of equal rights for its entire population. This seems particularly significant for Qatar, where almost 90 percent of the population have no citizenship. If such changes imply serious consideration toward an egalitarian society, the discussion carries even more meaning. The new text asks the question of whether freedoms can be granted gradually, in installments, or is it necessary to opt for an immediate change. On the surface, these are questions one expects to see in democratic or democratic-seeking environments.

\(^{121}\) Ibid., p. 132; Arabic Language, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 114.

\(^{122}\) Arabic Language, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 63.
5- Which of the following questions fits what Nelson Mandela said in the text you heard? [in audio presentation]

A. How can we implement freedom in portions?
B. Can freedom be granted in portions?
C. Who is responsible for dividing freedom into portions?
D. What are the situations in which we should have portions of freedom?

Arabic Language, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 63.

In the same textbook a poem about Qatar's beauty replaces one on childhood. An item about the patriotic (or national) poetry in Qatar with an image of the city replaces a poem about the perceived sorry state of Jerusalem and dreams to liberate it. In contrast, an ornate poem on Qatar, is replaced with a section on the new Hamad port and economy, including Qatar's Vision 2030. Another section replaces a grammar discussion with a patriotic text about the role of the citizen.123

Global Ambition: A New Attitude?

Qatari policies for some decades now strive to engage aggressively in regional and world affairs, using its financial clout to lure and deter other actors. Both sticks and carrots are used, often with the same actors; arguably one can find support from some actors over others.

The curriculum openly reports Qatari engagement in regional and world affairs, even supporting confrontation when appropriate.

Islamic Outreach in the Name of Peace

It is hard to develop a firm opinion about Qatar's global intentions. Doha's policies often seem contradictory.\textsuperscript{124} Most importantly, what effect do such policies and attitudes have on students?

From a peace and tolerance perspective, one must examine carefully the efforts to impart a culture of peace to young generations. A Social-Studies textbook, for example, devotes a unit to

the value of peace. At the beginning of the lesson, a quote from the Qur'an is read that supports peacemaking as long as both sides are inclined to peace. The book's authors underscore Islam's role in clarifying issues of peace, a necessary condition for the security of the state and its continued existence.

Students learn that Islam should be seen as representing the peace culture. One should combat the "distorted image" of the faith, encourage dialogue of civilizations and be aware that Islam is a religion of peace. Qatar will continue to support Islamic activities in the world.

The textbooks stress the principle of non-intervention in the affairs of other countries, but also point to the importance of safeguarding human rights and freedoms in a culture of peace. It is not fully clear to what extent "safeguarding human rights and freedoms" should be applied.

Third: Areas of Implementation of Peace Culture:

1. The Political Field:

This means complete respect for the sovereignty and independence of states, non-interference in their domestic affairs, together with guaranteeing human rights and freedoms, peaceful conflicts resolution, and the dissemination of the culture of dialogue; locally and internationally.


Students learn that Islam is central toward making peace in society. The curriculum teaches various techniques of peacemaking, with special attention given to Qatar's role. The idea that Islam permits freedom of religion has been strengthened. Until 2018 this was recognized but texts taught that abandoning Islam was punishable by death. This stipulation has been removed in the latest editions. Another improvement in recent texts has more social studies exercises dealing with cultural pluralism. Similarly, anti-racism messages were in some updated textbooks. There is an emphasis on tolerance toward other cultures and religious (or

125 Ibid., p. 86.
126 (87).
129 The exercise was added in 2019, although it existed generally in 2018. Social Studies, Grade 9, Vol. 2, 2019, p. 77; Social Studies, Grade 9, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 79.
non-religious beliefs.\textsuperscript{131} Social studies textbooks use Qur'anic quotations and other educational material to stress the desire for a culture of peace, encouraging cross-cultural communication. The role of Qatari leadership is accentuated.\textsuperscript{132}

The curriculum presents Islam as a religion of peace whose image has been distorted. Qatar is shown to fund peaceful Islamic activities such as mosques and intercultural centers in the West. The first Islamic Cultural Center and first mosque in Denmark, established by Qatar in 2014, is a quintessential example of the curriculum's presentation of Islam spreading peace and tolerance.

The text does not mention that leading Danish politicians stayed away from the opening ceremony for a variety of reasons\textsuperscript{133} and that there was considerable controversy about its creation.\textsuperscript{134}

This background is not seen in the textbooks. Rather, the aim of the new center is defined in the following example as "to correct the distorted image of Islam, to repudiate violence and hatred and spread tolerance."

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{131} Social Studies, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2019, pp. 134–36; Social Studies, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2020, pp. 136–38.
  \item \textsuperscript{132} Social Studies, Grade 10, Vol. 2, 2020, pp. 155–59.
\end{itemize}
The Efforts of the State of Qatar to Spread the Culture of Peace

Qatar is committed to strengthening and disseminating the culture of peace. It endeavored to establish national institutions for spreading the culture of peace, accepting the other, fighting extremism and repudiating national, regional and international violence. Among these institutions: 'Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue,' and the establishment of 'Hamad Bin Khalifa Civilization Center,' in Copenhagen, Denmark, whose goal is to support international efforts to strengthen peaceful coexistence between religions.

Add to your information:

Hamad Bin Khalifa Civilization Center in Copenhagen, Denmark, opened on June 21, 2014, and is considered the first Islamic Cultural Center and first mosque in Denmark. The center strives to correct the distorted image of Islam, to repudiate violence and hatred and spread tolerance.


The textbook's explanation that Qatar is "committed to strengthening and disseminating the culture of peace" is evidently at odds with Danish political belief. For while this report was being prepared, the Danish Parliament passed a law which banned the foreign funding of Danish institutions, including mosques, by anti-democratic sources like Qatar.135

Qatar's Role in the Islamic Nation

A central theme from an eleventh-grade 2017 Social Studies textbook focuses on Qatar's worldwide Islamic mission: that Muslims are persecuted everywhere and Qatar as a member of the Muslim Nation (Ummah) should be there to help. Instead of coexistence between religions,

the textbook presents an overview of Muslims confronting non-Muslims. We can only surmise that this remains the current view since we could not find an updated version of this particular textbook to contradict our finding.

With respect to the establishment of Israel, the Qatari viewpoint endeavors to have a global perspective rather than seeing a limited conflict between two peoples over a tiny slice of land. Thus, what would normally be a local dispute is now an injury cutting through the entirety of the Muslim and Arab Nation. The Islamic nation is thus fashioned as one pan-Arabic entity that should act as one body. The world can thus only be divided into Muslims and non-Muslims. The "Zionist gangs" were supported by the big powers that enabled them to conquer, deport and inflict untold suffering on a [Muslim] people.

![Map of the Middle East and the United States](image)

The Palestinian Question until 1948

Palestine is a deep wound in the body of the Arab and Islamic nation, and the matter is related to the people whose country was robbed and deported from their own land, and the sanctity of its holy places was desecrated by the Zionist gangs. The global superpowers allowed them to occupy Palestine and provided them with all the material or moral assistance. Let's study together the Palestinian issue from the beginning:

'Palestine at the Heart of the Muslim World'

- Palestine
- Islamic Countries
- Non-Islamic Countries

_Social Studies, Grade 11_, Vol. 2 (Advanced), 2017, p. 11.

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136 Originally refers to pre-IDF- military organizations, such as Haganah and Irgun; still used against Israel as a pejorative for all Jews living there.
Palestine is shown in the above map as the center of the Islamic-Arab world. The textbook asks whether the question of Palestine is a matter for the people who live there, for all Arabs, or for the entire Islamic world. Israel, for its part, "occupying" the same center is perceived as an impediment to the unity of the Arab-Islamic world. Thus, the Palestinian cause becomes a clarion call to rally all Muslims against Israel. With the world divided between Muslims and non-Muslims, the superpowers—evidently non-Muslim—support the "gangs" occupying the land of Palestine.

One way Qatar has opted to facilitate such hoped-for realignment within the "Arab-Muslim Nation" is by supporting Hamas. Indeed, referring to the 2014 conflagration between Israel and Hamas as "the most brutal aggression," Qatar contributed $1 billion to rebuild Gaza. Students are falsely taught that Israel prevents medical supplies, food, and fuel from entering the Gaza Strip.

Within a discussion of the economic conditions in the Islamic world, the 2017 Social Studies textbook describes the non-Muslim world as anti-Muslim, with heavy-handed policies toward Muslim minorities.

Areas of concern in this particular textbook include restrictions on using the Arabic language (in China and India); stripping Muslims of basic rights (e.g., name-changing in India); a slaughter ban on Halal meat in Bulgaria; land confiscation and a ban on mosques in Myanmar; Christian proselytizing; genocide of Muslim populations (Bosnia and Herzegovina, India and Myanmar); and forced demographic changes through deportations (Russia, China, Thailand, and Myanmar). The textbook enthusiastically reports on jihad wars in Kashmir: "the jihadi warriors were able to kill more than 26 thousand Indian soldiers." It also discusses challenges facing Muslims in the Philippines from persecution by a "Christian" government. In sections on China the Uyghurs of Turkestan occupy much space. The text reminds students that this region of China was part of the Islamic Caliphate. Following the collapse of the USSR, however, students are taught that Russia witnessed an Islamic "blossoming"; Muslims could now build mosques and open institutes of Islamic education and hold conferences about.

138 Ibid., p. 30, 32–33.
139 (39–82, 85–104).
140 (85–99).
This textbook sees the Muslim presence in Europe as a continuum, beginning with the conquests of Constantinople and Spain, leading to the current wave of immigration particularly into Britain, France and Germany. European countries are accused of trying to integrate Muslims into their societies.

**Enrichment Information**

A special European American study demonstrates that the Muslims will form 20 percent of European population by the middle of the century. That is why all European governments strive in all ways to integrate the Muslim minorities and assimilate them within the European societies.


The chapter on atrocities in Myanmar is particularly large with graphic images of Muslims being persecuted.
'Acts of Violence against Burma's Muslims'

'Buddhists Burn Muslim Homes and Villages'
The textbook provides an overview of the activities of Qatar in "Muslim causes" around the world. These include the Palestinian issue, Lebanon and Somalia where Qatar is deeply involved in sending medical teams and supplies and building refugee camps, while engaging in the local political conflict. Qatar's outreach is mainly "peaceful" and focused on protecting and defending Muslim minorities worldwide. This includes repelling the "fierce campaign against the Islamic world" post 9/11; helping Bosnia, Myanmar, and the Comoros Islands; and financial support for a host of international and Islamic organizations.

Although this textbook was originally created for the 2017 curriculum, we have found no evidence of any changes in the Qatari ideological commitment to Islamist and pan-Islamic causes across the world. An us-versus-them mentality is taught to confront non-Muslims worldwide; the apparent goal is to destroy Israel and support Muslim victims of oppression, negative campaigns, displacement, genocide and even "benign" efforts by Europe to integrate them into society at large. Attention is given to areas formerly under Islamic rule such as Spain, Israel and Xinjiang province in China.

**Perspectives toward Islamic Minorities in New History Textbook**

A new twelfth-grade textbook teaches that rich and powerful Muslims should use their privilege to intervene on behalf of Islamic minorities in non-Muslim countries. They should spread the faith by helping minorities to receive Islamic education in Muslim countries, form ties with organizations representing Muslim communities, and send "the most suitable individuals" to "raise the awareness of minority Muslims. Well-positioned Islamic states as well should take

141 (107–08).

142 (108).
advantage of their diplomatic influence to "intervene in a positive, balanced and calculated manner" to support Muslims overseas.

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Fourth: The Islamic World’s Role toward Muslim Minorities.
The Islamic world can connect Muslim minorities to their original homelands, while preserving relations with their adopted, new societies.

1. Facilitating visits of Muslim minorities to Islamic countries, in order to deepen their sense of belonging to the Islamic states.

2. Strengthening the connection to Islamic centers and unions that take care of the interests of Muslim minorities, and which help them financially and morally.

3. Making use of the political and economic weight and the strategic position enjoyed by many Islamic countries, as well as their governments' distinguished relations with governments of Western countries—by intervening in a positive, balanced, and calculated manner in favor of Muslim minorities in these countries, particularly with what relates to their religious and cultural rights.

4. Developing the level of Islamic missions and choosing the most suitable individuals to carry out the task of raising awareness and educating about minority Muslims.

A similar presentation of Muslim minorities worldwide calls for "independent [minority] Islamic media outlets in host non-Muslim countries to focus on Muslim news." The 2020 text no longer uses the expression "Islamic Nation," popular among Islamists, but clearly calls for unity of all Islamic and Arab countries to support Muslim minorities. As evident in the following excerpt, the implied message is that persecution of Muslim minorities should be monitored and confronted. Lessons about Muslim minorities around the world conclude with a list of suggested solutions for improving their situations. This includes financing Islamic education and institutions; taking advantage of diplomatic ties between Islamic and non-Islamic states; and setting up independent media sources to cover the situation of Islamic minorities. Finally, students are asked to suggest ideas to promote unity of Muslim minorities around the world.

Suggested Solutions for Helping Muslim Minorities throughout the World:
There are several suggested solutions to supporting and helping Muslim minorities. What are the most important solutions? Observe the following chart to become familiar with them:

- Establishing Islamic centers and organizations that study the situation of Muslim minorities in the different countries, defining their numbers and the problems they face, and developing the proper solutions for them.
- Gathering the support of the international community to lift the oppression that some of the Muslim minorities suffer from in some countries.
- Supporting the Islamic identity by providing economic, religious, and cultural support.
- Cooperation between governments of countries with Muslim minorities, in order to remove barriers that prevent their positive integration in the new society.
- Taking advantage of the political and economic relations that tie Islamic countries to countries that include Muslim minorities, in order to improve the situation of these minorities.
- Establishing Islamic media outlets that remain independent from the [host] countries and that focus on the Muslim minority news.

**Topic for Discussion:**

**Minority Rights**

Muslim minorities have various rights. All the countries of the Islamic world, as well as international organizations, must join hands in monitoring the violations experienced by these minorities, and they must strive to support and help them secure their rights. This will not be achieved unless there is solidarity and unity between all the Arab and Islamic countries on the one hand and the Muslim minorities and the institutes that represent them on the other. Disunity and division will bring the loss of many legitimate rights for these groups and will rob them of various freedoms.

1. Suggest ideas of supporting the unity between Muslim minorities in various countries.
2. What is the impact of persecution of Muslim minorities in some countries?
3. What is the relationship between minority rights and a nation’s progress and security?

**History, Grade 12, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 139.**

This *History* textbook adopts Yusuf Qaradawi’s main views regarding how Muslim minorities should behave, with special emphasis on changing the view of Islam in the West and making conversion more attractive. The textbook does not advocate for the conversion of non-Muslims although *da‘wa* (call to Islam) is the mainstay of Qaradawi’s legal theory. Instead, it quotes a Western scholar arguing that *da‘wa* was mainly conducted throughout history peacefully. Hence, students are shown a text with the claim that Islam is intrinsically tolerant, never forcing religious tenets upon others, in contrast to Christianity. Qatari students are asked to discuss how Islam treats minorities compared to Muslim treatment in non-Islamic countries.

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143 Qaradawi’s "Jurisprudence of Minorities" [*Fiqh al-Aqalliyyat*] is quoted in the bibliography of the textbook (see pp. 22, 38).
**Topic for Discussion:**

**Islam’s tolerance in dealing with minorities**

Sir Thomas Arnold writes in his book *The Call to Islam* [*da'wa*]: In view of the toleration thus extended by the Muslims to their Christian subjects in the early period of Islamic rule, the common hypothesis of the sword as the factor of conversion seems hardly satisfactory . . . But of any organized attempt to force the acceptance of Islam on the non-Muslim population, or of any systematic persecution intended to stamp out the Christian religion, we hear nothing. Had the caliphs chosen to adopt either course of action, they might have swept away Christianity as easily as Ferdinand and Isabella drove Islam out of Spain, or Louis XIV made Protestantism subject to punishment in France.

- Discuss how Islam deals with minorities compared to how some governments deal with Muslim minorities.
- How can a Muslim minority change the perspective of non-Muslims toward Islam?
- Design an online magazine to raise awareness about Muslim minorities and ways to support them.

In dealing with India and Kashmir, the new *History* textbook continues the anti-Indian approach seen in the 2017 *Social Studies* textbook; however, the presentation is somewhat milder (e.g., no glorifying of massacres perpetrated by Pakistani *jihadists*). An excerpt follows:

The Indian Government’s Policy in Kashmir:
The Indian government’s policy constitutes the following:
- Canceling self-rule in Jammu and Kashmir and dividing the province to two regions, controlled by the federal government.
- Attempting to change the Muslim-majority demographics, by granting a status of local citizen to those who have lived in Jammu and Kashmir for more than 15 years.
- Eliminating the ties between Kashmir and Pakistan.

*History, Grade 12, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 133.*

This new textbook offers a more pragmatic approach to history. The portrayal of Muslims in Germany and France is largely straightforward. The anonymous authors (from Qatar University) ignore the involvement of some Muslims in terrorism and antisemitism but they depict the issues in moderate terms and from a Muslim perspective. The textbook teaches about distorted portrayals of Islam in Germany by some news outlets which blame Muslims for terrorism and violence. Included is the difficulty Muslim children face in socializing because of "differences in the social and religious values of German society compared to the values upon which a Muslim child should be raised."144 The text fairly presents the opposing view in France regarding the veil (hijab).145 European governments, including Britain, Germany, Belgium and Austria, are praised for assuming moderate stances toward Muslim minorities.146

144 *History, Grade 12, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 128.*
145 Ibid.
146 (109–10).
A grade 12 History textbook's coverage of Ethiopia includes criticism of past discrimination against Muslims (particularly during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie) but highlights substantial improvements in recent decades. There are details on the horrors experienced by the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar.147

Twelfth-graders are also taught about Qatar's international investment, including the controversial Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), a state-owned fund that is used to expand investments around the world. The section presents an extremely long list of non-Qatari companies and organizations with which QIA is involved.148

**Britain, Germany and France, the US and China**

The interpretation of Islam in the Qatari curriculum is orthodox and literal. Christians are seen as infidels (kaifirun) expected to go to hell.149 Paradoxically, education for tolerance and peaceful cultural interaction is evident. Yet, the call for interacting with other cultures and for peace

147 (134–38).
appears genuine and instrumental. Realistically, the curriculum acknowledges that to gain power, Islam—and particularly Qatar—must deal with others on business and cultural levels.

**The United Kingdom**

The curriculum includes criticism of European colonialism, particularly as the textbooks adopt the Palestinian narrative against Israel, and also of past colonial activities in the Gulf; but the attitude toward Britain is mainly positive. Qatar is seen to have good relations with both Arab and other countries.

Relations with Arab and Foreign Countries:

Qatar has succeeded during the period in office of Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani [1972–95] in building a relationship with Arab, Muslim and friendly states, based on mutual respect and cooperation in economic and political fields. The Palestinian cause was the priority Arab issue to receive assistance and support from the Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani House and the State of Qatar from the moment he took power.

In addition, Qatar has gained respect and esteem from all countries of the world and many national leaders, including Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom who visited the State of Qatar in February 1979. Sheikh Khalifa also welcomed United Nations Secretary-General Dr. Kurt Waldheim in 1979.150


British children are featured alongside Qatari children in some textbooks imparting an emotional bond with the UK. Note the flag in the first image.

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Harry from the UK, Carlos from Columbia and Salim from Qatar are shown in a fourth-grade textbook:

**English, Grade 4.** Vol. 1, 2020, p. 10.

Historically, the role of Great Britain in the Gulf is represented fairly. Britons remained in the region as a colonial power to serve various interests, but the overall picture is nuanced. The following textbook example mentions Britain’s ban of the slave trade:

تعزيز الهيمنة البريطانية:
- عززت بريطانيا هيمنتها على الخليج العربي من خلال المزيد من الاتفاقات التي تمنحها مزايا جديدة. كلما اقتضىت مصالحها ذلك، فوقعبت اتفاقات مع حكام المنطقة وفرضت فيها ممنوعات تجارة السلاح والرفق، واتفاقيات أخرى فيما يتعلق بمنشآت البرق وقضايا الغوص.
Strengthening British Hegemony:

Britain has consolidated its hegemony over the Arabian Gulf through more agreements, giving it new advantages, whenever its interests so required. It signed agreements with the rulers of the region, in which it imposed a ban on arms and the slave trade. Other such agreements covered telegraph installations and diving issues.


The textbooks recognize Qatar's debt toward Britain for its creation as a political unit and later as a state. The text covers the 1820 Maritime Peace Treaty between Britain and the Gulf sheikhdoms. While Britain retains the rights to supervise trade in the Gulf, its interests are shown to be legitimate and benign: "Provide safety for their operating ships and ensure unimpeded trade between Britain and India in the Arab Gulf and the Indian Ocean."\(^{151}\)

![Image of Battle of Ras al-Khaimah, 1819](image-url)

*Battle of Ras al-Khaimah, 1819*  

In 1868, Sheikh Mohammed Bin Thani, representing the peninsula's population and Lewis Pelly, of the British government, signed an agreement establishing Qatar as a country under British protection; in the textbook's language, an "independent sovereignty."

\(^{151}\) *History, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 38.*
The text discusses how Qatar attained sovereignty in 1868. It explains how the British intervened as a result of a great "many conflicts and disputes." The goal of British intervention was to establish security. The treaty with the British secured peace for the country and the Gulf. Historically, this event represents the beginning of Qatar's independence. The blue box gives credit to Colonel Lewis Pelley (and the British) for Qatar's independence.

**Sir Pelly:**

Sir Lewis Pelly is considered a key figure in the history of the Gulf. He was the most important British official in his capacity as the Gulf Resident during the period 1862–1873. He is extremely important for the State of Qatar because he recognized its independent sovereignty in 1868.

The language of the historical description is nuanced but, as clearly expressed in the box, Qatar became officially independent from the Ottomans and self-rulled by the Al-Thani family since 1913, as a result of British insistence.
The British-Ottoman Conflict in the Gulf Region:

Before the end of the nineteenth century, a conflict arose between the Ottoman Empire and Britain in the Gulf region, as the Ottomans tried to consolidate their control over the Gulf. The British authorities strongly opposed this attempt. They imposed protection agreements for the Gulf region to sign, obliging these countries not to deal with any country other than Britain in exchange for a pledge to protect them.

There were also long negotiations between Britain and the Ottoman Empire that lasted from 1911–1913, with Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar eventually resulting in the signing of the 1913 Anglo-Ottoman agreement, which included the following:

1. The Ottoman Empire renounces sovereignty over Qatar.
2. Kuwait remains under Ottoman sovereignty.

Add to your information:

Article 4 of the draft Ottoman-English Agreement on the Gulf over the future of Qatar states as follows:

The Ottoman State permanently renounces every claim it has over the Qatar Peninsula, so that the Al-Thanis will govern the Peninsula as hereditary rulers.


The curriculum includes anti-colonialist, anti-European discourse and again displays the Qatari gift for embracing contradictions. Lesson Two in the same textbook describes various European (i.e., British, French and Italian) "occupations"—and Arab resistance movements—in the pre-WWI era. The lesson is entitled, "The Arabs before WWI: Between European Occupation,
Resistance and Promises of Independence." What follows is an image of the Sudanese-Mahdist Revolt, provided in the context of the British occupation of Egypt in 1882 and the Sudan:

The Mahdist Revolution in the Sudan against the English


**The United States**

Unlike many other Middle Eastern curricula, Qatar's curriculum offers a moderate—even positive—description of the United States.

An eleventh-grade geography textbook relegates issues of slavery and clashes with native Americans to discussions of South America rather than in the North as one would expect. Likewise, environmental concerns are more pronounced in the material on South America.

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North America is depicted as a good example of population diversity and is praised as a "melting pot" of cultures.
Diversity and difference are generally considered one of Allah’s customs in the universe and one of His blessings for increasing mutual acquaintance and affection among humans, as they populate and develop the universe. The population of the North American continent is characterized by ethnic and national diversity. It has become, therefore, the largest community in which so many different races and human groups have been melted. Some have even dubbed it 'the continent of population variations.'

*Geography, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 30.*

The curriculum follows the scientific narrative of indigenous peoples (the "red Indians" [al-hunud al-humr]) who arrived from the Asian continent thousands of years ago after crossing the Bering Strait to North America.¹⁵³

Qatar's cultural circumstance is compared in the discussion of diversity in North America, suggesting a similarity (despite the lack of citizenship and rights offered the expatriate population).

'People of all nationalities and various ethnicities and races live on the soil of the State of Qatar.' In light of this phrase:

– Monitor the most important aspects of accepting diversity and difference and its role in enriching and advancing Qatari society.

*Geography, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 32.*

¹⁵³ *Geography, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 30.*
The same textbook describes the "Migration of the Minds," how North America attracts talented people from around the world, through granting scholarships and providing excellent jobs and living standards. Economic ties between Qatar and North America are communicated in detail as a very positive reality.\textsuperscript{154}

But immigration to South America, as illustrated by the current curriculum, has been traumatic and disastrous, in its early history leading to thousands of natives killed in wars with the colonists. Europeans who immigrated to South America brought millions of Black Africans as cheap labor. Economic ties with South America have been helpful for Qatar during the current blockade; the destruction of the rain forest in the Amazon is singled out.\textsuperscript{155}

Descriptions of US policy during and after WWI are favorable. American help to suffering Europeans and efforts to make the world safe and democratic are lauded.\textsuperscript{156} For his efforts to promote the League of Nations, US President Woodrow Wilson is described as "the perfect man in the peace conference." The textbook also includes many examples of German war crimes and targeting of civilians.\textsuperscript{157}

\textbf{China}

China is seen as a positive force, economically and culturally. The following example about China is taken from an English textbook, taught as a second language.

\begin{center}
\textbf{English, Grade 5, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 87.}
\end{center}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{154} Ibid., pp. 38, 66.
\item \textsuperscript{155} (87–135).
\item \textsuperscript{156} History, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2019, pp. 102, 133.
\item \textsuperscript{157} Ibid., pp. 95–138.
\end{itemize}
In a traditional story about a Chinese emperor, the characters are classic and typical.\(^{158}\)

The curriculum treats Qatar’s relationship with both the US and China equally. Dealings with both nations are considered friendly. Here the delicious food is shown to be a unifier of cultures.

\(^{158}\) See also an image of classic China positioned next to ancient Greece and the Incas: *English, Grade 3, Vol. 2, 2020*, p. 114.
Muslim Minority Persecuted in China

While the general image of China is positive, the 2017 textbook which highlights persecution of Muslim minorities worldwide, counts China as one of the worst offenders. Students are taught that Muslims suffer politically, socially, economically and religiously. Islamic education is prohibited, as are mosques, Islamic newspapers and books in Turkestan; even writing in Arabic is forbidden. Although Muslims have attempted to rebel against such oppressive acts as outlined in the text, China continues to conceal its maltreatment of Muslim minorities.\(^{159}\)

The following map depicts East Turkestan as separate from China. The text reports that Turkestan comprises approximately one-sixth of China's total territory.

Islamic Nation and Arab World

Ample space in the curriculum is dedicated to the conflict with Qatar's neighbors and the siege imposed by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt. Note that these countries are still described as "sister states" [duwal shaqiqa] and their complete names are mentioned respectfully. Previous Qatari support of Egypt (against Israel) is noted elsewhere in the referenced textbook (p. 66—see below).
Second: Gulf Crisis and State of Qatar's Blockade:

The State of Qatar was subjected on June 5, 2017 to a blockade and severed relations with four sister states, namely: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; the United Arab Emirates; the Kingdom of Bahrain; and the Arab Republic of Egypt. The blockade of the State of Qatar went through a chain of events as follows:

1. Hacking of the Qatar News Agency (QNA) and the broadcasting of statements attributed to His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Hamad Al Thani.
2. The four Arab states announced measures that included closing air, land and sea ports with Qatar.

Gather information indicating the lack of legality of the measures taken by the siege states against the State of Qatar.


The school textbooks challenge the legality of the siege, do not relate directly to accusations about supporting terrorist organizations and keep demonization of "sister states” at a minimum, as seen in the above passage. Simultaneously, students are taught about effective and beneficial countermeasures taken by the State of Qatar, indirectly bolstering a spirit of nationalism before a focus on Arab and Islamic identities.\(^{160}\)

Regional countries not participating in the blockade receive more friendly attention, particularly in English textbooks. Egypt is somewhat an exception because of its historical and cultural weight.\(^{161}\) First-graders thus learn about the Omani flag, showing exchanges between Ali from Qatar and Jassim from Oman, which is not participating in the blockade against Qatar.

\(^{160}\) Social Studies, Grade 10, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 92.

\(^{161}\) Egypt is also mentioned in an English exercise on geography. English, Grade 8, Vol. 2 (Wkbk), 2020, p. 121.
Similarly, in third-grade English, Oman, a friendly Gulf country, is present in a series of examples throughout the textbook. The blockading countries are excluded.

Other Arab countries in examples given favorable status by the curriculum are Morocco and Jordan. In Jordan, the Dead Sea is often mentioned as Jordanian without reference to Israel or the Palestinians.\textsuperscript{162}

\textbf{Iran and Turkey}

\textbf{Iran}

The attitude toward \textbf{Iran} is largely positive. The curriculum points to cultural and economic considerations, past and present. There are common denominators between both individuals the two states. For example, society in the Abbasid period included Arabs and non-Arabs (such as the Persians and Turks). Altogether, the Abbasid state established a thriving Islamic civilization, despite the diversity of society.\textsuperscript{163}

\textsuperscript{162} \textit{Science}, Grade 6, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 97.
\textsuperscript{163} \textit{Social Studies}, Grade 7, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 57.
Persian art and culture are recognized.

Three: Architecture:

Architecture in the Abbasid era was influenced by Persian art. Construction and urban arts were developed. Among the most prominent examples are:
The Abbasids were interested in building cities such as: the city of Baghdad, which Abu Ja`far al-Mansur built, and which became the capital of the caliphate.

_Social Studies, Grade 7, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 63._

Regardless of the siege and the positive relations between Qatar and Iran, the Dolphin gas pipelines continue to serve both Qatar and the UAE. In the following map Iran is not mentioned and the Gulf is called the "Arab Gulf."

_Note the map, and be familiar with the natural gas transmission lines:_

[Legend, in blue:] Pipelines built by the Dolphin Energy Company.

_Social Studies, Grade 7, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 18._
Turkey

Qatar's relationship with Turkey is generally positive. Past clashes between the nascent Qatari Emirate and the Ottoman Empire are featured in the textbooks. As an Ottoman enemy during that period, Britain became the ally and midwife in the birth of what is now Qatar. In the current siege environment, however, Turkey has been an especially close ally of Qatar and helpful supporter during the blockade, as a partner in various other fronts from Gaza to Libya. The leaderships of both nations are committed to the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Golden Age of the Ottoman Empire is described with much admiration. The establishment of a caliphate and Islamic wars to conquer more lands are lauded. The Sultans are described in detail with their talents and capabilities. The glory of jihad is thus bolstered in examples not only from early Islam but also from the period of Ottoman rule.
The Conquest of Constantinople, 1453

The city was built in 324–330 by Emperor Constantine who made it the capital city of the Byzantine Empire.

The city of Constantinople was fortified; surrounded by walls and towers and fortresses. It was also surrounded by water from three sides.

The first goal of Mehmed the Conqueror was to take over Constantinople, the city that withstood eleven Muslim attempts to conquer it since the times of the Umayyad Caliph Mu'awiya bin Abi Sufiyan in the middle of the seventh century and until the mid-fifteenth century.


Christians, Jews and Israel

Christians

Until recently, the Qatari curriculum viewed Christianity negatively. Most charitable activities and goodwill from Westerners were viewed suspiciously, as aimed at destroying Islam and controlling Islamic lands. A 2016 Islamic Education textbook specified three spheres of activity defined as missionary: education; "deceptive charities" [al-jam'iyyat al khayriyya al-wahmiyya]; and medical treatment. All are described as missionary, "a way to communicate the Christian call" [al-da'wa al-nasraniyya].

164

The Relationship between Orientalism and Christianization and the Governments of Christian Countries:

The relationship between Orientalism and Christianization is a close and extremely strong one, because Orientalism is the other tributary of Christianization. Both emanate from the Church. They are all pastors, and they serve the Church in the same manner. The mission of all is focused on destroying Islam, or sowing doubts in people's hearts about it, distorting the history of the Islamic nation and its great Prophet, and turning the Islamic world into regions of influence of the West.


There has been some improvement compared with previous curricula in attitudes toward Christians. Much information about cultural interaction during the Middle Ages is provided, especially regarding the translation movement. The textbooks generally praise the role of Christians along with others (such as the Nestorian Christian, Hunayn ibn Ishaq al-Ibadi, but without naming his faith). 165

With the integration of Qatar's Vision 2030, one sees more exercises in cultural sharing and engaging with the world, compared to previous editions. 166 Students are called to reach out to the world, "strengthen the national identity at the global level," to promote "dialogue and openness to the Other for civilizational and cultural coexistence . . . 167

In Islamic religious studies, however, there is very little improvement. As with previous curricula, Christianity and Judaism remain a bad example for Muslims. The following passage refers to a Qur'anic verse warning believers not to follow in the footsteps of those who in the past "became divided and differed."[from other believers rather than uniting] In other words, the Qur'an offers a general warning against inner conflicts. The Qatari textbook volunteers—without reference—the anti-Christian, anti-Jewish interpretation. 168

166 Social Studies, Grade 9, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 83.
167 Ibid., pp. 76–78
Allah forbade them [the Muslims] to be in the likeness of the People of the Book, in the way they became divided and differed [from each other] and said: 'And do not be like the ones who became divided and differed after the clear proofs had come to them' meaning that after He established his case against them with hard evidence, they deserved the great punishment and thus Allah said: 'And those will have a great punishment' [all quotations are from Al-Imran 3:105].


Previous curricula have focused on endless attacks by Christians against Islam beginning with the Crusades, followed by missionary work; and more recently a secular-democratic assault by the West. All were seen as having the intention of destroying Islam through the rule of human (secular) law and by granting equal rights to women.\(^{169}\) Suspicion toward non-Muslim minorities in the curriculum was present and local minorities were blamed of collaborating with the enemy.\(^{170}\) Such previous indoctrination toward resentment and rejection of the People of the Book, namely Jews and Christians, was indoctrinated in young Qatari minds.\(^{171}\)

Some indoctrination continues. The belief in Jesus as the son of God, the trinity, and the belief in redemption by the cross are listed in a 2020 *Islamic Education* textbook among the things that caused the deviation of Christianity. In an explanation on Christianity, the text criticizes the Apostle Paul, one of the most important figures in Christianity, for introducing changes deviating from "Jesus' religion."\(^{172}\)

\(^{169}\) *Islamic Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2016, p. 162.

\(^{170}\) *Islamic Education*, Grade 12, Vol. 2, 2017, p. 79. Note: As the Qatari curriculum was publishing such material, ISIS and other radical Sunnis were slaughtering minorities in the region.

\(^{171}\) Example of a removed verse: "O you who have believed, if you obey a party of those who were given the Scripture, they would turn you back, after your belief, [to being] unbelievers." [Al-Imran 3:100], *Islamic Education*, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2016, p. 36.

\(^{172}\) *Islamic Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 46.
Christianity and Judaism are corrupted religions that include themes of paganism.

Allah Almighty sent His Messenger Muhammad with the message of Islam to the entirety of humanity, in order to bring them from the shadow of ignorance and paganism to the light of knowledge and tawhid (the oneness of Allah), from the narrowness of the world to its width, and from worshipping idols to worshipping Allah Almighty. Idol worshipping and paganism had spread all over the world, and the heavenly religions [i.e. Christianity and Judaism] became corrupted and idol worshipping principles entered in them. In the Arabian Peninsula, the tribes worshipped idols and statues from rock and other materials, and they abandoned the religion of Ibrahim [Abraham].


Thus, the process of moderation appears to be in its infancy; the question remains as to whether this is indeed the ultimate direction of the curriculum. There are certainly lapses in this process, notably removing some material relating to Christians in Jerusalem.173

The curriculum does not report on the suffering and persecution of local Christians under Islam through the ages, particularly their demise in the last century, and the horrors of recent years by radical Islamist groups. Instead, self-congratulatory idyllic descriptions are provided. For example:

> The continued presence of Christian denominations on Islamic lands is a clear indication of Islam's adherence to the principle of tolerance, and a sign of coexistence and peace between the followers of the two religions.


This phrase is provided in the context of the denial of any attachment of Judaism to Jerusalem (let alone its centrality) suggesting that learning is not taken seriously even when improvements occur. Other platitudes include: "Loving one's homeland is a duty of every member of society. The heavenly religions encourage this."174 This kind of phrasing does not meet international standards, which require specific examples in a

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meaningful context. Such examples are provided in the context of presentation of Western scientists and specifically the new attitude toward Orientalism.\textsuperscript{175}

The damage to Qatari society caused in past curricula through so many years of demonization and incitement may not be easily undone. Currently, the outlook toward the Jews and Israel remains negative, even though one finds some positive descriptions of Jews in the context of open and tolerant Medieval Muslim-Arab empires and states. Direct Jew hatred is less widespread in the recent edition, but it continues to be a central problem for this curriculum. The attitude toward Israel is intolerable by any acceptable standard. It seems that authors believe that copy-pasting radical Palestinian narratives into the textbooks is the right educational path for young Qatari students rather than providing them with balanced and nuanced information about Israelis, the Jews, Palestinians and related conflicts.

**Jews**

Past Qatari curricula were rife with anti-Jewish material, against the background of early Islamic conflicts and modern antisemitism. In the following excerpt (removed from the recent editions), the myth of the Elders of Zion is quoted as fact; Jews are still blamed as architects of a premeditated plan to corrupt Muslim women. It is unclear how much of this forms the educational edifice of the Qatari population. Anti-Jewish material remains in the curriculum.

\textit{Islamic Education, Grade 12, Vol. 2, 2017, p. 73.}

It says in the \textit{Protocols of the Elders of Zion}: We must win the woman, in the day she reaches out to us, and we won the case.

Therefore, the Jews succeeded in directing Western public opinion, when they took hold of the [Muslim] women through media and through money.

Another of the fiercest enemies of Islam said: A cup [of alcohol] and a song are effective in destroying the Muhammadan community more than a thousand cannons do, so they drowned it in love with materialism and desires.

\textit{English, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2020, pp. 21, 29.}
But the "Protocols" mentality is present in the current curriculum's discussion on the Balfour Declaration. The textbook presents Jews as all powerful, able to change the course of their countries and the world.

**Western Antisemitism and the Holocaust**

Modern Muslim antisemitism is thought to have its roots in three areas: Anti-Judaism in classical Islam (seventh to ninth centuries), adoption from Modern European antisemitism, and, more currently, themes related to the Arab-Israeli conflict. If an *Islamic Studies* textbook refers at one point to the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, with the accusation that Jews target women, it echoes Western, rather than Islamic antisemitic tropes. The omission of the Holocaust can also serve as an indicator of antisemitic bias.

In the 2020 textbooks examined by IMPACT-se, we found no evidence that the Qatari curriculum teaches directly about the Holocaust. Indirectly, however, a 2019 twelfth-grade *Social Studies* textbook refers to Nazi Germany's hatred toward the Jews and appears to justify the ensuing actions against the European Jewish population. Sharing elements of Western antisemitism, the textbook apparently agrees with these policies and provides supporting "evidence."

A chapter on Nazi Germany on the eve of World War Two (WWII) explains that the Nazis were hostile to the Jews, "because they were the reason for Germany's defeat" [in WWI] remains in the current eleventh-grade *History* textbook. Against this background, Nazi enmity toward the Jews was justified within the text.

The Jews played a crucial role in the outcome of WWI, not only in trying to pressure Russia to stay in the war, "playing a sabotaging role" in Germany and Austria, but also in pushing the United States to join the war. The allies, seeking "Jewish financial and political support" granted the Balfour Declaration "to exploit Jewish economic and political influence and push the US to join the war on the side of the allies."

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176 The classic research on this topic remains, George Vajda, "Juifs et Musulmans selon le Hadit," *Journal Asiatique* 229 (1937): pp. 57–137.

177 Emmanuel Sivan, Dov Maimon, "Muslim Anti-Semitism: The Challenge and Possible Responses," The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, Jerusalem, 2009. This argument was validated after examining a variety of radical Islamist groups with opinion-mining methods; Eldad J. Pardo, "Radical Islam Team," in *GIF Final Scientific Report: Opinion Mining in Religious Studies*, ed. Andreas Gruenschloss (Gottingen and Jerusalem: 2012), pp. 16, 18–21.


179 Based on this project's reviewed textbooks, with special scrutiny given to *History*, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2020 (until 1939) and *Social Studies*, Grade 12, Vol. 1 (Advanced), 2017, pp. 92–116 (WWII).


The Qatari curriculum describes Jewish capitalism as a powerful actor, allowing the Zionist movement to manipulate all warring parties.

B. The Balfour Declaration
Word War I helped the Zionist movement to enroll all the [warring] parties to its side. offered promises in return for the support of Jewish Capitalism to this or that party. The movement worked in all directions to achieve its goals, whoever might win the war.


A 2017 eleventh-grade Social Studies textbook asserts Jewish control over the global economy while exploiting other countries in times of financial difficulty.

Britain underwent a financial crisis during World War I, so the Jews exploited the situation, especially since they almost controlled the global economy, and through this they could stir the countries’ policies according to their own interests.


The textbook empathizes with German sentiment on the eve of WWII explaining that Germany was humiliated and bankrupted; Jews were ready to take advantage by "manipulating the financial markets and accumulating immense wealth at the expense of the dire economic conditions." This led to the rise of National Socialist Party that followed "the ideas of its leader Adolf Hitler." 182

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Canceling the rights of the Jews because they had a great impact on the defeat of Germany in the First World War.

Social Studies, Grade 12, Vol. 1 2017 (Advanced), p. 95.

This argument is reinforced in another textbook. A history lesson about Nazi ideology states that one Nazi principle was "hatred for Jews; for they are the reason for Germany’s defeat," implying that the Jews, as a people, were in fact the actual cause for Germany’s defeat in World War One.

In the shadow of the economic and political crises [afflicting Germany after WWI], the National Socialist Workers’ Party emerged, and came to be known as the Nazi Party, led by Adolf Hitler.

Adolf Hitler, leader of the German Nazi Party

B. Principles of the Nazi movement:
1. Viewing the Aryan race as the master race.
2. Veneration of leadership: for the leader is the representative of all the people; viewing the individual as servant of the state.
3. Complete state supervision of economic activity.
4. Hatred of Jews; for they are the reason for Germany’s defeat.

Add to your knowledge:
**Nazism:** a movement which believes in the superiority of the German Aryan race to all other human races, and considers their leader, Hitler, to be the representative of the entire people, and the individual to be servant of the state.


Students are taught that Jewish influence can result in the election of an American president. The passage states that Harry Truman became president "with Jewish support." This curriculum expounds on the racism of Germany during the National Socialist regime but does not specifically mention the Holocaust. Other horrors conducted by Germany against various helpless communities before and during WWII are also not mentioned.

**The Racism of the Nazis:**

Nazism sees the Aryan race as superior to human races, as if they were God's Chosen People. This means radicalization of the idea of nationalism mixed with racism. They
made citizenship rights limited to the pure Germanic race only. Hitler thought that the existence of culture and human civilization depends on the Aryan Race and its superiority.

- Demonstrate the validity of the following: The ideas of the Nazi Party (Led by Hitler) were extreme.
- What was the Nazi Party's view of other peoples?
- Can such ideas bring world peace? Why?

[Box on left—white background]:

Values I Learn:

Accepting the Other:
'I make sure not to differentiate between races in different societies, or to discriminate within one society.'


Discussing the Nazis, the curriculum displays counterintuitive awareness of the connection between bad education and evil actions as its natural corollary.
Hitler’s methods in implementing his Nazi policy:
Youth organization and education were based on the nationalist-racist principles of Nazi theory.

... 

Read the following historical text, then answer:
[Photo of the cover of Mein Kampf] Picture of the book "My Struggle"
All schools and universities across all levels of education in Germany were transformed in accordance with Nazi ideology. Hitler’s book, "My Struggle," became the official manifesto of the education system, and as their guidebook in the field of pedagogy. Most of the teachers were Nazis, and the government worked to affirm Hitler’s racist ideas.

What is your opinion of Hitler’s policy? ........

Evaluate Nazi ideology in light of human rights. ........

History, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2020, pp. 20–21.

The lesson of the curriculum's authors is that racism should be condemned both in different societies and "within one society." This is an especially important acknowledgement in a multi-racial (though discriminatory) society such as Qatar.

A general reference to genocide as a negative phenomenon appeared in a 2018 textbook dealing with violence and extremism. The chapter was first removed from the 2019 edition.

6– Wrongs committed against some peoples, such as genocide and collective punishment.
7– Some of the customs and traditions, which incite to violence and repudiation of others, such as tribal or a community-based bigotry.

The Jews Tried to Kill Jesus, Killed Other Prophets

The Israelites are accused of trying to kill Jesus ('Isa). Some of them are presented as corrupted people and practitioners of polytheism.

The Israelites Position toward the Call of Allah's Prophet 'Isa [Jesus]
- Allah's Prophet 'Isa invited his nation to worship only Allah. He started to debate with them and explained to them their corrupted behavior and the polytheism that they were practicing. But most of them accused 'Isa of lying and only a few believed with him.
- 'Isa continued to invite the wrongdoers among his nation to Allah until they became tired and weary of him and wanted to kill him. They did everything possible to achieve their goal, as they incited the Romans against him and tried to hand him over to his enemies to crucify him. However, Allah saved his prophet 'Isa from their hands, and raised him to heaven. The Almighty said: 'And they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him; but [another] was made to resemble him to them. And indeed, those who differ over it are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge of it except the following of assumption. And they did not kill him, for certain. Rather, Allah raised him to Himself. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise' [An-Nisa 157:4].


The textbooks follow the Islamic tradition which showers praise on the kings of ancient Israel, notably, David and Solomon, who are considered prophets. But the Israelites themselves are often cast negatively, for accusing the prophets of being liars and even killing a number of them.
The Story of Daoud and His People the Israelites:

It is known that the Israelites, because of their bad morals, accused their prophets of being liars and killed some of them. They accused the Prophet Daoud of obscene false deeds, all because of their lies and slander against him. So, he cursed those people who disbelieved. The Almighty said: 'Cursed were those who disbelieved among the Children of Israel by the tongue of Daoud and of Jesus, the son of Mary. That was because they disobeyed and [habitually] transgressed. [Al-Ma’ idah 5:78].

Daoud passed away after living a life full of worship and just judgment, it is said that he died at the age of one hundred years.


The students need to actively ponder and practice the crimes of the against Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.

Research Activity

The Messengers of Allah Almighty and His Prophets have been afflicted by people portraying them as liars and abusing them, in word and in action. With your colleagues, write the most noticeable afflictions caused to the following Prophets:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prophet</th>
<th>Main Affliction by His People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Muhammad</td>
<td>...........................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Isa [Jesus]</td>
<td>...........................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Musa [Moses]</td>
<td>...........................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Treacherous Jew

Previous curricula included the depiction of Jews as traitors and schemers during Prophet Muhammad's time. One well-known case is that of a Jew who tried to rekindle a conflict between two groups of tribespeople converted to Islam. Instead, the textbook relied upon a story not found in the Qur'an, relating it to a particular Jew; it then asked students to form an opinion about Jews based on "the story."

From the 2016 version:

**Reason for the Revelation:**

The verses were revealed in [the context of a story according to which] a group of people from the Aws and Khazraj [tribes] were sitting and talking. Shas bin Qais, the Jew, passed them by and became angry from the harmony and togetherness among them since they had been enemies in pre-Islamic times. So he instructed a young Jew to sit with them and remind them of their past wars and hatred and recite for them some of the ridiculing poems they used to write about each other. And so he did. Thus, they started quarreling, and boasting, and becoming angry, and they called for weapons and moved on one another to fight. This reached the Prophet, so he came and preached to them and sorted it all out among them. They listened and obeyed. And Allah thus revealed: 'O you who have believed, if you obey a party of those who were given the Scripture, they would turn you back, after your belief, [to being] unbelievers' [Al-Imran 3:100].

**Activity:**

Write some of the characteristics of the Jews citing the story and the reason for the verse's revelation . . .

*Islamic Education, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2016, p. 36.*

Stories about treacherous Jews continue to be taught in the curriculum. Students learn a widespread claim as a "useable lesson" that "treachery and treason are among the traits of the Jews."
Reasons for the Battle of the Trench:

1. The Jews of Banu Nadir Incited the Tribes to Wage War against the Muslims.

In the fourth year since the Hegira, the Prophet banished the Jews of Banu Nadir from enlightened Medina to Khaybar as a result of their treachery and betrayal, and their hearts continued to boil with resentment against the Messenger of Allah and his Dawah, so they plotted to take revenge.

The leaders of Banu Nadir, led by Huyayy ibn Akhtab, set out to the Arab tribes, and incited them to invade the Muslims together, and they went to the Quraysh and agreed to wage war against the Muslims . . .

During this difficult time, the Jews of Banu Qurayza breached their covenant with the Muslims and announced their participation with the Arab tribes, so the Muslims were surrounded on all sides.

The Usable Lessons:

4. Treachery and treason are among the traits of the Jews.


The eighth-grade *Islamic Education* textbook includes numerous additional examples of so-called Jewish treachery. Jews are portrayed as being problematic toward Allah and Islam. Previous textbooks, including the eleventh-grade 2016 *Islamic Education* textbook devoted an entire section to Jewish distrust of Islam and Allah, as seen in the oft-quoted, Surah Al-Imran.

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This mentality likely persists not only among former Qatari students but throughout numerous Middle Eastern curricula where this continues to be taught. In the current Qatari curriculum, some items have been removed, such as opposition by the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) toward Islam and their attempts to corrupt Muslims.  

**Jews are Partners in the Effort to Destroy Islam**

Previous textbooks depicted Jews as allies of the polytheists, part of an eternal anti-Islamic axis. The flag of falsehood was carried by the polytheists and their Jewish supporters. All the enemies of the [Islamic] nation were allied with them. And so it went until the Crusader armies attacked the Muslim lands, driven by blind fanaticism and aroused by the clergy of the Church among the European peoples by inventing the ugliest lies about Muslims. *Islamic Education, Grade 11,* Vol. 1, 2016, p. 162.

Other items were not removed. Despite somewhat more moderate language, the following textbook still insists that the People of the Book rejected the true faith and opted for a false one.

Allah called the People of the Book to the correct faith that saves from the punishment of Allah. And he said 'If the People of the Book were to believe' in the Prophet Muhammad and what came through him in Islam 'it would have been better for them' than the false claim of faith they hold.

And Allah said that 'among them are the believers,' meaning a small group that believed and trusted Muhammad’s message, like Al-Najashi and Abd Allah bin Salam. 'And most of them are the immoral.' And most of them did not believe in Muhammad’s message. *Islamic Education, Grade 12,* Vol. 1, 2020, p. 33.

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This unfinished business with the Jews from the period of Islam's beginnings is also covered in secular textbooks such as *Arabic Language*, which suggests that Jew hatred has been a policy in Qatar for quite some time. The following sentence is given as part of an exercise that relates to Jews in the city of Medina during the Prophet Muhammad's time.

> أخلص أهل المدينة للرسول ﷺ إلا اليهود.

The people of Medina devoted themselves to the Messenger, except for the Jews.


Jewish incitement is seen as a tool to be used by the Quraysh tribe to destroy Islam. This historical context, in which Jews are cast as enemies of Islam, lingers in this curriculum.

> 2- رغبة قريش في القضاء على الإسلام.

超过了危险处境的穆斯林在城市里，他们利用了犹太人的煽动，发现了一种破坏敌人和消除伊斯兰教的方式。


### Status of Jews in Jerusalem and the Holy Land

The attachment of Jews to Jerusalem as their holiest place is completely denied. Descriptions of Saladin conquering Jerusalem from the Crusaders include much information about tolerance toward Christians and the religious significance of the city to their faith, but nothing about the Jews. It should be noted that in the new edition of the seventh-grade *Social Studies* textbook that describes this episode there is less about Christians in Jerusalem as well.

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The Holy Places in Jerusalem:

Jerusalem was given a great place in the hearts of Muslims. In it the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first of the two qiblas [prayer directions], the third of the Two Holy Mosques, and the path of the Holy Prophet. Allah described it as the blessed land and the city of Jerusalem, the land of the prophets, and in it many [of the Prophet's companions] were buried.

The continued presence of Christian denominations on Islamic lands is a clear indication of Islam's adherence to the principle of tolerance, and a sign of coexistence and peace between the followers of the two religions.

In light of the previous phrase, look for the reality of Muslim treatment of non-Muslims in Islamic history. Present your findings to your classmates.


The twelfth-grade Qatari History book falsely accuses "the Jews" of setting fire to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in 1969, an event which led to the establishment of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Oddly, the text also correctly points out that an "Australian extremist" caused the fire; however, it omits the fact that he was not Jewish, that he was arrested by Israeli authorities and that he was mentally ill. As a result, this antisemitic libel—which directly resulted in the Second Intifada—is not challenged by the text. Despite the inaccuracies of facts, this is the first time we have seen this semi-qualified version in an Arab textbook. The textbook also ignores the interfaith collaboration and close Israeli cooperation with Jordan and other Muslim countries to repair the damage. The text uses Palestinian nationalist terminology, describing the entire Temple Mount [Al-Haram Al-Sharif] as "Al-Aqsa Mosque," while the actual Al-Aqsa Mosque is called the "Southern Place of Prayer" [Al-Musalla Al-Qibli].
The Formation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation:

- The Islamic states held a summit in Rabat, The Moroccan Kingdom, on September 25, 1969, in order to discuss the Jews' crime of setting fire to the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Islamic summit led to the formation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

- In 1970, the first Islamic conference for ministers of foreign affairs was held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The conference decided to form a general secretariat with headquarters in the city of Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and it will be led by a Secretary-General of the organization.

Add to your information:

The Al-Aqsa Mosque Fire:
On August 21, 1969, an Australian extremist named Michael Denis [Denis Michael Rohan] set fire to the Southern Place-of-Prayer in the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The fire consumed everything in the place-of-prayer, including the ancient pulpit (minbar) known as the Salah ad-Din al-Ayyubi Minbar. The fire also threatened the ancient dome of the mosque. This crime generated a wave of rage across the Islamic world; the fire led to the first Islamic summit in Rabat, Morocco.

This excerpt from a 2019 sixth-grade textbook denies the legitimacy of Israel. It claims that Palestine is an Arab country; its capital is Jerusalem and is under "Israeli Occupation." The narrative includes demonization of the Jews as perpetrators of crimes and occupiers of other people's land.

Palestine is an Arab state, and its capital is the city of Jerusalem. It fell under the Israeli Occupation, which committed barbaric actions against its people; torture, killing, and destroying houses. The occupier claims that this land belongs to the Jews and that they own it, not the Arabs. In this poem, the poet proves the falseness of these claims, as he underlines how Jerusalem is an Arab city, no matter how much the aggressors try to alter this truth.

*Arabic Language, Grade 6, Vol. 2, 2020, 138.*

The textbooks narrate a version of ancient history that sets out to prove the Arab right to the land of Palestine; the Canaanites were Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula who settled the land in 6000 BCE. The Jews, following Abraham, only arrived around 1400 BCE. 187

Note that the text does not deny Jewish rights in the Land of Israel. It also does not refer to the Palestinians, but to "the rights of Arabs."

Historical Truth:

Historical studies prove that the first residents of Palestine were the Canaanites; and this goes back to 6000 years BCE. They are an Arab tribe that moved to Palestine from the Arabian Peninsula. After their advent, Palestine was called it by their name [Canaan]. As for the Jews, their first entry into the land of Palestine occurred six hundred years after the arrival of Ibrahim [Abraham]. So they came to the land around 1400 BCE.

Thus, the Canaanites entered and settled Palestine before the Jews by about 4,500 years, and this proves the Arab right to the land of Palestine, both from the religious-legal perspective [shari’iyya-diniyya] as well as from their residential seniority and land ownership.


The Arabization of the Canaanites is perhaps not only related to the hostility with Israel, but also to a deeper question of ancient indigenous pre-Islamic or non-Arab peoples who somehow managed not to become extinct, such as the Yazidis and even the Kurds. In the following example there is a text about Ibn Battuta, the great Muslim explorer from Morocco—a popular country in the curriculum—but not recognized as an ethnic Berber (Amazigh).
Jewish Holy Books such as the Torah are Valid

The Torah and other Jewish holy books are recognized without the assertions one sometimes finds within Islam about forgeries or distortions. Islam as a continuation of Judaism and Christianity is well documented.

The following fourth-grade *Islamic Education* textbook provides support from the Qur'an that it is imperative to believe in the "previous books" that Allah has revealed to human beings, including the Torah, which was given to Moses, and the New Testament, which was given to Jesus (both considered by Islam to be part of the Israeliite tradition).
The Heavenly Books Mentioned in the Holy Qur'an:

- The Holy Quran tells us about a number of Heavenly Books. [Allah] said: 'We have already sent Our messengers with clear evidence and sent down with them the Scripture' (Surat Al-Hadid 57: 25).
- The heavenly books mentioned in the Blessed Qur'an:
  1. The Scrolls—Revealed to Ibrahim [Abraham]
  2. The Torah—Revealed to Musa [Moses]
  3. Psalms—Revealed to Da'oud [David]
  4. The Gospel—Revealed to 'Isa [Jesus]
  5. The Qur'an—Revealed to Muhammad


Loyalty to one's homeland is revered in the curriculum. Obligation toward one's homeland derives from the heavenly religions (i.e., Islam, Christianity, and Judaism). This suggests that Jews, too, are obligated to defend their homeland, although that remains unclear from the text.

Lesson Topic

Loving Homeland Emanates from Faith

Loving one's homeland is a duty of every member of society. The heavenly religions encourage this. Loving one's Homeland has multiple facets: Human behavior, sayings, and deeds; commitment to upright values and principles, such as honesty and tolerance, preference of the collective interest over the individual ones; offering advice to others, preserving the cohesion of the country, working for its development and prosperity, and rejecting causes for division and disagreement among individuals; finally, adherence to one opinion as regards the benefit of the country.

Theological differences with Judaism are apparent in the curriculum; Jews overly appreciate life in this world, suggesting a lack of sufficient faith in the world to come. Another argument, detailed in the following excerpt, relates to their technical attitude toward the Torah. Muslims are advised not imitate them.

The example of those who were entrusted with the Torah and then did not take it on is like that of a donkey that carries volumes [of books]. Wretched is the example of the people who deny the signs of Allah. And Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people [Al-Jumu'ah 62:5].

After memorizing the aforementioned Ayahs, write the Ayahs that demonstrate the following meanings:

- Performing deeds in accordance with what the Muslim knows of his religion, while not resembling the Jews.

*Islamic Education, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2020, pp. 18-19.*
Finally, the students learn about the conflicts and fighting between the early Muslims and Jewish tribes in great detail. The Muslim narrative of the Medina covenant describes the failure of the Jews to abide by it, ultimately leading to their demise.\(^{189}\)

**Israel and the Jewish National Movement**

The curriculum adopts a discourse that views Israel through the lens of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel is seen as evil while Palestinians are good. The curriculum proposes that Israel is an occupying state and Zionism, associated with a Jewish ambition to rule the world, is racist. But despite the obvious contradiction, the expression "comprehensive and final settlement according to the two-state solution" exists.

The following is an example of Qatar's attitude toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Note that the name Israel is contextualized as a warmonger.

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**First, the Palestinian Cause:**

The Palestinian cause is considered to be one of the most prominent causes in the Arab and international arena. Most of the Islamic and Arab states defend it.

**Qatar's Role in Supporting the Palestinian Cause:**

The State of Qatar has made great efforts to support the Palestinian cause and stand by the Palestinian people, including:

- The State of Qatar's efforts for reconciliation among the Palestinian factions.
- The State of Qatar's success through diplomatic efforts to stop the wars that Israel has waged against the Gaza Strip.
- Supporting Palestinian educational institutions and assistance to institutions supporting women and children and providing assistance.
- The historic visit by Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani to break the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip in 2012.

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Values I learn:
I am proud of my state, Qatar, for its position in support of the Palestinian cause and I make a point of helping the Palestinians in their claim for legitimate rights.

It is no surprise that the Israeli role in facilitating this visit and the often close coordination between Jerusalem and Doha on Gaza issues is not mentioned, nor is the former Israeli trade office in Doha acknowledged.

In the following excerpt quoting the Qatari leader's speech on the Palestinian cause, an assignment was added with the 2019 edition, calling for students to draw conclusions from the text, which presents the two-state solution, "agreed upon by the international community" based on "peace negotiations" and "the 1967 borders." Israel is not mentioned as one of these two states. Rather, "Israeli occupation of the Arab lands" should end.

Read the following text taken from the Speech of His Highness Amir Sheikh Tamim Ben Hamad before the General Assembly of the United Nations on September 19, 2017 and answer the subsequent questions:

The international community should assign maximum priority to renewing the peace negotiations based on ending Israeli occupation of Arab lands within a limited time frame, and reaching a just, comprehensive and final settlement according to the two-state
solution agreed upon by the international community, grounded on International legitimacy decisions and the Arab peace initiative. This will not be achieved except through the establishment of the independent state of Palestine with the 1967 borders and Jerusalem as its capital.'

- **Summarize His Highness’ demands to the United Nations General Assembly over the Palestinian cause.**

- **What are the values that can be extracted from the text?**

  *Social Studies, Grade 10, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 93.*

Israel's omission from the speech as a partner for peace seems significant. Israel does not appear on any of the maps in the textbooks we examined. As we have seen elsewhere, the curriculum embraces a "culture of peace." Yet, it teaches that Israel has been an occupation state since its establishment in 1948 and that Muslims have a religious obligation to conquer the land.

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3- تقسيم فلسطين وإعلان قيام دولتين محتلة (الحكاية الإسرائيليّة):

وفي عام 1948م، تمّ إعلان الدولة الصهيونية بعد إنهاء الانتداب البريطاني على فلسطين، وصار يُعرَف هذا اليوم فيما بعد بـ "يوم التكية". وفي عام 1967م، قام الصهاينة باستكمال احتلال فلسطين، وتمّ تهجير دفعة جديدة من الفلسطينيين إلى خارج فلسطين، ولا يزال الاحتلال يعمل على هويّة فلسطين وطمس هويّتها العربية والإسلامية.

3- The Partition of Palestine and the Declaration of an Occupying State (The Israeli Entity)

In the year 1948 a Zionist State was declared following the end of the British Mandate of Palestine; this day became to be known as the Nakba Day.

In the year 1967 the Zionists completed the occupation of Palestine, and a new wave of Palestinians was displaced outside Palestine. The Occupation continues to Judaize Palestine and blur its Arab and Islamic identity.

*Islamic Education, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 146.*

The text makes clear that there is no place for Israel's existence. In the following exhortation students are taught that it is a **religious obligation** to help **liberate Palestine from the Occupation** (Israel) and not to concede any part of it, leaving no room for Israel or Jews. In other words, the curriculum exhorts an endless war against Israel and rejects any compromise.

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The Obligation of the Muslims toward Palestine, Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa

1 Teach Muslim children about the aspects of the Palestinian cause and the Zionist aggression toward Palestine and Jerusalem.

2 Invest every effort to liberate Palestine from the Occupation [Israel].

3 Support the Palestinian people in political, material and moral spheres.

4 Do not give up any part of Palestine, as it is an Arab-Islamic land.

5 Help and support the people of the House of the Temple (Jerusalem, bayt al-maqdis), work on installing them in their land, and confront the schemes for their displacement.

Islamic Education, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 147.

Rejection of Arab-Israeli peacemaking and normalization.

Students are asked in a passage about "the duty of Muslims in regards to Palestine" and to suggest a list of "ideas to protect Palestine, Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa Mosque" against "normalization in all its forms" with Israel and against its "efforts to Judaize the land and holy places."

I will suggest a number of ideas to protect Palestine, Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa Mosque through the following topics:

- Exposing the Occupation’s efforts to Judaize the land and holy places.
- Legal actions to hold the Occupation’s leaders accountable.
- The position toward normalization and its forms.

Islamic Education, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 147.
The rejection of Israel's legitimacy follows a selective and historically incorrect narrative to demonstrate, apparently, that Jews have no rights to their homeland, in contrast to the rights of Arabs. As described earlier, the Canaanite "origin" myth presented by the curriculum, misleadingly portrays early Canaanites as Arabs, pre-existing the emergence of the ancient Israelite states.

Israel is further delegitimized with the Balfour Declaration's "falseness."\footnote{The Balfour declaration was in reality just one of many war promises (in 1915 and early 1916 Britain made to Sharif (later King) Hussein of Mecca, leader of the Arab Revolt. After the war, the Balfour Declaration became international law. Recent research demonstrates that it reflected an agreement among all the Allies, not just Britain. Martin Kramer, "The Forgotten Truth about the Balfour Declaration," and "The Balfour Declaration Was More than the Promise of One Nation," Mosaic, June 5 and June 28, 2017, https://mosaicmagazine.com/response/israel-zionism/2017/06/the-balfour-declaration-was-more-than-the-promise-of-one-nation/} A History textbook teaches that Jews exert global influence—that the British issued the Balfour Declaration to curry favor with their counterparts in America and Russia. Britain needed "Jewish influence" in America to compel the US to enter the First World War. The text tries to prove the declaration false by arguing that Britain had no legal status in Palestine, teaching that Jews do not have the characteristics of a nation, nor a shared history, cultural heritage, customs or traditions. Jews manipulate jointly the argument goes, but are not a nation.

**B- The 1917 Balfour Declaration:**

This is a declaration issued by Britain’s Foreign Secretary, Balfour, for the Zionist Movement, about establishing a national home for the Jews in Palestine.

**Britain was motivated to issue it because of:**

1. Britain’s need for Jewish influence to compel the US to participate in the First World War on the side of Britain and its allies (which actually happened in 1917).
2. Britain’s wish to control Palestine, in order to protect Britain’s center in Egypt.
3. Gaining the affection of the Jews in Russia and impelling them to pressure it to carry on in the war.
4. Imposing British control on Palestine through the Jewish presence in it.

Add to Your Information:

**The Falseness of the Balfour Declaration:**

The Balfour Declaration lacked historical, legal, and ethical foundations, for the following reasons:

1. Britain did not own Palestine to promise the Jews the establishment of a home for them in it.
2. The statement made the Jews the natives, even though they were 8% of the population of Palestine at the time of the issuing of the declaration.
3. The concept of a national homeland for the Jews is contradictory to the reality of the Jews in the world, as they do not have the characteristics of a nation that make them consisting of one nationality. There are English Jews, German Jews, and French Jews.


A 2017 *Social Studies* textbook applies the term "Zionist gangs" to Israelis. It claims that "Israel has been active since the first day of its establishment to annihilate the Palestinian people, and to Judaize Palestine." It presents a baseless history of Jewish origins and rights in the Land of Israel and life in the diaspora. Ancient Jews were "invading immigrants" who established a short-lived state and were later killed by the Romans, with the few survivors escaping to neighboring lands, thus disconnecting the Jews from Palestine. The text even questions the Jewishness of today’s Jews. The Palestinians were "subjected to massacres" by the "Occupation" forces. The textbook is rife with demonization of Israelis, as the term, "Zionist gangs" implies. Much space is given to the "jihadi movement" founded by Izz al-Din al-Qassam. The Arab revolt of 1936–39 is also described in jihadi terms. The conflict over Jerusalem is labeled as Judaization, aimed to push Muslims (and Christians) out of the city.

No less disturbing is the textbook's representation of the 2014 conflagration between Hamas and Israel. The indiscriminate rocket launches by Hamas into civilian populations, forcing "Zionist citizens to enter the shelters" and stopping "airplane traffic to and from Israel," is described as "brave" and "remarkable." Israeli responses are described as instigating "the most barbaric aggression."
Add to your knowledge

Hamas Movement:

One of the movements of Islamic resistance against the Zionist Entity in Palestine, it was founded in December 1987 by Sheikh Ahmad Yasin, with the goal of opposing the Zionist Entity, liberating Palestine, including its Islamic and Christian holy sites, and establishing a sovereign Palestinian state.

The following poem, written by Qatari poet Hassan Al-Nimah following the 1967 Six-Day War, represents the desired goal of victory against Israel as annihilation of the enemy.

Read the following verses in front of your colleagues in expressive reading. Observe the transition from a tone of sadness and sorrow to one of resolve and challenge. Use your body language appropriately:

O my nation as poets grieve
Igniting souls with torments, and they flare up
O nation charred by the age calamities,
Scorched by belligerent evil,
O nation of the Chosen One and the Arabic,¹⁹⁶ do not grow feeble!
Answer Palestine that victory is waiting
Answer fate and be a perfect storm of heroic acts
Not leaving [the enemy] remaining or scattered

Arabic Language, Grade 10, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 27.

Poetry, often accompanied with strong imagery, is used to stir negative emotions toward Israel. The Islamic expression: "Judaize" is used to describe Jewish history in reference to Al-Aqsa Mosque. Arabs are invited to "lend their cannons" to the war against Israel. The poem is violent, employing phrases like "the waterfall of blood" and "the elderly accompanying children to death." Students learn that they must help resist all things Israeli, as suggested by "the filth of the aggressors and their heinous actions."

¹⁹⁶ "The Chosen One" [literally: al-mustafa], one of the names of Muhammad; "the Arabic" [literally, the language of the consonant Dhad, believed to be unique to Arabic]
A Letter from the Guardians of the Al-Aqsa Mosque
Abd al-Ghani at-Tamimi

Lend us your cannons for a day, and not your tears
Lend us and remain in your positions
Sons of Islam! Our pain is still your pain
Our deaths are your deaths

If we are family of the same womb
Shall we cut it and will it cut us off!?
God forbid! The qualities of Islam
Forbid you and forbid us.
Lend us your cannons for a day, and not your tears
Lend us and remain in your positions
Are you waiting for the Al-Aqsa Mosque’s existence to be obliterated?
And for us to be obliterated?
Lend us, leave the condemnation and be ashamed
We had enough of the condemnations and the waiting

My brother, for Allah’s sake, tell me when will you be angry?
When things holy to us are violated?
When our landmarks are ripped apart, won’t you be angry?
When our nobility is killed, when our honor is crushed
When our resurrection will happen, won’t you be angry?
Tell me, when will you be angry?
When our resources are robbed, when our institutes fall apart
When our mosques are destroyed and the Al-Aqsa Mosque remains

You saw there are horrors
You saw the waterfall of blood
The elderly accompanying children to death
You saw the colors and shapes of oppression
You did not get angry
Tell me when you will
Shedding Light on the Text:

In this part of the poem, the poet addresses the Arab people and calls them to save Jerusalem and its people from the filth of the aggressors and their heinous actions. He cries and agonizes over the Arab people’s weariness and indifference toward their Palestinian brothers and their sacred places. He is hopeful that the Arab and Islamic nation will return to be a powerful nation that protects what is sacred to it.

Preparation and Arrangement:

Using the center of information sources in your school and the internet, search for attempts to Judaize Jerusalem and the aggression against its holy sites, then summarize in your notebook the opinions that you found.


The description of Israel and Zionism in a 2019 History textbook is hostile.\(^{197}\) In the 2017 twelfth-grade Social Studies textbooks, for which we have no 2020 counterpart, the curriculum describes Jews as acting in unison; as "Jewish capitalists" they obey Zionist directions in all countries.\(^{198}\) And yet, it also argues that Jews "do not have the characteristics of a nation." They do not deserve national rights because: "There are English Jews, American Jews, French Jews, Russian Jews, Ethiopian Jews, and so on." Moreover, while recognizing that the Jews received the Torah, have had Prophets and have practiced a legitimate heavenly religion, the curriculum still insists that they "do not share any connection [with one another], nor do they have a shared history, a cultural heritage, or shared customs and traditions."\(^{199}\)

Zionism is demonized as a racist movement. In one 2019 textbook the Zionist movement is not described as racist and Jewish suffering from European persecution is somewhat acknowledged.\(^{200}\) This was apparently removed from the current 2020 volume. The problem of the diaspora for Zionists is recognized by the curriculum's authors. The State of Israel is a "settler-colonialist" state ("the most severe type of colonialism"), an "Occupation State" and thus illegitimate; it should be rejected. The legitimacy of terrorism against the "Zionist Entity" as ("resistance") is discussed.\(^{201}\)

In the spirit of antisemitism, Zionism is defined as a racist movement that aims at achieving Jewish global dominance. This concept is applied without any context in a chapter about Judaism and Christianity, and the deviations which occurred and prevented them from continuing to be part of the one true religion of Islam.

Within a framework of antisemitism, Zionism was defined until 2019 as a racist movement that aims at achieving Jewish global dominance. This concept was applied without any context in a

\(^{199}\) Ibid., p. 26.
\(^{200}\) History, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2019, p. 22.
\(^{201}\) Social Studies, Grade 9, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 135.
chapter about Judaism and Christianity and the deviations which occurred and prevented them from continuing to be part of the one true religion of Islam. It was removed in 2020.

Enrichment: Zionism is an extremist racist political movement, which aims at establishing a state for the Jews in Palestine. It strives to rule the world and control it.


The curriculum portrays various aspects of colonialism. The following chart is organized by type of colonialism, definition and example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>أشكال الاستعمار</th>
<th>المظهر</th>
<th>التعريف</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>الاستيطاني</td>
<td></td>
<td>يُعد من أشد أشكال الاستعمار على الشعوب: حيث يتم توطين سكان الدولة المستعمرة مكان السكان الأصليين بالقوة.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الانتداب البريطاني في الأردن</td>
<td></td>
<td>نظام أقرته عصبة الأمم بعد الحرب العالمية الأولى، على الدول الصغيرة.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الوصاية</td>
<td></td>
<td>نظام أقرته هيئة الأمم المتحدة لحل مصلحة الانتداب، وذلك بعد الحرب العالمية الثانية، على بعض الدول التي كانت خاضعة للاستعمار.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الحماية الفرنسية على تونس</td>
<td></td>
<td>وتعني أن تحافظ الدولة المستعمرة على مظاهر الدولة المستقلة، ولكنها تتحكّم بجميع الأمور المتعلقة بالأمن في البلاد.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>العسكري</td>
<td></td>
<td>سيطرة دولة على أخرى بالقوة وتب طب خراباتها بكل الوسائل.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The curriculum portrays various aspects of colonialism. The following chart is organized by type of colonialism, definition and example:
Types of Colonialism:
The world has known different types of colonialism; these are the most important:

**Military:** A country controls another by force and robs its resources with all means. Example: French occupation of Algeria.

**Settler:** Considered the most severe type of colonialism for a people. [Controlled by] people of a settlement state instead of the original inhabitants. Example: The Zionist settlement in Palestine.

**Mandate:** Regime set by the League of Nations for weaker countries after World War I. Example: British Mandate in Jordan.

**Guardianship:** A regime set by the UN, post-World War II, set to take the place of the mandate for some of the countries that were under colonialism. Example: Italian guardianship over some of the regions of Libya.

**Protectorate:** Meaning that the colonial state maintains the appearance of an independent state [of the country under its protection], but that it controls all aspects of security in the country. Example: French protectorate of Tunisia.

[White box on the upper left]:

**Values that I learn:**

I reject all forms of colonialism

*Social Studies, Grade 9, Vol. 2, 2020, p. 119.*

According to the Qatari curriculum, the entire State of Israel is "Occupation."

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**C- Wars and Political Problems:**

[Wars] play an important role in population spread. Wars and political problems lead to forced migration of people toward safe and stable areas. An example of that is what happened in Palestine after its Israeli occupation in 1948. [People] found refuge in the neighboring Arab countries. This also happens nowadays in Syria which led to immigration waves into neighboring areas.

*Social Studies, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 103.*
Question Four: What are the Consequences of:

1. The Israeli Occupation of the Land of Palestine (population-wise)?


Rejection of Israel teaches Qatari students to support terrorism against Israeli citizens. The word used is *resistance*, but the meaning across the region is known to mean indiscriminate violence. The ninth-grade *Social Studies* textbook has a section titled: "European Colonialism and the Liberation Movements in the Arab Homeland," which includes the legality of resistance to "French and British Colonialism in the Arab Homeland." Regarding Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation, the question is raised as to whether it is legal opposition or an act of violence. The student must provide proofs in his answer. The previous year's *Social Studies* textbook (2018) included the same question.

The Third Activity: In your opinion, is the Palestinian people's resistance to the Israeli Occupation considered a legal or a violent act? Support your position with evidence.


Early Zionism

The following narration of early Zionism is less extreme than some other Middle East curricula but remains negative and inaccurate. A 2019 edition of a history textbook asserted that Theodor Herzl, as founder of the Zionist movement, collaborated with European countries to eliminate the Ottoman Empire. In fact, he defended the Ottomans in Europe and was concerned about the

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203 "Herzl turned to countries in Europe for help in achieving his goal and found great support, especially since it was another means (for those countries) to eliminate the Ottoman Empire." *History*, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2019, p. 22.
possibility that the empire might collapse from some of its harsh policies. This sentence has apparently been removed.

As in other curricula as well, the Qatari textbooks do not refer to the Holy Land as a Jewish homeland nor do they much lament the sultan's poor judgement and missed opportunity to save the Islamic Empire. Elsewhere in the textbook, the authors point to the fact that the Ottomans declared war as they entered WWI on the German side.

A new detailed grade 12 History textbook offers a mostly one-sided anti-Israeli presentation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, featuring such incitement as the recurring use of "the Zionist Entity" while characterizing the Zionist movement as racist. The Canaanite myth is repeated here as well, as a proof that Jews have no rights in their homeland; thus, Israel is illegitimate. The events leading to WWII and the war itself are particularly biased. The Holocaust and Jewish persecution in Europe and various Arab countries is glaringly omitted from the narrative, while violence against Jews is described as resistance. Hence, [Syrian-Islamist] Izz ad-Din al-Qassam and Palestinian leader (and Nazi agent and Holocaust collaborator) Hajj Amin al Husseini are glorified.

The text depicts suicide bombings and violence by Palestinians in the Second Intifada targeting Israeli civilians as a natural reaction to ongoing Israeli oppression; such acts are portrayed as "armed operations" or "military operations"—blaming Israel for leaving Palestinians no choice but to engage in such activities.

Nevertheless, there are nuances. In maps, the entirety of Israel's territory is called the "Occupation." Cities in Israel proper such as Tel Aviv are in "Occupied Palestine" on maps outlining borders following the 1948 and 1967 wars. Holy Jewish places are ignored; only Muslim and Christian sites are acknowledged. And yet the text reports about "The Jews

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At the time, Herzl was considering a "night shelter," as a stopgap for Jewish refugees in East Africa, before the establishment of a permanent homeland. Eyal Lewin, Ethos Clash in Israeli Society (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2014), p. 82.


207 Ibid., p.16.

208 (14).

209 (20–21).

210 (26).

211 (94–95).

212 (13).
(Israelites) entering Palestine in 1190 BCE." Note: the term used is "entering," which is different from the Roman and British "occupations." The Jews dwelled in the "north-western" part of Palestine "under the existence of the Canaanites, the owners of the land." Using the same logic, the text correctly reports that "Herzl tried to convince the Ottoman State to grant the Jews self-rule in Palestine, under Ottoman sovereignty." (Herzl's Zionism is depicted as fully compatible with the most rigid interpretations of Islamic Sharia.)

But within the same History textbook there is also an apparent attempt at balance, showing points in history in which the Jewish or Israeli side displayed moderation or fell victim to intransigence from Muslims or Arabs. Notably, for the first time in any Muslim curriculum, there is mention that the Zionist project to establish a national home for the Jews was planned as part of the Ottoman Empire. Other findings from the textbook are the Arab rejection of the 1947 partition plan and the multi-army Arab invasion (of Israel) in 1948; the "refugee issue in the Arab region" is only briefly mentioned. The Six-Day War is referred to as "another Israeli aggression." The Egyptian blockade of the Tiran Straits in May 1967 on the eve of that war is noted. There is ample information about wars ("between the Arabs and Israel"), including uprisings, battles, peace negotiations with images depicting meetings and contract signings (between Egypt and the "Zionist Entity").

\[213 (15).\]
\[214 (14).\]
\[215 (18).\]
\[216 (18).\]
\[217 (18).\]
\[218 (18).\]
\[219 (18).\]
Figure 1: The 1948 War Map

[Invading armies include the Egyptian (dotted red), Jordanian (blue), Iraqi (dotted purple), Syrian (orange) and Lebanese (green). The beige color refers to Palestine, but Israeli cities Tel Aviv and Eilat are clearly marked.]


The History textbook also teaches about the Madrid Conference of 1991 and the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1993. The curriculum places the Madrid Conference after the First Intifada and before the Oslo Accords, implying negotiations were only possible because of the Intifada. Regarding the Oslo Accords, the textbook focuses on gained benefits from the Palestinian perspective—the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority, the granting of self-rule, and the first democratically held elections.
The text is mostly factual; however, it falsely presents Palestine’s accession to the United
Nations as an observer state following the 1993 Oslo Accords. In fact, this took place almost two
decades later, in 2011.

One can point to other positives. There are pictures of peace ceremonies and by implication,
acknowledgement of the peace process. The clear statement: "The establishment of the
Palestinian Authority that became sovereign based on the interim agreements signed in
September 1995" contradicts the common parlance about Israeli "occupation" by stressing that
the PA already acquired substantial powers via internationally recognized agreements.

Many expressions in the text can be understood as educating for peace by showing the various
means to secure it, the advantages of peace, the achievements of the Palestinians and, by
implication, neutralizing the demonization of Israel by displaying that negotiations with it yield
substantial results. Among these expressions one finds "Arab peace process with Israel," the
participation in the Madrid conference of "Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians,"
conducting "secret talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis in Norway," the facilitating of
"Palestinian presidential and general elections," the enumeration of various agreements, and the
transfer of territories and consequential diplomatic achievements such as international
recognition, all resulting from the peace process as seen in the following examples:221

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Qatar apparently views Israel in a variety of ways, as demonstrated in this twelfth-grade History textbook,
There is some reduction of anti-Zionism. For example, the poem "To My Mother" by Palestinian National Poet, Mahmoud Darwish (1941–2008), is no longer included. The introduction to the poem describes Israel as: "Occupation." Nevertheless, "To My Mother," although not especially inciting, was published in Israel in 1966, and fits conveniently into the Israel=Occupation paradigm.222

The second text was written by great Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwih, who tasted the bitterness of the Occupation's prison. Like any mother who longs to see her imprisoned son, his mother decided to visit him and bring him fruit and coffee . . .

One should not conclude that the poem's removal suggests that Palestinian literature is not respected. In an article dedicated to values and literature, two of five examples are written by Palestinians from the Galilee in Israel (which is not mentioned). The quintessential example for the value of nationalism is found in Mahmoud Darwish's preoccupation with the Palestinian issue. An illustration of "patriotic values" is seen in the writings of Samih Al-Qasim (1939–2014)

The replacement text seems more focused on the homeland. The lesson in the 2018 edition is entitled "Loss and Longing between Two Poets" while the comparable 2020 lesson is entitled "The Homeland between Two Poets." Other examples of replacing a Palestine-related issue with a Qatar-related one also exist. In one case a poem by Saudi poet Abd Al-Rahman Al-'Ashmawi calling for the liberation of Jerusalem was replaced by an introduction to patriotic poetry in Qatar.

**Gender and Society**

The curriculum portrays women largely in traditional modes. But some subjects, such as science and English, include women in modern settings.

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1. Let's Write!


Males often wear traditional garb (note that the girl's image is less traditional and came first):

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225 *Arabic Language*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2018, p. 120; *Arabic Language*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 122.
2. I Browse the Internet

*Computing Information Technology, Grade 1, Vol. 2 (Workbook), 2019, p. 28.*

Women are encouraged to be brave, while serving the home and homeland.

"...قَالَتُ لِلَّهِ عَلَيْهِ الْمَلاَكُ اِنْفُكِيَتْكَ، كُونِيْ قُوَّةً مُجَّاعِةً، وَانْنُعِيْ بِنَتِكَ وَوَوَنُكَ".

The mother said to her daughter: 'My little daughter, be strong and courageous and help your home and your homeland.'

*Arabic Language, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 46.*

Another traditional presentation of female status is seen in the story: "Every Girl Adores Her Father" which references the women of paradise from Islamic tradition. Just like the story itself, the good woman is the one who pleases her husband, is loving and has many children. Note that this hadith is quoted from Salafi scholar (Muhammad Nasiruddin) al-Albani (1914–99).²²⁶

The following image portrays a typical image of males depicted as protectors. Here a benevolent-looking father walks his smiling children to the school bus.

In an Arabic Language textbook, the punctuation exercise in previous curricula was about a Qatari male racing car driver.²²⁷ The text is now dedicated to Rufaida Al-Aslamia, an Arab female doctor from early Islam who offered medical assistance on battlefields. She was also known as a companion to the Prophet Muhammad and a successful businesswoman. Her role may be seen as dualistic as both a successful professional, while at the same serving on the battlefield supporting Islam as a jihadi.

We see in other Muslim curricula—particularly in Iran and the Palestinian Authority—that women are elevated to jihadi or martyr status, as a considered advancement of women.

²²⁷ Arabic Language, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2018, p. 34.
Eternal Women

Who is the first nurse and physician in Islam? It is the great companion [to the Prophet] Rufaida Al-Aslamia, who treated the wounds of the Muslims in the raids commanded by the Prophet to spread Islam. She accepted the wounded and injured in her ambulance tent helped by a number of female companions who extended medical treatment to the Muslim wounded based on her wide medical experience and knowledge. She participated in the raids of the beloved Prophet such as the Battle of the Trench and Khaybar. She was reading and writing well and possessed great fortune which she spent on her charity work. What a great woman combining knowledge and ethics.


Thus, the curriculum values both traditional values and hints at empowerment of women. In the same textbook, there is a picture of a woman wearing an Islamic hijab standing in the library and reading a book. The context is that of the National Library of Qatar. The books and the hijab combine the power of learning and the obedience and adaptability expected by traditional values.

*Arabic Language, Grade 7*, Vol. 1, 2020, p. 68.

Gender Roles

A 2020 eighth-grade *Islamic Education* textbook teaches the Sharia view that prohibits men and women from imitating one another in action or dress. This act, the curriculum maintains is against Allah’s plan as it disrupts the natural order of things by destabilizing the family structure and thus society. The chapter lists a person’s lack of awareness, absence of religious boundaries,
mental issues, and blind imitation as motivations for copying the opposite sex. Pride in religion is one way to solve this problem. The 2018 version of this textbook applies harsher language and provides more detailed information on the imitation of men by women. The text does not encompass sexual conduct or specific punishments, except for the Prophet's curse which implies being deprived of Allah’s mercy.

I will read and memorize:
Abdullah ibn Abbas narrated: 'The Messenger of Allah cursed the men who imitate women men and the women who imitate men.'

Within the Vastness of the Noble Hadith:
- Allah created men and women and made each of them with a different nature. The purpose of this distinction is so that one completes the other. And with his integration, life will continue and livelihood sustained livelihood. The difference between man and woman is not meant to respect one and humiliate the other. If one of them tries to leave their position that was revealed by Allah, then matters will be disrupted and become out of its way and harm the entire society.

- This is why the warning came to deter whoever is tempted to act against the natural disposition created by Allah. The Prophet gave a warning in the form of a curse which signals the removal from Allah’s mercy. This also indicates strict prohibition and great warning to men who imitate women in talking, acting, or appearance. The same prohibition and warning is directed as well to women who imitate men.

The Reasons Men and Women Imitate Each Other:
1. Lack of awareness and guidance from the family regarding the severity of such imitation and its consequences.
2. Feeble faith and scarcity of religious deterrent help this behavior and invite sins.
3- Mental problems: Some experience feelings of inferiority, so to compensate, they imitate the other gender to get attention.
4- Blind imitation.

**Why Did Allah Prohibit Men and Women's Imitation of Each Other?**
Imitation between men and women deviates from the purpose for which Allah wanted to distinguish men from women. There are many purposes, among them:
1- Increasing love and affection: creating distinction increases the love between the two [man and woman], as all families are based on the couple.
2- Stabilizing the family and society: This distinction between both (men and women) implies different roles for each of them in the family and in society, so it straightens life and stabilizes society.

**Important Matters That Must Be Adhered to in Order to Avoid Imitation between Men and Women, Including:**
1- Adherence to our natural disposition, created by Allah.
2- Right upbringing that nurtures pride in religion.
3- Right friendship and leadership.
4- Correcting false ideas and habits.
5- Filling one's time with useful activities.

**What Must Be Considered in Men's and Women's Clothing:**
- **Men:** Should wear what is usually known to be for men, as follows
  1- They are not to be made from silk or gold.
  2- They must avoid wearing jewelry that imitates women’s jewelry, such as necklaces or bracelets.
  3- They must cover their private parts.
- **Women:** They wear what is usually known to be for women, as follows:
  1- They must not wear jewelry that attracts men’s attention.
  2- They must not imitate men’s clothing.
  3- They must not wear tight or transparent clothes but opt for loose coverings.
  4- They must cover their private parts.

Conclusion

Qatar has shown itself to be an ambitious country with a great many challenges in its path. The movement from poverty to affluence starting in the mid-twentieth century, along with a mostly capable leadership, has allowed the Gulf nation to create a viable economic plan (Vision 2030) to support its active involvement in regional and world affairs. Like Saudi Arabia with its Vision 2030 program, Qatar aspires to become a regional and global hub focusing on high visibility and specialization in the domains of media, education, sports, knowledge economy, transportation and diplomacy. The curriculum maintains that Qatar's involvement in world affairs is ongoing and includes the global spread of political Islam.

While its enormous wealth allows Qatar to employ a carrot-and-stick interventionist policy in a host of regional issues, the tiny peninsula with its miniscule army is constantly challenged by its more powerful neighbors in the Arabian Peninsula, the Gulf and Iran. At the same time, it continues to face internal challenges resulting from its demographic makeup. This focuses on an autocratic regime ruled by a minority immigrant tribe with the remainder of citizens, eligible to vote only in local elections. Most strikingly, almost 90 percent of Qatar's population are non-citizen immigrants who can be deported at any time, often experiencing segregation and discrimination. Such discrimination and the ensuing unrest it creates, contributes to Qatar's geopolitical vulnerability; its source of revenue, owes to a fortunate discovery of fossil fuels in the late 1930s.

The curriculum emphasizes nationalist identity which seems to be in the midst of a resurgence—likely in part due to the now-resolved siege crisis affecting the emirate country. However, pan-Islamic and pan-Arab nationalism is also evident—though somewhat reduced from previous curricula. The Islamic dimension includes elements of Salafism and the Muslim Brotherhood. But Qatari education, despite such extreme religious influences, remains heavily swayed by Western educators, reflecting the Qatari gift for embracing contradictions.

Within the Islamic discourse there appears to be some movement away from the jihadism of the Muslim Brotherhood as well as from the cultural isolationism of the Salafists. Yet both defensive and offensive jihad is taught with contexts from early, Medieval, and contemporary Islam. Certain particularly offensive material (such as the Protocols of the Elders of Zion) has been removed or replaced.

The curriculum expounds on the openness of Medieval Islamic states, leading to their rise in prominence culturally and economically. It attributes much of Qatar's financial success on education and openness; the historical emphasis on the Medieval translation movement in school textbooks recognizes the role of Christians and Jews and stresses the critical importance of

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228 Pattisson, "Asian Town," The Guardian
tolerance and openness in Muslim societies. One should bear in mind that this moves the curriculum away from the Salafi ideal,\textsuperscript{229} despite lingering theological issues including "Jewish treachery" and corruption of texts.

With gender, however, the Salafi voice remains intact. Women are encouraged to be brave, serving homes and homeland, to love their husbands, and to have many children. Yet, the empowerment of women is documented from supporting roles during early Islamic times and currently in the opportunities afforded them by education and the ability to participate in the Consultative Council (\textit{Majlis al Shura}); but such empowerment is not at the expense of strict adherence to traditionalist beliefs.

Qatar's commitment to issues important to the Arab world remains strong; occasionally one finds such support replaced with sections that favor Qatari national causes. Israel conveniently remains illegitimate as part of a Qatari identity which supports the Palestinian cause. Qatari-Israeli relations are avoided. Absent from the curriculum is an understanding of the perennial Middle Eastern crises affecting non-Arab or non-Muslim minorities or their various issues. While the Turks and Iranians—and even the British and Americans—are respected, others are not.

Hatred and persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany is justified for their role in the downfall of post-WWI Germany and their control and manipulation of governments. Concerns related to the origin of Israel and the Jews in the region, Western antisemitism and the Holocaust, and the condition of Jews in Islamic lands, particularly in the modern age leading to mass exodus from Arab countries, are avoided. Other ethnic and religious minorities and tribes such as the Amazig, Yazidis, Kurds and Maronites are among those excluded. The curriculum teaches students the importance of protecting Muslim minorities—often persecuted worldwide. China and India's abuses of their Muslim minorities is criticized. Some governments, mainly European, are portrayed a little better in this context in the new curriculum.

An idyllic presentation of the history of Islam as tolerant, liberal, interactive and advanced is preferable to the radicalism and jihadism that still exists across the curriculum. Yet from the perspective of UNESCO standards, it is important to present such history more completely and accurately.

Qatar appears to be in the process of reducing decades of radical education. Changes are slow and not fully consistent. A good starting point to view the curriculum is from the perspective of \textsc{IMPACT-se}'s UNESCO-derived standards for \textsc{SOUND PROSPERITY} and \textsc{COOPERATION},\textsuperscript{230} reflecting society's vision.

\textsuperscript{229} \textit{Al-salaf al-salih} (the righteous early), refers to the first three generations of Islam: The "friends" (of the Prophets), the "followers," and the "followers of the followers" [\textit{الصحابه, التبعون, تابعو التابعين}].

\textsuperscript{230} Terms in all caps represent international standards. For more, see Methodology, p. 152.
In the Qatari curriculum, prosperity is tightly linked to opening education and cultural interaction with the world. However, such behavior is new. Until very recently one could see vicious attacks against Western civilization. *Islamic Education* textbooks have been fashioned by Muslim Brotherhood affiliates targeting Jews, Crusaders, missionaries, secular-modernists and secular Arabs. Democracy was seen as contradicting Islam.

The new curriculum speaks of democracy and cultural exchange. This may explain Qatar's intention to maintain high visibility in international affairs. Various projects such as hosting the FIFA World Cup and funding the first mosque and Islamic center in Denmark are praised. The curriculum maintains that the Copenhagen mosque aims at "disseminating the culture of peace" correcting "the distorted image of Islam," while repudiating violence and hatred and spreading tolerance. However the curriculum omits Qatar's controversial treatment of workers building World Cup venues and makes no mention of the concerns of Danish politicians regarding the foreign funding of Danish institutions—including mosques—from anti-democratic sources (like Qatar) that led to a ban on such activity earlier this year. Students are also taught to be proud of Qatar's involvement in Gaza and to be enthusiastic over attacks against Israeli civilians.

In the Israeli-Palestinian context the two-state solution is mentioned and peace agreements are covered in the new curriculum. Yet, so is the "obligation of Muslims to liberate Palestine from the Occupation." Simply, the curriculum's presentation of Israel, peace and Jewish issues do not meet UNESCO's standards. The textbooks provide very little UNBIASED INFORMATION regarding Jews and Israel; they do not show RESPECT, nor do they acknowledge INDIVIDUAL OTHER Israelis, let alone Israel as a national entity. HATE continues to be instilled through examples that carry over to some textbooks from previous curricula, such as the "The Treacherous Jew," Zionism as a racist-political movement, and Israel as an Occupying State. Students are taught to support Palestinian "resistance and to expect victory against Israel and annihilation of the enemy . . . without compromise. Thus, PEACEMAKING is almost never found in this context. Briefly, but with unexpected vulnerability, this curriculum offers embarrassing information in which Israel or the Jews historically displayed much moderation, only to be rebuffed by Muslim or Arabs.

But Jews are mentioned in the context of the Medieval translation movement. The description of Zionism as a racist movement still remains but was removed from at least one textbook as were some antisemitic myths. Old Islamic anti-Jewish tropes exist but were minimized in recent

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editions. The curriculum still falsely frames the Jewish national movement as a colonial-settler enterprise, and Israel as an occupation state.

Similarly, some anti-Christian material has been removed. But Christians, along with Jews as "People of the Book" are blamed for causing divisions among Muslims. The curriculum respects Western scientists and scholars. The US, Britain, Turkey Iran, China and Oman are portrayed as friendly actors. China's persecution of Muslims is detailed; *jihadism* in Kashmir is not applauded any more, but India is criticized. The report found more praise toward governments hosting Muslim minorities. There is no anti-Shi'ite material, perhaps in deference to the large Shi'ite population and the current close relations with Iran. Criticism of rival Arab countries during the siege was restrained, leaving open avenues for dialogue. The curriculum's idyllic portrayal of the Islamic treatment of minorities is simplistic (former editions described minorities as collaborating with the enemy).

Finally, the curriculum teaches students tolerance toward the expatriate community. It encourages them to respect all members of the Qatari population and cautiously fosters the idea that democracy represents the future. Regarding GENDER, the curriculum exhorts both traditional values and empowerment for women, at times creating contradictions. Careers for women are not a priority. They are encouraged to be brave, serving homes and homeland, loving their husbands while having many children. The curriculum rejects non-traditional gender roles (even actors playing opposite-gender roles).

This updated report maintains that the Qatari curriculum appears to be in a phase of transformation. Qatar's ambition to be actively involved in world affairs includes the global spread of political Islam, supporting Iranian and Turkish agendas, radical movements such as Hamas and Muslim Brotherhood, and subverting other regimes such as Egypt. There are many contradictory signals attending such outreach: Building an Islamic Center in Denmark or supporting so-called human rights causes around the world can be interpreted in various ways. Israel's legitimacy remains a major concern. Israeli-Qatari ties, the Holocaust, and the demise of Jewish communities in the Arab World are simply avoided. The curriculum fosters a commitment toward Qatar's global role, but fails to display the impartiality and good will that must accompany such ambition.

Such international preoccupation tends to obfuscate the major problem affecting the Qatari homeland, to wit, the maltreatment of its majority expatriate population. A more serious attitude toward improving conditions for this population could ultimately help Qatari leaders to channel their global ambitions into more meaningful and beneficial arenas. The curriculum includes hints in that direction, particularly with its discussions of democracy. If, as promised, the Consultative Council convenes as a parliament in 2021, we may hopefully see some of the promised changes. We will continue to watch closely if the curriculum—and the society it represents—evolves.
IMPACT-se utilizes a content analysis research method to examine textbooks according to the following condensed criteria of UNESCO’s standards for peace and tolerance in school education:

1. **RESPECT**: The curriculum should promote tolerance, understanding and respect toward the "Other," his or her culture, achievements, values and way of life.\(^{234}\)

2. **INDIVIDUAL OTHER**: The curriculum should foster personal attachment toward the "Other" as an individual, his or her desire to be familiar, loved and appreciated.\(^{235}\)

3. **NO HATE**: The curriculum should be free of wording, imagery and ideologies likely to create prejudices, misconceptions, stereotypes, misunderstandings, mistrust, racial hatred, religious bigotry and national hatred, as well as any other form of hatred or contempt for other groups or peoples.\(^{236}\)

4. **NO INCITEMENT**: The curriculum should be free of language, content, and imagery that disseminate ideas or theories which justify or promote acts and expressions of violence, incitement to violence, hostility, harm and hatred toward other national, ethnic, racial or religious groups.\(^{237}\)

5. **PEACEMAKING**: The curriculum should develop capabilities for non-violent conflict resolution and promote peace.\(^{238}\)

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\(^{234}\) As defined in the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance Proclaimed and signed by Member States of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Articles 1, 4.2. See also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding Between Peoples (1965), Principles I, III. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

\(^{235}\) The goal of education for peace is the development of universally recognized values in an individual, regardless of different socio-cultural contexts. See Ibid., Article 6. See also, on exchanges between youth, the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principles IV, V.


\(^{237}\) As defined in Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2106 (XX) on December 21, 1965. See also Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2200A (XXI) on December 16, 1966.

6. **UNBIASED INFORMATION**: Educational materials (textbooks, workbooks, teachers’ guides, maps, illustrations, aids) should be up-to-date, accurate, complete, balanced and unprejudiced, and use equal standards to promote mutual knowledge and understanding between different peoples.\(^\text{239}\)

7. **GENDER**: The curriculum should foster equality and mutual respect between women and men. It should refrain from stereotyped gender roles.\(^\text{240}\)

8. **SOUND PROSPERITY and COOPERATION**: The curriculum should educate for sound and sustainable economic conduct and preservation of the environment for future generations. It should encourage regional and local cooperation to that effect.\(^\text{241}\)

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\(^{239}\) Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Article V.14.

\(^{240}\) The preamble to the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, notes the Convention on the Elimination of Any Form of Discrimination against Women and emphasizes respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to gender.

\(^{241}\) Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Articles III.6, and IV.7. On the imperative for developing "systematic and rational tolerance teaching methods that will address the cultural, social, economic, political and religious sources of intolerance," see the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 4.2. On education for international cooperation, see also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principle II.
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List of Textbooks

The following Qatar curriculum textbooks were analyzed for the research in this study. The titles both here and referenced in the text have been translated into English to aid the reader. IMPACT-se typically researches all available textbooks used in a curriculum. If new textbooks or previously unavailable books become available after a report's publication, every effort is made to update reports to include any relevant material. For this updated report, IMPACT-se acquired a majority of the textbooks used in the Qatar curriculum. Any omitted books were either unavailable or made unavailable for unknown reasons. We welcome any comments related to the acquisition of any omitted materials (http://www.impact-se.org/about-us/contact-us/).

Grade 1


Grade 2


**Grade 3**

Grade 4

Grade 5

**Grade 6**

**Grade 7**
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**Grade 9**

**Grade 10**

**Grade 11**

**Grade 12**