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RELIGIOUS IMBALANCE IN THE TEXAS SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM: ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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“Religious Imbalance in the Texas Social Studies Curriculum: Analysis and Recommendations”

Introduction

There is a general consensus among U.S. scholars that as the world becomes more interconnected and American society more religiously diverse, students need a basic working knowledge of the world's religions. As one scholar writes, such instruction is “an integral part of education for democratic citizenship in a pluralistic society.”¹ It is equally clear that in the public school context, coverage of religion must be presented in a balanced and nonconfessional way, so as not to violate First Amendment protections against government favoring one religion over others.

Texas does not currently require public school students to take a dedicated course in world religions. Instead, instruction about religion falls within the social studies curriculum—a broad category that includes history, geography, government, psychology, sociology, and economics. Coverage of religion is largely restricted to three social studies courses: middle school social studies (essentially a world geography course), high school world geography, and high school world history.

While the curriculum standards for the middle school course set few requirements for religion coverage, the standards for the two high school courses require that students learn about specific world religions; as will be discussed below, however, the list of religions in the world geography standards differs from that in the world history standards. Several of the world geography and world history instructional materials (IMs) approved for use in Texas include a “World Religions Handbook” feature that offers brief summaries of the major characteristics of the world's religions.² Other adopted IMs distribute information about religion throughout the text.

Although Texas is to be applauded for including religion in its curriculum, its current approach, as this report seeks to show, fails to offer public school students the balanced coverage of religion they need in order to fully understand the world and function effectively in an increasingly diverse society.

This imbalance involves two major players—the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) and the publishers of social studies IMs—and is manifested in two distinct but related areas of the social studies curriculum: the curriculum standards (the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, or TEKS) and the social studies IMs approved for use in Texas public schools beginning in 2015.

The SBOE, the main policymaking body in Texas public education, established the social studies TEKS in 2010. The TEKS specify what teachers are to teach and students are to learn, and thus set the criteria which IMs must meet.³ The SBOE also oversees the evaluation and adoption of IMs for use in Texas public school classrooms. Publishers seeking to have their IMs approved for use in Texas must demonstrate how their products satisfy each of the pertinent TEKS standards. They also are required to correct any factual errors identified in the evaluation process, and must respond to all comments submitted to the SBOE by members of the public.

As this report will show, both the SBOE and the IM publishers bear responsibility for the religious imbalance in the current Texas social studies curriculum: the SBOE, for imbalance in the social studies TEKS; the IM publishers, for imbalance in the IMs. However, I will also argue that the SBOE bears the greater share of responsibility. While the SBOE cannot directly determine IM content, board members have established a climate and a process which not only fail to promote religious balance, but in some cases, actively impede it.

This report is presented in five parts. The first part sketches the rationale for teaching about religion in public schools and discusses what constitutes balanced coverage of religion. The next two parts focus on the first major player in the social studies curriculum, the SBOE. Part 2 explores the SBOE's record of obstructing religious balance in the social studies curriculum. Part 3 examines imbalances in religion coverage in the social studies TEKS. Part 4 turns to the second major player, the IM publishers. It highlights similar imbalances in recently adopted instructional materials, focusing on the illustrative case of how world geography and world history IMs cover violence in the spread of Christianity and Islam. Finally, Part 5 offers a list of recommendations for achieving balanced coverage of religion in Texas public schools.

It is hoped that this report will raise awareness of problems in the way religion is taught in Texas, and will spark a broad conversation among stakeholders about how to improve this vital area of public education—particularly in advance of the next revision of the social studies TEKS in 2019 or 2020.

1. Teaching about Religion in Public Schools

Why focus specifically on religion? After all, much of the controversy swirling around Texas public education over the last two decades has had to do with the science curriculum (debates over whether students should be taught creationism or intelligent design alongside evolution)⁴ or with the history and government curriculum—most prominently, debates over the role of the Bible (or the “Judeo-Christian tradition”) in shaping American democracy.⁵

However, as those examples demonstrate, religion underlies much of the controversy surrounding instruction in other disciplines. It is the metaphorical elephant in the classroom. Until Texans recognize the role of religion and deal with it constructively, controversy will continue to plague public education in the Lone Star state.

But preventing controversy may be the least important reason for focusing specifically on religion.⁶ Other reasons are far more significant. First, religion has played a profound role in the story of humankind, and continues to do so today. For students to understand our world, they must understand the *religions* of our world. Second, religious differences figure prominently on the national political landscape, influencing debates over climate change, abortion, sexuality, and a host of other issues. Students cannot fully understand what is at

stake in these national debates if they do not understand the religious perspectives that help shape them.

Third, and perhaps most important, today's Texas public school students are growing up in a state and a nation that are much more religiously diverse than ever before, and that also include a growing number of people who identify with no religious tradition. To succeed in this increasingly diverse environment, public school students should know who their religious (and nonreligious) neighbors are, what they believe, and how they see the world.

A recent position statement by the National Council for the Social Studies sums up quite well the need for religion education: "Study about religions should be an essential part of the social studies curriculum. Knowledge about religions is not only a characteristic of an educated person but is necessary for effective and engaged citizenship in a diverse nation and world. Religious literacy dispels stereotypes, promotes cross-cultural understanding, and encourages respect for the rights of others to religious liberty."⁷

Clearly, however, any instruction about religion in government-sponsored schools must not violate First Amendment protections against government establishment of religion. Numerous scholars have worked on this problem in recent years and have come to a consensus view: religion should be taught in an academic rather than a devotional manner; schools can support the study of religion but not the practice of any particular religion; and schools can expose the student to religious diversity, but not impose any particular vision.⁸

To avoid favoritism toward any religion or religions, coverage of religion in the social studies disciplines, and particularly world geography and world history, should be *balanced*. This does not mean a simplistic parity—for instance, giving equal space to each religion, measured by word count, line count, or some similarly crude metric.⁹ Simple parity is *not* appropriate in world history or world geography, since religions have varying degrees of impact on or relevance to a particular area of study.¹⁰

Instead, the sort of religious balance envisioned here would give each religious tradition coverage commensurate with its impact on a given social studies discipline. For instance, although primal religions today account for only around 6 percent of the world's population, they predate most other world religions and have arguably exerted a greater influence on the human story than other religions.¹¹ Consequently, a world history textbook may well give primal religions more extensive coverage than other religions (depending, of course, on the time frame encompassed by the textbook). Similarly, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam might receive comparatively extensive coverage, as befits their influence on humanity globally. Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism, though considerably smaller in terms of total adherents worldwide, might receive coverage proportional to their global impact and their influence on specific regions and other religious traditions (i.e., their effect on religions that do have global reach).

Perhaps the best measure of religious balance is a very rough and basic one, with two main parts:

- Does the coverage give students sufficient information about the role of various religions in shaping the human story? Or does it overemphasize one or more religions, giving a distorted picture of their historical significance and influence on the human story?
- Is the information presented about each religious tradition fair and accurate? Does it represent a given religion's beliefs, practices, history, and development in terms that would be broadly recognizable to most of its adherents? Does it give an accurate and neutral account of a religion's history, depicting the religion neither more positively nor more negatively than is justified by the historical record?

This measure of balance will be used throughout this report.

2. The SBOE: Obstacle to Balanced Religion Coverage

In Texas, curriculum is established by the State Board of Education (SBOE), which sets policies and standards for Texas public education. In most states (36), state education board members are appointed, usually by the governor. Texas is one of only five states in which state education board members are elected by a partisan ballot.¹² Texans choose SBOE members in down-ballot elections that often receive relatively little media attention. In off-year elections when turnout is chronically low, SBOE elections can be heavily influenced by small groups of committed activists who can be relied upon to show up at the polls.¹³ As a result, the SBOE's makeup and policy—including its approach to the coverage of religion—are subject to the shifting political winds. Furthermore, while some states set requirements for membership on the state education board, Texas SBOE members are not required to meet any qualifications, such as training in the subject areas they oversee.¹⁴

These characteristics of the SBOE would pose only minor problems were it a purely advisory body. However, it exercises immense power over the curriculum in two important areas: the development of curriculum standards—specifically the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards, or TEKS—and the review and adoption of instructional materials (IMs).

TEKS: The SBOE is responsible for establishing TEKS for all subjects in grades K-12.¹⁵ As noted above, the TEKS specify what teachers are to teach and students are to learn. IMs must satisfy at least 50 percent of the TEKS to be adopted for use in Texas public schools.

True, the TEKS are not drafted by the SBOE alone, but with “the direct participation of educators, parents, business and industry representatives, and employers.”¹⁶ In fact, the current social studies TEKS were drafted by teams of appointees, many of whom were educators, and a team of experts (mostly university professors) contributed input and feedback. However, as we will see, SBOE members passed over credentialed field specialists in favor of ideological allies with little or no relevant credentials. SBOE members also directly modified the curriculum standards themselves, despite their lack of

relevant expertise.¹⁷ These interventions dramatically shaped the coverage of religion in Texas public schools.

Instructional Materials (IMs): The SBOE is also responsible for adopting IMs for all subjects in grades K-12.¹⁸ Although board members are not required to have any subject-matter expertise, they are charged with ensuring not only that IMs submitted for adoption meet the relevant TEKS, but also that they are free of “factual errors,” vaguely defined as “verified error[s] of fact or any error[s] that would interfere with student learning.”¹⁹ Furthermore, the SBOE’s own operating rules specify that it must ensure that IMs adopted for use in Texas “present the most current factual information accurately and objectively without editorial opinion or bias by the authors,” clearly distinguish theories from fact, “present balanced and factual treatment” of contrasting viewpoints, and “provide an objective view of cultural confluence.”²⁰

This is a tall order, and likely an impossible one. It is unreasonable to expect non-specialist SBOE members to be able to identify contrasting viewpoints in a given field, let alone ensure that those viewpoints are given “balanced and factual treatment.” Furthermore, non-specialists are ill-equipped to determine what constitutes “factual errors” or “the most current factual information” in a given field, or to identify “editorial opinion or bias” in the presentation of information.

Granted, board members do not review the IMs themselves; they draw on the findings of teams of state-appointed reviewers, many of whom are classroom teachers.²¹ (I will refer to these state-appointed reviewers as “official reviewers,” to distinguish them from independent IM reviewers like me.) Although the Texas education commissioner (appointed by the governor) actually handles the selection of official reviewers, priority is given to individuals nominated by SBOE members.²² While state code was revised in January 2014 to specify that review teams will include “members with sufficient content expertise and experience” and will give priority to “content-relevant educators and professors,”²³ SBOE members have shown a disturbing tendency to exclude university-level content specialists in favor of appointees who have little or no relevant expertise but who are supportive of the members’ own ideology. This appears to have been the case during the social studies IM adoption process in 2014 (discussed below).

Furthermore, the SBOE restricts the scope and time frame of the IM review. Official reviewers are responsible only for certifying that the packages comply with the TEKS, contain no “factual errors,” and satisfy manufacturing standards. The reviewers are not tasked with investigating broader issues of balance and equity of coverage. Furthermore, reviewers are given only a week to conduct their reviews—an absurdly short time period, given that they must comb through hundreds or even thousands of pages of material.²⁴ (For comparison purposes, my own independent review of world geography and world history IMs in 2014 took more than three months of full-time or nearly full-time work.)

The end result of the review process is a list of IMs approved for use in Texas schools—the “adopted list.”²⁵ In the past, local school districts could use state funds only to purchase IMs

on the SBOE's adopted list. Since 2011, however, local school districts may use state funds to purchase IMs of their own choosing—whether or not they are on the SBOE's adopted list.²⁶ Thus, if they wish, local school districts can effectively bypass the decisions of the SBOE.

Nonetheless, the SBOE remains a power center in the IM adoption process, for two main reasons. First, IM allotment expenditure data from the Texas Education Agency conclusively shows that there has been no widespread flight from the SBOE-approved list on the part of local school districts. As of May 2016, nearly half of Texas school districts—including large districts such as Arlington, Austin, Brownsville, Corpus Christi, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, and Tyler—continue to purchase some or all of their world geography and world history IMs from the SBOE's approved list.²⁷ This means that many, perhaps most, Texas students continue to use IMs the state has certified as meeting at least 50 percent of the social studies TEKS.

Second, textbook publishers wishing to sell to the Texas market still deal with the SBOE review and adoption process. Persons close to the publishing industry have told me that many textbook publishers consider SBOE adoption to be a kind of “official state seal of approval” that helps them market their textbooks in Texas. Having participated in the review process in 2014, it was clear to me that IM publishers put considerable effort and expense into securing SBOE approval.²⁸

In some cases, it appears that publishers have tailored IM content to align with specific TEKS. Take, for example, world history TEKS 4(A), which expects students to “explain the development of Christianity as a unifying social and political factor in medieval Europe and the Byzantine Empire.”²⁹ The Houghton Mifflin Harcourt world history offering replicates this language in a section on the Byzantine Empire, calling Christianity “a major unifying factor in the empire.”³⁰ The McGraw-Hill world history IM goes even further: it mentions Christianity as a “unifying” factor three times in the main text, and three more times in student exercises.^{31, 32}

2.1 The SBOE's Record of Prioritizing Politics and Ideology

One evident drawback of the current system of politically elected SBOE members who are not required to have any experience or training in the subjects they oversee is the possibility that the SBOE's actions can be guided by ideological and political considerations rather than by the broad consensus of academic field experts. Indeed, this has long been a reality. The SBOE has a lengthy and well-publicized record of placing ideology above scholarly consensus in the Texas curriculum.³³ Prior to 1995, the SBOE exercised great power over textbook content as well as selection. Using their authority to reject textbooks arbitrarily, SBOE members pressured publishers to edit content to which the members had political or ideological objections.³⁴ For instance, at one point SBOE members “demanded that publishers remove illustrations of breast self-exams for cancer. Such illustrations, they worried, were too suggestive for high school students, even in a health class. They also pressured a publisher to replace a photo of a woman carrying a briefcase with another

showing a woman putting a cake in the oven. Far-right board members found the replacement photo more in line with their personal social views about gender roles.”³⁵

In 1995, the Texas Legislature stripped much of the board’s authority over textbook content.³⁶ Legislators barred the SBOE from editing IM content, and permitted the board to reject IMs only if they fail to meet the state’s curriculum standards, contain factual errors, and/or do not meet manufacturing standards.³⁷ This measure did not, however, end the board’s attempts to reshape the public school curriculum along ideological and political lines. Two examples are especially relevant to the coverage of religion: the social studies TEKS 2009-10 revision process, and the social studies IM adoption process in 2014.

2.1.1 Politics in the Social Studies TEKS

In 2008, a bloc of seven ultraconservative Christian Republicans gained effective control of the SBOE.³⁸ Only two members of this bloc had experience as educators, and none were credentialed specialists in history, government, or religion.³⁹ Given low voter turnout in 2006 and 2008, five of the seven were effectively endorsed by substantially less than half of the registered voters in their districts.⁴⁰ Yet in 2009 and 2010, they used their newfound power to shape the social studies TEKS to reflect their own ideology, Christian Americanism (sometimes called Christian Nationalism)—the belief that America is an essentially Christian nation in which the Bible should be normative for law and public policymaking.⁴¹

The leader of this bloc, dentist and former SBOE chair Don McLeroy, declared: “We are a Christian nation founded on Christian principles....And our education system should reflect that.”⁴² His successor, Gail Lowe, asserted that “Judeo-Christian principles were the basis of our country and...our founding documents had a basis in scripture.”⁴³ Another bloc member, David Bradley, insisted that promoting Christianity in the IMs is not a problem because “America was founded on Christian principles.”⁴⁴

The Christian Americanist bloc also wanted the social studies curriculum to promote a belief in American exceptionalism. As *New York Times* reporter Russell Shorto wrote, “One recurring theme during the process of revising the social studies guidelines was the desire of the board to stress the concept of American exceptionalism, and the Christian bloc has repeatedly emphasized that Christianity should be portrayed as the driving force behind what makes America great.”⁴⁵ As that statement indicates, American exceptionalism also amounts to *Christian* exceptionalism. That belief motivated the Christian Americanist bloc to give Christianity a starring and one-sidedly positive role in the social studies TEKS.

As noted above, SBOE members themselves did not draft the new standards. That was the job of state-appointed drafting committees composed mostly of classroom teachers and other education professionals. Six expert reviewers, including four university professors, provided feedback and guidance on the drafts. Still, the Christian Americanist bloc used the process to shape the social studies curriculum standards in three ways: (1) stacking the membership of the expert review panel, (2) controlling the TEKS drafting committees, and

(3) making their own changes to the TEKS. The result was a pronounced imbalance in the coverage of religions, with a heavy and overly positive emphasis on Christianity.

2.1.1.1 Stacking the Expert Panel

Christian Americanist SBOE members ensured that three of the six expert reviewers—David Barton, Daniel Dreisbach, and the Rev. Peter Marshall—supported their vision of history and government.⁴⁶ Only one of the three, Dreisbach, professor in the School of Public Affairs at American University in Washington, D.C., possesses relevant academic credentials. Barton, by contrast, is an amateur historian and Republican activist, noted for pushing the ideology of Christian Americanism; Marshall, who died in 2010, was a Presbyterian minister and, like Barton, an amateur historian who promoted Christian Americanism.⁴⁷ Given that Dreisbach has spent many years challenging the judicial application of Jefferson’s “wall of separation” metaphor, fully half of the experts represented positions congenial to Christian Americanists.⁴⁸ Furthermore, none of the expert reviewers specialized in world religions.

Members of the Christian Americanist bloc could not have been disappointed with the reports from Barton and Marshall. Barton advocated that students should learn five “fundamental principles of American government” set forth in the Declaration of Independence and “subsequently secured in the Constitution and Bill of Rights”: “1. There is a fixed moral law derived from God and nature”; “2. There is a Creator”; “3. The Creator gives to man certain unalienable rights”; “4. Government exists primarily to protect God-given rights to every individual”; “5. Below God-given rights and moral law, government is directed by the consent of the governed.” Significantly, Barton presented these principles not just as ideas that guided the Founders, but as having a timeless quality: they “must be thoroughly understood by students” because, Barton indicated, they are still normative today.⁴⁹

Marshall’s report likewise hit many of the notes in the Christian Americanist tune in his report. He contended, “In our American situation it is indisputable that the motivational role of the Bible and the Christian faith was paramount in the settling of...most of the original 13 colonies....The settling of America was not ‘accidental’ but purposeful.” He then cited the Pilgrims as case in point, implying that their desire to advance “the Gospel of the Kingdom of Christ” in America also characterized other settler groups.⁵⁰ He later asserted that the principle of the consent of the governed “reflects the Biblical influence on American government” and can be traced “all the way back to the Israelites in the Sinai wilderness under Moses.”⁵¹ He also emphasized American exceptionalism. He complained that “the trend in American education has been to study American culture in comparison to other cultures around the world, which leads to the rejection of the idea that there is anything unique or exceptional about American civilization.” He advocated that students “learn *why* America is the greatest country in the world, and *why* they should be proud to be an American.”⁵²

The upshot of Barton and Marshall’s contributions was that the social studies TEKS should place special emphasis on Christianity. While the drafting committees did not adopt all of

these suggestions, they did adopt some, and SBOE members themselves implemented others.

2.1.1.2 Controlling the Drafting Committees

Although the committees charged with drafting the new TEKS were staffed mainly with teachers and other education professionals, SBOE members also arranged for the appointment of persons who lacked relevant academic or educational credentials but who reflected the members' own ideological positions. A notable example is Bill Ames, a retired IBM executive and conservative firebrand, who was appointed by McLeroy to the American history TEKS drafting committee despite his lack of either history or education credentials. He accused his fellow drafting committee members of having been "planted ... in a conspiracy of 'liberal groups' and unions who wanted to 'hijack' U.S. history."⁵³

Although these ideological appointees were few in number, rules set by the SBOE allowed them to exercise great power over the TEKS. According to these rules, the drafting committees were required to reach consensus (i.e., unanimity), rather than a simple majority, on each standard. Consequently, a single committee member could hold up the process until changes were made to his or her liking. Ames reportedly made frequent use of this rule.⁵⁴

2.1.1.3 Direct Intervention by SBOE Members

Once the expert reviewers and drafting committees completed their work, SBOE members further took it upon themselves to make substantial changes to the TEKS, despite their own lack of relevant training in the various social studies subject areas. The impact of their direct intervention was far-reaching, as Russell Shorto notes: not satisfied with "merely weaving important religious trends and events into the narrative of American history," the Christian Americanist bloc sought to slant the TEKS "toward portraying America as having a divinely preordained mission."⁵⁵ And that "divinely preordained mission" is to be understood in decidedly conservative Christian terms.

While examples of these interventions abound, several directly affected the coverage of religion in the TEKS. Perhaps the most controversial and widely publicized instance was the addition, in the U.S. government TEKS, of Moses as one of "the individuals whose principles of laws and government institutions and ideas informed the American founding documents."⁵⁶ In the high school world history TEKS, all instances of the more inclusive labels "BCE" and "CE" (i.e., Before the Common Era, and the Common Era, respectively) used in the draft standards, were changed to "BC" and "AD" by the SBOE at its March 10, 2010, session.⁵⁷ The SBOE also added a new standard requiring students to "explain the characteristics of Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy."⁵⁸ With this development, Christianity became the only religion for which students are required to learn about its internal diversity, since the TEKS do not explicitly require that students know about the characteristics of the major divisions of, say, Judaism, Islam, or Buddhism.

We will examine other instances of religious imbalance in the social studies TEKS in Part 3.

2.1.2 Politics in the Social Studies Instructional Materials (IMs)

In 2014, Texas began the process of adopting new social studies IMs for use in Texas classrooms in fall 2015. The IMs adopted in 2014 were the first to reflect the TEKS established four years earlier.

By 2014, the Christian Americanist faction on the SBOE had lost some of its power, having shrunk from seven members to three. However, one of their number, Barbara Cargill, chaired the board, Republican members still outnumbered Democrats 10-5, and several Republicans often voted with the remaining Christian Americanists.⁵⁹

As was the case with appointments to the expert panels and drafting committees in 2009-10, political and ideological considerations once again trumped scholarship, this time involving appointments to the state review panels charged with evaluating the new textbooks. The nonprofit, grassroots watchdog organization Texas Freedom Network (TFN) determined that SBOE members were instrumental in securing review panel appointments for “political activists and individuals without social studies degrees or teaching experience,” including a former car salesman who opposed church-state separation. TFN also found that numerous credentialed field specialists from Texas colleges and universities who had applied to serve as official reviewers were passed over. As a result, only four of the 140 official reviewers were faculty members at colleges or universities, and of these, only two were specialists in social studies fields.⁶⁰ As far as I have been able to determine, no credentialed specialists in religious studies were appointed to the state review panels.

Political and ideological considerations also dominated the SBOE’s handling of the public comments phase of the IM review process. Texas residents may file written comments on IMs and testify in person at the SBOE’s public hearings before the final board vote on IM adoption. Publishers must respond in writing to all comments from official reviewers and the public, and report all revisions they plan to make to their textbooks in response to the comments. Unfortunately, to judge from publisher responses to public comments in 2014, feedback from academic field specialists received no more weight in the public comment phase than comments from persons with no relevant academic credentials.

In September 2014, the SBOE held a public hearing on the IMs up for adoption. Members of the public had been asked to submit their written comments on the IMs under consideration in August prior to the hearing. At that hearing, more than 100 individuals testified about the social studies textbooks under consideration by the SBOE. (For the record, I testified on imbalances in the religion coverage based on my own independent review of the social studies IMs, conducted at the request of TFN, as will be discussed below.) Among those who testified were scholars from Southern Methodist University, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Mary Washington. Other speakers represented religious groups such as the Sikh Coalition, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the Hindu American Foundation (HAF), and the Anti-Defamation League; the secular group Americans United for Separation of Church and State; and conservative groups such as Texas Values and Texas Eagle Forum.⁶¹

Those testifying before the SBOE were given three minutes to present their remarks, followed by an indefinite period of Q&A with board members. Most witnesses were restricted to a total of three to five minutes. However, SBOE chair Cargill used her privilege to extend the testimony time for certain allies. For instance, Jonathan M. Saenz, head of the conservative anti-LGBT organization Texas Values, was allowed to speak for over half an hour.⁶² After the public hearing, publishers posted their written responses in September and October.

Another sign of the board's favoritism toward conservative voices came later in 2014. Well past the August deadline for comments, and a mere two weeks before the SBOE was to take its final vote on the IMs in November, the anti-Islam group Truth in Texas Textbooks (TTT), which has allies on the SBOE, submitted its reviews—469 pages of material. As I wrote in a *Religion Dispatches* article, “Two days before the final adoption vote was to take place, Christian Right members of the SBOE made much of the TTT criticisms and insisted that publishers address them.”⁶³ The importance those members gave the TTT reviews was particularly revealing, given that most of the organization's reviewers lacked scholarly credibility. The sole TTT reviewer with relevant social studies credentials reviewed only one world history textbook, and quite appropriately restricted his comments to his areas of expertise. None of the other TTT reviewers had academic credentials in history, geography, economics, or religious studies, but that deficiency did not prevent them from weighing in on a wide range of topics, including prehistory, climate change, economics, political science, and U.S. government.⁶⁴

A consistent theme in the TTT reviews of world geography and world history IMs was a one-sided and historically unjustified insistence on the violent nature of Islam. For instance, one TTT reviewer claimed (incorrectly) that “it is the religious duty of all Muslims who are able to wage aggressive *jihad* warfare until Islam and *Shari'a* law are supreme over the entire world.”⁶⁵ Furthermore, many of the reviews revealed outright anti-Muslim prejudice. As I wrote in *Religion Dispatches*, one TTT reviewer spoke of “Islam's ‘threat to the Western world,’ while another lumped Muslims together with communists and socialists commenting, bizarrely, that ‘The greatest fear for a communist, a socialist, or a Muslim is Truth.’”⁶⁶

Certainly the TTT reviewers had a right to express their views, no matter how questionable they were. The problem lay with the SBOE's handling of them. Despite the last-minute submission, the lack of relevant credentials, and the obvious tendentiousness of large sections of the reviews, “conservative SBOE members insisted that publishers give them the same level of attention they gave comments from credentialed scholars.”⁶⁷ While some publishers stood their ground, several modified IM content to accommodate TTT comments. One casualty was the Pearson world history textbook's correct statement that jihad “is most frequently used [by Muslims] to describe an inner struggle in God's service.”⁶⁸ TTT reviewers took issue with this definition, asserting (erroneously) that “most contemporary Islamic scholars, jurists, and theologians are in agreement with the classical Islamic authorities that the primary meaning of jihad is mandatory, aggressive warfare to

convert or subjugate infidels.”⁶⁹ In place of their originally correct definition, Pearson inserted more ambiguous wording: “For some Muslims, [jihad] means a struggle against one’s evil inclinations. For other Muslims, it refers to a struggle or violent holy war to defend or spread Islam.”⁷⁰ While this change might have pleased TTT and other anti-Islam groups, it deprived students of the important fact that the “holy war” interpretation of jihad is held by only a small minority in the Muslim community today. It also contributed to an overall imbalance between depictions of violence in the spread of Islam and Christianity (discussed in Appendix B, below).

McGraw-Hill (MGH) also sought to accommodate TTT criticisms—again, to the detriment of religious balance. With regard to the MGH high school world geography IM, TTT reviewers criticized the authors’ neutral but factually correct statement that “By the AD 700s, Islam had spread through the subregion and into Europe and the eastern horn of Africa.” TTT held that this statement did not indicate that Islam spread through “jihad,” which (as noted above) TTT interprets one-sidedly as warfare. MGH agreed to change the statement as follows: “Beginning in the AD 630s, Muslim Arab armies moved out of the Arabian Peninsula and attacked neighboring territories. By AD 750, nearly all of southwest Asia, as well as northern Africa and parts of Spain, had been conquered and converted to Islam.”⁷¹ This wording incorrectly implies that the conquered peoples were forcibly converted to Islam. With this modification, the publisher moved from a balanced account to one that overemphasizes the role of violence in the spread of Islam. A similar problem crops up in the MGH response to a TTT criticism of a description of jihad in the high school world history IM. According to the MGH text, “The Qur’an permitted warfare as jihad...or ‘struggle in the way of God.’” As with the TTT review of the Pearson product discussed above, the TTT reviewer insisted that the Qur’an *mandates*, rather than permits, “jihad warfare.” MGH agreed to change the passage to the following: “One important duty in the Qur’an is for Muslims to wage jihad...which literally means ‘striving in the way of God.’ It refers to a Muslim’s duty to work for the triumph of Islam in the world, and within themselves (by avoiding sin and acting righteously). Muslim understanding of the term has changed over time, but for much of Islam’s early history jihad meant armed struggle against nonbelievers. It was also used to justify war within Islam when Muslims disagreed with one another.”⁷² Although MGH did not go as far as TTT wished, the change contributes to an overall emphasis on violence in the spread of Islam.

2.2 Summary

In its handling of the social studies TEKS in 2009 and 2010, and of the social studies IM adoption process in 2014, the SBOE showed itself to be an impediment to balanced coverage of religion. Board members sought to shape the social studies curriculum to promote a Christian Americanist ideology, which by definition contradicts balanced coverage of religion. They appointed ideological allies to key committees and passed over academic field specialists and education professionals. Despite their own lack of relevant subject-matter expertise, SBOE members directly altered the social studies TEKS. While the SBOE had lost some Christian Americanist members by the 2014 IM adoption process, the board stayed true to form. It minimized the involvement of credentialed academic

field specialists in the official IM evaluation and prioritized the public comments of non-credentialed ideologues, most prominently Truth in Texas Textbooks.

Nonetheless, given the fact that school districts may use state funds to purchase IMs not on the SBOE's approved list, might this all amount to merely symbolic victories on the part of SBOE conservatives? Not at all, for three main reasons. First, as noted above, nearly half of Texas public school districts, including some of the largest in the state, continue to purchase social studies IMs from the SBOE approved list. Second, the TEKS are the measure which IM publishers must meet in order to have their products approved for use in Texas. As noted previously, IM publishers in some instances appear to have tailored their content to align with the TEKS. Third, publishers in some cases changed IM content—and aggravated religious imbalance—by attempting to accommodate criticisms from non-credentialed critics such as reviewers from Truth in Texas Textbooks.

While to date these problems have stemmed from the conservative Republican and Christian Americanist domination of the SBOE, this is not a liberal versus conservative issue. So long as SBOE membership is determined by partisan elections and members need not meet any requirements other than winning the highest number of votes, the board is vulnerable to being captured by ideological groups from *any* part of the political spectrum. This fact should worry all Texans, conservatives and progressives alike.

3. Religious Imbalance in the Social Studies TEKS

The social studies TEKS adopted by the SBOE in 2010 received nationwide coverage, much of it negative. The lion's share of media attention went to the TEKS for American history and U.S. government. Even the conservative Thomas B. Fordham Institute called the social studies TEKS “‘an unwieldy tangle’ of ‘misrepresentations at every turn’ that give students a ‘politicized distortion of history’”; the Fordham report also criticized the SBOE for “inject[ing] their personal religious beliefs into history education.”⁷³

Patterns of religious imbalance in the world geography and world history TEKS received far less media attention. In this part of the report, I will focus on four manifestations of religious imbalance in these standards. The first two have to do with, respectively, the absence of an overall requirement promoting balance in religion coverage, and a marked inconsistency in the religions covered in the world geography and world history courses. The other two involve the high school world history TEKS: specifically, a general pro-Christian slant, and problematic claims of “Judeo-Christian” origins for democracy.

3.1 No Standard Requiring Balanced Coverage of Religions

The TEKS contain overall guidelines covering several general issues. For example, the high school world history TEKS include general specifications regarding the focus and scope of the course, the historical periodization to be used, and even the definition of a “constitutional republic.”⁷⁴ Nowhere in the social studies TEKS, however, is there a requirement that religions (or other similar aspects of human life, such as cultures or forms of government) be presented in a fair and balanced manner. This is an odd omission, given

that the SBOE's own operating rules (as noted previously) specify that "when significant political or social movements in history generate contrasting points of view, instructional materials should present balanced and factual treatment of the positions."⁷⁵ Certainly religions constitute "significant...social movements in history."

The absence of an explicit overall requirement for balanced coverage of religions suggests that the SBOE does not consider it to be a priority. As a result, the social studies TEKS do not signal to instructors and IM publishers the importance of such balance.

3.2 Inconsistency in Religions Covered

As mentioned above, coverage of religion in the Texas public school curriculum is largely restricted to three courses: middle school (sixth grade) social studies, high school world geography, and high school world history. However, the TEKS for these courses differ as to which religions should be covered, and omit several religions that arguably have significantly shaped the human story.

The TEKS for middle school social studies specify that students be able to "explain the relationship among religious ideas, philosophical ideas, and cultures." They also require that students be able to "explain the significance of religious holidays and observances...in various contemporary societies." However, they do not specify which religions should be covered. The only guidance comes in a list of recommended religious observances; this list includes observances from Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism.⁷⁶ It omits Confucianism, Daoism, Jainism, and primal religions.

The TEKS for high school world geography and high school world history, on the other hand, do specify that certain religions be covered. Oddly, however, the lists for each differ. Both include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism. Only high school world geography includes "animism" (an outdated term for primal or indigenous religions), while the high school world history TEKS omit "animism" but include Confucianism.⁷⁷ Also, the world history TEKS include "the development of monotheism," added at the behest of SBOE members.⁷⁸ Both lists omit Daoism, Jainism, and Zoroastrianism.

3.3 World History TEKS: Clear Christian Slant

Quite appropriately, the TEKS describe world history as "a survey of the history of humankind," suggesting *all* of humankind.⁷⁹ However, they in fact sketch a world in which Christianity clearly predominates. The number of mentions each religion receives in the world history TEKS bears no discernable relation to its global significance today or to its historical impact. As I noted elsewhere:

Christianity accounts for around 31% of the global population, but receives 41% of the mentions in the [world history] TEKS, whereas Hinduism, which accounts for 15% of global population, only receives 6% of the mentions; and Buddhism, which accounts for 7% of people worldwide, only receives 3% ... While Christianity has undoubtedly had a major impact on world history as a whole, it would be difficult to

argue that it has had one-and-a-half times the impact of Islam, or more than twice the impact of Hinduism, or nearly five times that of Buddhism. Nevertheless, that is what the TEKS imply.⁸⁰

In short, the TEKS give the impression that Christianity has played an outsized role in human history, compared to all other religions (as well as the impression that Western history is more important than that of the world at large). While it is true that Christianity is the world's largest religious community,⁸¹ prior to 1600—that is, for much of the history of humankind—Christianity accounted for far fewer of the world's people and played a much smaller role in the world's story. That is not the message the TEKS communicate.

Besides the predominance of references to Christianity in the TEKS, a Christian slant is evident in other parts of the high school world history TEKS:

- TEKS 1(C) refers to “the spread of Christianity,” but instead of also speaking of the spread of Islam, it refers to “the development of the Islamic caliphates and their impact on Asia, Africa, and Europe.”⁸² This frames the discussion so as to underplay the political and imperial side of Christianity while playing up those elements of Islam. It also diverts attention from the peaceful spread of Islam through trade and missionary work (which often had little to do with the caliphates).
- TEKS 9(A) requires an emphasis on the role of religion in the American and French Revolutions; Christianity, of course, was the dominant religion in both instances. However, TEKS 13(E) does not similarly require an emphasis on the role of religion in independence movements in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. Those movements were at least as momentous in global impact as the American and French Revolutions, and they involved religions other than Christianity (e.g., the Hindu and Jain influence on Gandhi).⁸³
- Thanks to the direct intervention of SBOE members (mentioned above), Christianity is the only world religion for which the TEKS requires a discussion of its major divisions. TEKS 4(B) specifies that “the characteristics of Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy” be explained. TEKS 5(B) effectively requires coverage of Protestantism, and in even more detail and depth than its sister denominations.⁸⁴ In contrast, the TEKS do not require equivalent coverage of the major divisions in, say, Islam (Sunni and Shia) or Buddhism (Theravada and Mahayana).
- TEKS 4(A) posits that Christianity was “a unifying social and political factor in medieval Europe and the Byzantine Empire.”⁸⁵ The TEKS do not mention that during that time period, Confucianism played a similarly unifying role in China, as did Islam in the Muslim world. Indeed, a reference to Islam’s “unifying” role was included in the first draft of the TEKS, but for undocumented reasons it was changed to a less positive reference to Islam’s “impact.”⁸⁶ Besides lacking balance, 4(A) is tendentious. While Christianity did in some respects act as a unifying factor in medieval Europe, it also acted as a force for disunity, often setting Christians against Christians. Consider, for example, the Investiture Controversy, the Inquisition, the Crusaders’ penchant for attacking other Christians they considered heterodox, and the Western European attack on Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade.⁸⁷ This side of the European Christian

story is at least as important historically as the church's unifying effects. Furthermore, stressing the latter results in a one-sidedly positive portrayal of Christianity.

3.4 World History TEKS: Claims of "Judeo-Christian" Origins for Democracy

The stamp of Christian Americanist influence is evident at numerous points in the social studies TEKS generally. In the U.S. government TEKS, for instance, one standard mentions Moses as an individual "whose principles of laws and government institutions informed the American founding documents"; another asks students to compare and contrast the phrase "separation of church and state" (a perennial bogeyman for Christian Americanists) with the language regarding religion in the First Amendment, making no mention of the use of the former phrase in critical Supreme Court decisions and other documents.⁸⁸

Of particular concern to the issue of religious balance, however, are two world history TEKS that assert "Judeo-Christian" origins for democracy. TEKS 20(A) requires students to "explain the development of democratic-republican government *from its beginnings in the Judeo-Christian legal tradition* and classical Greece and Rome through the English Civil War and the Enlightenment" (emphasis mine).⁸⁹ TEKS 22(B) requires students to "identify the influence of ideas regarding the right to a 'trial by a jury of your peers' and the concepts of 'innocent until proven guilty' and 'equality before the law' *that originated from the Judeo-Christian legal tradition* and in Greece and Rome" (emphasis mine).⁹⁰

"Judeo-Christian" is not a neutral term: in conservative Christian circles, it typically means "biblical," and is sometimes combined with elements of later Christian traditions. As Andrew Preston notes, since the 1980s the phrase has become "a badge of identity for Christian conservatives who wanted to chip away at the wall of separation between church and state," and "tends to be used by Republicans as a way to rally their supporters around a presumed set of traditional values."⁹¹ Significantly, the references to the "Judeo-Christian legal tradition" did not come from the panels drafting the TEKS, but appear to have been added in response to feedback from SBOE members.⁹²

Both standards make claims about the formative role of the "Judeo-Christian tradition" in the development of democracy, but the precise nature of that role is open to interpretation.⁹³ One could read them as signifying only that some elements later found in democratic government and law—but not democratic government and law themselves—originated in the biblical tradition. However, one could also read them as signifying that democratic government and law actually began in—that is, are found in some nascent form—in the biblical tradition.

So which reading is correct? Here, the context can help. In numerous public statements from 2009 and 2010, Christian Americanist SBOE members made clear their own beliefs about the origins of democracy. Don McLeroy, SBOE chair during the early part of the revision process, expressed this view: "Christianity has had a deep impact on our system. The men who wrote the Constitution were Christians who knew the Bible. Our idea of individual rights comes from the Bible."⁹⁴ That quote shows that McLeroy combines comparatively unobjectionable claims of *influence* ("deep impact") with much more

radical—and questionable—claims of Christian origins or essence (“comes from the Bible”). McLeroy’s successor, Gail Lowe, went further in claiming Christian origins: “Judeo-Christian principles were the basis of our country and...our founding documents had a basis in scripture.”⁹⁵ Cynthia Dunbar, a member of the SBOE in 2009–10, also refers to the “biblically derived principles” of the Constitution.⁹⁶ She claims that the Founders “intended to establish [the United States] squarely on the foundation of biblical truth.”⁹⁷ “[T]he underlying authority for our constitutional form of government stems directly from biblical precedents,” Dunbar wrote. “Hence, the only accurate method of ascertaining the intent of the Founding Fathers at the time of our government’s inception comes from a biblical worldview.”⁹⁸ Finally, it is worthwhile to note the views of amateur historian David Barton, who served on the expert review panel during the social studies TEKS revision process. America, Barton writes, “was unquestionably a nation established on natural law; God’s laws revealed through both nature and the Bible were the basis of government.”⁹⁹ In a televised talk, Barton declared that “If you look at our institutions you can track them back to Christianity and the Bible,” and that “every one of the Bill of Rights had biblical verses behind them.”¹⁰⁰ Barton’s claims are generally dismissed by credentialed historians.¹⁰¹

Given this context, it seems clear that what is intended by the “Judeo-Christian origins” passages in TEKS 20(A) and 22(B) is not merely the moderate and quite reasonable claim that biblical ideas *influenced* the development of democratic government and law. Instead, the intent is that students learn, as Christian Americanists believe, that democratic government and law in fact *originated*—had their “beginnings”—in the “Judeo-Christian legal tradition” as well as in ancient Greece and Rome.

The claims of “Judeo-Christian origins” for democracy are problematic in two ways. First, they fly in the face of current scholarship on the origins of democracy. Benjamin Isakhan notes that the history of democracy “has become a contested field and the question of democracy’s origins has become increasingly contentious.”¹⁰² Second, the claim does not take into account recent scholarship that finds the beginnings of democratic practice prior to ancient Israel, Greece, and Rome. For instance, Christopher Boehm finds early forms of democracy in human prehistory: checks and balances on power “were present less formally [than in constitutional democracies] in egalitarian agricultural tribes and in egalitarian hunting bands.”¹⁰³ Temma Kaplan speaks of a “prehistory of democracy” involving popular participation in the regulation of scarce water resources; she finds evidence of this in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt, as well as among the Moche people of Peru and the Maya of the Yucatan Peninsula. Yet whatever the prehistory, Kaplan writes, “full-blown democratic institutions and practices flourished in ancient Greece, particularly in Athens.”¹⁰⁴

In short, TEKS 20(A) and 22(B) do not reflect the views of major academic historians and legal scholars, and thus give students a one-sided and distorted account of current historical thinking. These standards also impede religious balance by stressing Christianity over non-Christian sources on the origins of democracy.

4. Religious Imbalance in the Social Studies IMs

Though the TEKS are important to balanced coverage of religion, instructors and students interact directly with IMs rather than standards. The real test of religious balance is how religions are covered in the world geography and world history IMs that went into Texas classrooms in 2015, and that likely will remain in use for at least another decade.

As mentioned above, when the social studies IM review process got underway in early 2014, the Texas Freedom Network (TFN) discovered that credentialed academics had been passed over for appointments to the state IM review panels, while appointments were granted to political activists and persons without relevant academic credentials in the various social studies disciplines. Consequently, in 2014 TFN commissioned me and two other university professors to conduct an independent review of the social studies IMs up for adoption in 2014.¹⁰⁵ As the religious studies scholar on the team, I was given the task of assessing the coverage of religion in the world geography and world history IMs. I reviewed sixth grade social studies (i.e., world geography) IM packages from seven publishers;¹⁰⁶ high school world geography packages from five publishers;¹⁰⁷ and world history packages from six publishers.¹⁰⁸ TFN published my summary reviews in September 2014, prior to the first public hearing on the IMs.¹⁰⁹ Subsequently, publishers made some revisions to their IMs in light of public comments, including those of the TFN reviewers.

In 2016, four publishers—Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH), McGraw-Hill (MGH), Pearson, and Social Studies School Services (SSSS)—very graciously granted me access to the final Texas editions of their IMs, enabling me to bring my earlier findings up to date. Other publishers did not respond to my repeated requests for access to their materials. Accordingly, my comments in this report cover *only* IMs from the four publishers who gave me access.

I found that all of the IMs I reviewed display an acceptable degree of *overall* balance and accuracy in their presentation of the world's major religions; indeed, they generally exhibit greater religious balance than the TEKS with which they were expected to comply. Yet in certain cases, the religion content of the social studies IMs varies greatly in balance and accuracy.

One of the most common problem areas involves the coverage of the role of violence in the spread of Christianity and Islam—an area of particular concern today, given American attitudes about Muslims and the compatibility of Islam with Western values.¹¹⁰ The IMs I reviewed tend to reinforce those perceptions by stressing the role of military conquest in the spread of Islam, while downplaying or glossing over the role of violence in the spread of Christianity. In fact, *both* religions have spread through a combination of violent and peaceful means. During the initial period of Arab imperial expansion (622-750 CE), Islam also spread by peaceful means, for example, to the Horn of Africa and sub-Saharan Africa.¹¹¹ Even in instances where Islam was carried by Muslim armies, the conquered peoples very rarely experienced forced conversion to the new religion, numerous religious communities (including Christians and Jews) were given protected status (*dhimmi*), and for

many generations Muslims remained a minority in some of the areas they governed.¹¹² Furthermore, in later centuries, missionaries and traders introduced Islam in southeast Asia, where the religion is especially strong today.

With respect to Christianity, the IMs tend to downplay or omit altogether the role of violence in three historical episodes: the persecution of non-Christians after Christianity became the official religion of the Roman and then Byzantine Empires (fourth to sixth centuries CE); the expansion of Christianity under Charlemagne (768–814 CE); and the later spread of Christianity in the Americas under European conquerors (sixteenth century CE). After Theodosius I made Nicene Christianity the official and only legitimate religion in the Roman Empire in the late fourth century, persecutions of non-Christians became common and were often quite violent. For instance, the Byzantine emperor Justinian I pursued a policy of vicious suppression of non-Christians.¹¹³ A few centuries later, around the same time that Muslim armies were reaching the peak of their imperial conquests, Charlemagne spread Christianity in part by forcibly converting some non-Christians (particularly the Saxons), destroying non-Christian holy sites, and making non-Christian practices punishable by death.¹¹⁴ Similarly, the Spanish conquerors of the Americas systematically destroyed indigenous religious institutions and practices, and in some cases forced indigenous peoples to convert to Catholicism. Most notoriously, the *Requerimiento* of 1513 provided a Christian fig leaf to cover the theft of American lands from the non-Christian indigenous peoples, as well as to justify the killing of those who refused to acknowledge the sovereignty of Christian rulers.¹¹⁵ Christianity was also complicit in the brutal *encomienda* system, which legitimized the enslavement of indigenous peoples.¹¹⁶ Nor were Protestants above reproach in their treatment of American Indians. While Protestant Europeans generally did not practice forced conversions of the native inhabitants, they did deploy biblical categories to justify eliminating them from the land.¹¹⁷

In short, the sad legacy of both Christianity and Islam is that they both at times have spread by violent means. Unfortunately, that full story does not come across in many of these instructional materials.

Due to space limitations, I will focus here on one illustrative case, the most widely adopted world history IM, published by McGraw-Hill (MGH). However, similar problems crop up in the coverage of this issue in the other world geography and world history IMs I reviewed. See Appendix B for a full discussion of those IMs.

4.1 MGH Coverage of Violence in Christianity and Islam

The MGH package overemphasizes the military character of Islam's spread while downplaying the history of violence in the spread of Christianity. The chapter on Islam and the Arab Empire begins: "Muslim armies spread Islam beyond the Arabian Peninsula from the seventh century onward"—omitting the fact that Islam also spread by nonviolent means during this period.¹¹⁸ As a result of a change to accommodate TTT reviewers (see section 2.1.2 above), the text gives a misleadingly one-sided account of jihad, stressing the lesser jihad (e.g., warfare) over the greater (internal struggle). True, the authors mention that jihad refers to internal struggle against sin and note that "Muslim understanding of the

term has changed over time.” However, they go on to say that “for much of Islam’s early history, jihad meant armed struggle against nonbelievers ... The duty of jihad played a role in the decisions of early Muslim leaders to attack neighboring kingdoms and build the Arab Empire.”¹¹⁹ This is potentially misleading, since the Qur’an arguably uses the term jihad in a non-military sense more frequently than in a martial sense.¹²⁰

Additionally, as Islam scholar Douglas E. Streusand notes, while all references to jihad in a standard collection of *hadith* (sayings and acts of the Prophet Muhammad) do indeed refer to warfare, “The root meaning of ‘effort’ never disappeared,” and went on to figure in the Sufi sense of jihad as “inner war.”¹²¹ Thus, to say that in early Islam “jihad meant armed struggle” is reductive and misleading.

To their credit, the authors do note that relations between Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the conquered territories of Asia and North Africa were generally peaceful, and that Muslim rulers allowed Christians and Jews to practice their religions largely without interference. However, the authors qualify this by noting: “Following the concept of *dhimmitude*...[Jews and Christians] were also subjected to regulations in order to make them aware that they had been subdued by their conquerors. Those who chose not to convert were required to be loyal to Muslim rule and to pay special taxes.”¹²² The authors also note that whereas “according to Islam, all Muslim people are equal in the eyes of Allah,” “[n]on-Muslims were not considered equal to Muslims in the Islamic world.”¹²³ All of this is quite correct. The problem is that the authors do not place this in context: in Christian realms at the same period (sixth and seventh centuries CE), “pagan” religion was forbidden altogether, and Jews were subject to restrictions of equal or greater severity (including, in rare cases, forced baptisms) than Christians and Jews experienced in most Muslim-ruled territories.¹²⁴

The spread of Christianity is depicted in the MGH package as much more peaceful than that of Islam. The authors mention that the Roman Empire “adopted Christianity as its official religion,” without noting what this meant for non-Christians.¹²⁵ In a discussion of Charlemagne’s coronation as Holy Roman Emperor, the authors write: “Christianity was triumphant in Europe. The Germanic peoples...adopted the faith of Christianity.”¹²⁶ That sounds as if the conversion to Christianity was wholly voluntary. True, with some hunting, students can find out in the text that Charlemagne spread Christianity through military conquest.¹²⁷ But this information is contained in a biographical caption attached to an image, not in the main text. And neither passage mentions forcible conversions or capital punishment for non-Christian practices.

Similarly, in the discussion of the Spanish conquest of Mexico, the authors vividly describe the violence suffered by the indigenous peoples at the hands of Spanish colonizers, but do not mention forced conversions of indigenous peoples or the destruction of indigenous religions.¹²⁸ On the positive side, however, the authors do mention the *encomienda* system as well as its Christian aspect, and quote Bartolomé de Las Casas on the dubious Christianity of the conquerors; they also note that Catholic missionaries attempted to control the indigenous peoples and “make them docile subjects of the empire.”¹²⁹ Yet

overall, this section may well leave students unclear about the violence that often accompanied the spread of Christianity in Spanish America. Additionally, the MGH package does not describe the role Christianity played in rationalizing and justifying the English colonists' mistreatment of indigenous people in North America.¹³⁰

4.2 Summary

The world geography and world history IMs adopted for use in Texas display varying degrees of religious imbalance in their handling of the role of violence in the spread of Islam and Christianity. In part, this arises from a one-sided emphasis on the spread of Islam “by the sword,” while de-emphasizing its spread through peaceful means. It also partly arises from omitting or underplaying descriptions of parallel instances where Christianity “spread by the sword” as much as did Islam. This gives students a distorted view of the role of violence in the spread of both religions, and fails to promote balanced coverage of religions.

While publishers are certainly responsible for the content of their offerings, the Texas SBOE deserves a greater share of the blame for the religious imbalance of the adopted IMs. As noted in Part 3, the social studies TEKS do not require religious balance, and in fact work against such balance by requiring an emphasis on, and a favorable presentation of, Christianity. Indeed, the publishers are to be applauded for generally providing greater religious balance than the TEKS require.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Texas' current approach fails to offer public school students the balanced coverage of religion they need in order to fully understand their world and function effectively in an increasingly diverse society. The source of the problem is the principal policymaking body in Texas public education, the SBOE, whose members are elected by partisan ballot. SBOE members are not required to have any expertise in the subjects they oversee, and they have often promoted political and ideological concerns, most prominently Christian Americanism, over scholarly consensus. In its handling of the social studies TEKS revisions in 2009–10, the board actively worked against religious balance by promoting Christianity over other religions. In the 2014 adoption process for new social studies IMs, the board once again impeded religious balance by its politically driven appointments to the official review committees, tight restrictions on the scope and time frame of the IM review process, and favor toward non-credentialed and sometimes partisan public testimony over feedback from credentialed academic specialists. Given the behavior of the SBOE, it is no surprise that the world geography and world history TEKS fail to promote religious balance, or that the IMs for these disciplines adopted in 2014 show patterns of religious imbalance—illustrated by uneven and historically misleading coverage of the role of violence in Christianity and Islam.

Given how important it is for Texas public school students to gain a basic working knowledge of the world's religions, stakeholders in the Lone Star state should begin to work

toward constructive change in religion coverage in Texas public education. The following recommendations are offered as a starting point for further public discussion.

Problems and Recommendations

SBOE

Problem: The SBOE tends to prioritize political and ideological considerations over scholarly consensus, and SBOE members are not required to have any educational or academic expertise in the subjects they oversee.

Recommendation: Education is as much a specialized and professional field as medicine, pharmacy, or engineering, all of which are overseen in Texas by boards with appointed rather than elected members.¹⁸¹ Accordingly, SBOE members should be appointed for staggered four-year terms by the governor, in consultation with the Texas education commissioner, and with the advice and consent of the Texas Senate. To make the appointment process more manageable, the size of the board should be reduced from 15 to nine members. To prevent purely political or ideological appointments, qualifications for SBOE membership should be explicitly specified. At least six members should be public education professionals and/or academics who hold master's or doctoral degrees from accredited universities. At least two members should be currently active public school classroom teachers. One member should represent the business community, which has a strong interest in the education of future employees.

TEKS Revision Process

Problem: In 2009–10, SBOE members appointed persons with no relevant academic credentials to the drafting committees and expert panel charged with developing the social studies TEKS. Despite their own lack of relevant social studies credentials, board members also directly modified the TEKS. Both issues explicitly contributed to religious imbalance in the social studies TEKS.

Recommendations: As far as I have been able to determine, the Texas Education Code does not currently specify rules governing the revision process for TEKS, equivalent to those governing the IM review process. Such rules should be added to the Education Code, and should contain the following provisions:¹⁸²

- As was the case in 2009, the process of drafting the TEKS should be the work of drafting committees, based on input and feedback from content area specialists (discussed below). These committees should consist entirely of public school classroom teachers/administrations and credentialed field specialists.
- Drafting committees should work by majority vote rather than by consensus.
- A separate panel of content area specialists (CAS) should provide input and feedback to the drafting committees. Membership on the CAS panel should be restricted to credentialed academic field specialists, who would typically possess relevant doctoral-level degrees from accredited universities. There should be at least one specialist for each subject. In the social studies TEKS review, the CAS panel should include at least one member with advanced academic credentials in religious studies. The panel's responsibility will be to ensure that the standards reflect current

scholarly consensus and provide balanced coverage of issues, including religion. At the beginning of the revision process, the CAS panel will review the existing TEKS and make recommendations to the drafting committees. After the drafting committees have completed an initial draft set of TEKS, the CAS panel will review it and recommend revisions. Once the drafting committees complete their revisions, the CAS panel will vote on approval. In the case of disapproval, the panel will recommend revisions to the drafting committees.

- All CAS panel meetings should be public, with opportunities for interested parties to address the panel.
- Persons interested in serving on the drafting and expert committees should apply directly to the Texas Education Agency. SBOE members may nominate persons to the drafting and expert committees, as well as invite qualified individuals to apply; however, SBOE nominees should not receive preferential treatment. The education commissioner's staff should evaluate applicants' qualifications and make all appointments.
- Members of the public should be invited to comment on the proposed standards at key points during the drafting process. Leaders of religious communities in Texas, as well as representatives of nonreligious groups, should be invited to offer their feedback on any religion coverage. However, feedback of credentialed field specialists should be prioritized over that of those lacking such credentials.
- Final approval of the draft TEKS should be delegated to the CAS panel instead of the SBOE. Once the CAS panel approves the TEKS, it would submit to the SBOE a written statement of approval, which, together with the new TEKS, would be released for public review and comment for 60 days prior to consideration by the SBOE. The SBOE should hold at least one public meeting before approving the framework for adoption.¹³³
- The SBOE should not be allowed to alter TEKS content. The board's role in the TEKS revision process should be limited to convening public hearings, offering *general* input and feedback to the drafting committees and CAS panel, and formally adopting the TEKS approved by the CAS panel.

Social Studies TEKS

Problem: The social studies TEKS adopted in 2010 overemphasize Christianity and thus do not require balanced coverage of religion.

Recommendations: The current social studies TEKS should be overhauled as soon as possible. At minimum, the following changes should be made:

- Add an overall standard to the social studies TEKS requiring balanced coverage of religion. The standard should specify: (1) that coverage of religions be balanced and proportional to each religion's impact on the given subject; (2) that the information presented about each religious tradition be fair and accurate; (3) that it represent a given religion's beliefs, practices, history, and development in terms that would be broadly recognizable to most of its adherents; and (4) that it give an accurate and neutral account of a religion's history, depicting the religion neither more positively

nor more negatively than is justified by the historical record as established by credentialed field specialists.

- Bring all social studies TEKS in line with the balanced coverage requirement.
- Students in middle school social studies, high school world geography, and high school world history should be required to gain a basic working knowledge of the beliefs, practices, and overall history of the following religions: Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Daoism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, primal religions, and Sikhism. Coverage of Jainism and Zoroastrianism should be recommended but not required. High school students should also learn about the growing nonreligious community, including secular humanists, agnostics, and atheists.

IM Review and Adoption

Problem: In 2014, SBOE members appointed persons with no relevant academic credentials to the official review teams. Official reviewers were given too little time to conduct thorough reviews of the IMs, and were instructed to evaluate them only in terms of whether they satisfied the TEKS and contained no “factual errors.” SBOE members also used the public comment phase to favor ideological groups with little or no academic standing.

Recommendations:¹³⁴

- The IM review process should be conducted by two sets of reviewers: Instructional Materials Reviewers (IMRs) and a panel of Content Area Specialists (CAS).
- Only public school teachers/administrations and credentialed field specialists should be allowed to serve as IMRs. IMRs should evaluate submitted IMs for accuracy, balance, and pedagogical effectiveness. IMRs should work by majority vote rather than by consensus. Their votes should be a matter of public record.
- Membership on the CAS panel should be restricted to credentialed academic field specialists, who would typically possess relevant doctoral-level degrees from accredited universities. There should be at least one specialist for each subject. In the social studies IM review, the CAS panel should include at least one member with advanced academic credentials in religious studies.
- The CAS panel should be tasked with ensuring that the IMs up for adoption reflect the current scholarly consensus, satisfy at least 50 percent of the TEKS, and provide balanced coverage of issues, including religion.
- All CAS panel meetings should be public and offer opportunities for interested parties to address the panel.
- Persons interested in serving as IMRs or CAS panel members should apply directly to the Texas Education Agency. SBOE members may nominate persons, as well as invite qualified individuals to apply; however, SBOE nominees should not receive preferential treatment. The education commissioner’s staff should evaluate applicants’ qualifications and make all appointments.
- Both the official review teams and the CAS panel should be given sufficient time and resources to conduct a thorough review of the submitted IMs.
- The IMRs and CAS panel should prepare a report of findings that includes one of the following recommendations: (1) adopt; (2) adopt with minor edits and

corrections; (3) adopt for a narrower range of grade levels than requested by the publisher; or (4) do not adopt. This report would be submitted to the SBOE and made available to the public at least 60 days prior to consideration by the SBOE.

- The SBOE should hold at least one public meeting before taking action on the IMR/CAS recommendations.
- The SBOE should not be allowed to alter content of the IMs.

Appendix A: Turnout, Ballot, and Effective Percentages for Christian Americanist SBOE Members in 2006 and 2008

Prior to the 2009–10 revision of the social studies TEKS, all seven members of the Christian Americanist bloc were either elected or re-elected. The following table indicates the effective percentage of the vote each bloc member received.

SBOE Member	District‡	Election Year	% Turnout *	% Vote**	Effective Percentage†
Bradley	7	2008	59.56	53.67	31.97
Cargill	8	2008	60.33	85.33	51.48
Dunbar	10	2006	39.42	70.31	27.72
Leo	6	2008	64.65	79.27	51.25
Lowe	14	2008	61.93	64.99	40.25
McLeroy	9	2006	37.40	59.59	22.29
Mercer	5	2006	37.42	71.11	26.61

* Turnout as percentage of registered voters in the SBOE district. This data comes from SBOE district population, voter registration, and turnout analysis data supplied by the Texas Legislative Council at my request.

** The percent of the total vote received by the SBOE member. Election results come from the Texas Office of the Secretary of State, “1992—Current ELECTION HISTORY,” <http://elections.sos.state.tx.us/index.htm>.

† % Vote multiplied by % Turnout.

‡ District number at the time of the election.

Appendix B: Imbalances in the Coverage of the Spread of Christianity and Islam

The following sections contain detailed discussions of the coverage of the spread of Christianity and Islam in the sixth grade social studies, high school world geography, and high school world history IMs to which I was granted access in 2016. (The McGraw-Hill world history IM is discussed in the main report.)

B.1 Sixth Grade Social Studies IMs

The otherwise commendable Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) sixth grade package is marked by imbalance in the discussion of the role of violence in the spread of Christianity and Islam in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. On the one hand, the coverage of the spread of Christianity in the Roman, Byzantine, and Frankish empires fails to mention the role of official persecution, and sometimes violent persecution, of non-Christians.¹³⁵ On the other hand, the discussion of Islam one-sidedly emphasizes the military aspect of that religion's spread. For example, the authors write that "Beginning in the AD 600s, Arab armies from southwest Asia swept across North Africa. They brought the Arabic language and Islam to the region."¹³⁶ Also, the discussion of Iran notes that after the conquest of the Persian Empire by "several Muslim empires," "Muslims converted the Persians to Islam," leaving undefined how that conversion came about.¹³⁷ True, the authors later discuss the fact that Islam also spread through trade.¹³⁸ However, students are likely to come away with the mistaken impression that Islam spread primarily through conquest, while Christianity spread, at least in Europe, through peaceful means.

The sixth grade McGraw-Hill package contains a similar imbalance in its discussion of southwest Asia and the three Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) that arose in the region. While the authors note simply that "Christianity spread to Europe, where it became the dominant religion"—giving no indication of the role state persecution and military violence played in that spread—the discussion of Islam on the following page notes that "Arab armies began spreading the religion through military conquests." Though the authors add that Islam was also spread by scholars, pilgrims, and traders, the damage has been done.¹³⁹

The comparable Social Studies School Services (SSSS) IM offers a somewhat more balanced presentation. While the "Curriculum Map" (a set of recommended online modules) for this package offers comparatively little coverage of the spread of Islam, what coverage is provided offers a more balanced and accurate depiction of the role of violence. A unit on "The Empire of Islam" correctly notes that military conquest alone does not account for the rapid spread of the Arab Empire and the Muslim religion.¹⁴⁰ In a section on the rise of Islam, the authors also caution students about either negatively stereotyping Islam or presenting only the most positive aspects of the religion.¹⁴¹ Unfortunately, this unit does not discuss the spread of Islam by traders and other nonviolent agents.¹⁴² With regard to the spread of Christianity, however, the SSSS IM is less clear about the role of violence. A video mentions that the Spanish were "committed by Vatican decree to convert their New World indigenous subjects to Catholicism," but does not go on to discuss how that

conversion took place.¹⁴³ Similarly, “fact sheets” associated with a Grade 6 module on Latin America note the violence inflicted on the American Indians by the Spanish conquerors, but do not mention how religion was implicated in this violence.¹⁴⁴

The Pearson package gives a generally balanced portrayal of the spread of Islam, presenting both violent and nonviolent aspects.¹⁴⁵ However, its description of Christianity’s spread one-sidedly stresses the peaceful aspect. In a discussion of the Roman Empire, the authors write: “Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Over the next 100 years, Christianity spread and most Romans became Christians.”¹⁴⁶ While this is true, the authors do not mention that the Roman imperial state actively persecuted competing faiths. The brief discussion of Charlemagne’s empire notes only that he and his fellow Franks “spread Christianity,” glossing over the forced conversions and other violent aspects of this development.¹⁴⁷ While the authors pull no punches regarding the violence of Spanish colonization of the Americas (the Spanish “killed or enslaved millions of American Indians”), they leave in doubt Christianity’s complicity in that violence, as in the following passage: “Priests came to Mexico to convert Native Americans to the Roman Catholic religion. The church became an important part of life in the new colony. Churches were built in the centers of towns and cities, and church officials became leaders in the colony.”¹⁴⁸ Other passages, however, make much clearer Christianity’s complicity in the subjugation of native peoples, particularly in the *encomienda* system.¹⁴⁹

Finally, while the discussions of English settlement in North America in all four of these IMs note the colonists’ conflicts with American Indians, none of these packages notes the role Christianity played in that conflict.¹⁵⁰

In each instance, these sixth grade social studies IMs fail to strike a proper balance between Christianity and Islam with regard to the role of violence in each religion’s spread. While the Pearson and SSSS IMs note that Islam spread by both peaceful and non-peaceful means, the HMH and MGH packages one-sidedly emphasize the military aspects of Islam’s growth. All four downplay the record of violence in the spread of Christianity in Europe and the Americas. This imbalance could give students the mistaken impression that Islam has historically been more violent than Christianity.

B.2 High School World Geography IMs

Similar imbalances crop up in the high school world geography IMs. Case in point is the McGraw-Hill textbook.¹⁵¹ Sections on the Arabian Peninsula, North Africa, and Central Asia one-sidedly emphasize the role of military conquest in the spread of Islam.¹⁵² The most serious problems occur in the chapter on the eastern Mediterranean region. The text describes the spread of Islam as follows: “Beginning in the AD 630s, Muslim Arab armies moved out of the Arabian Peninsula and attacked neighboring territories. By AD 750, nearly all of Southwest Asia, as well as northern Africa and parts of Spain, had been conquered *and converted to Islam*” (emphasis mine).¹⁵³ (As discussed in section 2.1.2, this passage resulted from an attempt to accommodate criticism from a Truth in Texas Textbooks review.) This gives the impression that the conquered peoples in these regions were forced to convert *en masse* to the new religion; as noted above, this was rarely the case.

A review exercise in the Teacher's Edition on the spread of Islam in the eastern Mediterranean further aggravates the problem. To the question "Why did Islam spread throughout the subregion [i.e., the eastern Mediterranean] and into Europe and Africa by the AD 700s?" the text suggests as a possible response that its spread "was facilitated through conquest"—which is true, but incomplete. Next, the instructor is prompted to ask the students: "Did Christianity...spread in the same way during this time? Explain." The text gives as a possible response, "No, Christianity spread first to some Jews, then to non-Jews through Jesus' followers, and in AD 380 it became the official religion of the Roman Empire."¹⁵⁴ The text does not tell the instructor that such a response would be incomplete—that Christianity was, during the 700s and 800s, spread in part by military conquest (e.g., under Charlemagne) as well as by missionary activity.

Indeed, the coercive aspect of the spread of Christianity is generally absent from this McGraw-Hill text. The section on the establishment of Christianity in northwestern Europe makes no mention of the role of conquest and violence in the spread of the religion in the region, apart from a vague reference to it having been the official religion under the Roman Empire, though without any indication of the coercive aspects of that official status.¹⁵⁵ Similarly, the spread of Christianity in the Americas is portrayed as more peaceful than it actually was. See, for example, this account of Christianity's establishment in Mexico: "The Spanish arrival brought other changes to Mexico. It resulted in war and disease outbreaks. The Spanish also established the Catholic Church in Mexico. A unique melding of traditional indigenous beliefs and the newly introduced Catholic culture occurred in a process called syncretism."¹⁵⁶ This phrasing effectively dissociates the arrival of the Spanish, and the attendant warfare, from the introduction of the Catholic faith, which in turn is presented as being involved in a presumably peaceful "melding" with indigenous beliefs—when in fact, the Spanish conquerors, often with the blessing of the church, actively destroyed indigenous religious life and institutions.

Partly offsetting this omission is one passage in the Teacher's Edition in a chapter on South America. In a critical thinking skills exercise, the authors recommend that the instructor ask students why Catholicism is the predominant religion in South America today. The suggested answer: "When the Spanish and Portuguese arrived in the 1500s and 1600s, they imposed their religious beliefs on the indigenous people."¹⁵⁷ However, I was unable to locate a corresponding passage to this effect in the Student Edition.

Like its MGH counterpart, the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt high school world geography text is less than clear about the violence associated with the Christianization of Mexico. The authors write that "the Spanish brought their language and Catholic religion, both of which dominate modern Mexico." There is no account of *how* Catholicism came to dominate Mexico, or at what cost—though the authors do note that the Spanish conquerors demolished the Aztec temples.¹⁵⁸ To their credit, however, the authors *do* note, in a later section on South America, that "The Spanish forced their own language and religion on the conquered peoples."¹⁵⁹ It is unclear why that information is not presented in the chapter on Mexico as well.

Furthermore, while both the MGH and HMH IMs discuss how American Indians lost land and suffered severe disruptions due to the English colonization of North America, they do not describe the role Christianity played in rationalizing and justifying the mistreatment of indigenous people.¹⁶⁰

B.3 High School World History IMs

By far, however, the imbalance in the presentation of the role of violence in the spread of Christianity and Islam is most pronounced in the four high school world history IMs. (The MGH world history IM is discussed in the main report.)

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH): This text tends to overemphasize the martial aspect of Islam's spread. The authors write, misleadingly, that Bedouin "warrior skills...would become part of the Islamic way of life."¹⁶¹ While this may have been true of the early Arab Muslims (as well as non-Muslim Arabs), it does not describe the "Islamic way of life" for non-Arab Muslim cultures, such as those in southeast Asia, and it inaccurately associates Islam with warfare. More support for the martial message comes in the account of Caliph Abu Bakr. "For the sake of Islam," the authors write, "Abu Bakr invoked *jihad*." While the authors do note the complexity of the term ("The word *jihad* means 'striving' and can refer to the inner struggle against evil"), they go on to state that "the word is also used in the Qur'an to mean an armed struggle against unbelievers."¹⁶² This is true, but potentially misleading, since the Qur'an also—and perhaps more frequently—uses the term in a non-military sense.¹⁶³

Nonetheless, the authors press forward with the martial meaning: "For the next two years, Abu Bakr applied this meaning of *jihad* to encourage and justify the expansion of Islam"; "Muslims of the day saw their victories as a sign of Allah's support and drew energy and inspiration from their faith. They fought to defend Islam and were willing to struggle to extend its word."¹⁶⁴ While all of this is true, two important facts tend to get lost here: the fact that Muslims also spread Islam by peaceful means, and the fact that Muslims were no more motivated to spread their religion by the sword than Christians of the same period.

A subsequent passage does note that "because the Qur'an forbade forced conversion of 'people of the book' [i.e., initially Jews and Christians, later extended to include Zoroastrians and other religions], conquered Christians and Jews received special consideration."¹⁶⁵ The authors also note that the Muslim success was also due to "the persecution suffered by people under Byzantine or Sassanid rule because they did not support the official state religions, Christianity or Zoroastrianism. The persecuted people often welcomed the invaders (the Muslims) and their cause and chose to accept Islam. They were attracted by the appeal of the message of Islam, which offered equality and hope in this world. They were also attracted by the economic benefit for Muslims of not having to pay a poll tax."¹⁶⁶ While these passages are helpful, they do not completely offset the text's overall emphasis on Islam's violent character.

Whereas the military aspect of the spread of Islam is quite clear in the HMH package, the role of violence in the spread of Christianity is far less evident. While the authors write

about the persecution of Christians under the pre-Constantinian Roman state, they do not note the similar persecution of non-Christians after Christianity became the official religion.¹⁶⁷ The authors write that “politics played a key role in spreading Christianity. By 600, the Church, with the help of Frankish rulers, had converted many Germanic peoples.” What sort of help those rulers provided, however, is left unspecified. “Missionaries also spread Christianity,” the authors write. “These religious travelers often risked their lives to bring religious beliefs to other lands....In southern Europe, the fear of coastal attacks by Muslims also spurred many people to become Christians in the 600s.”¹⁶⁸ That last sentence implicitly contrasts an apparently violent Islam with an apparently peaceful Christianity, when in fact Christianity had its own record of violence in this period. Turning to Charlemagne, the authors write that he “conquered new lands to both the south and the east. Through these conquests, Charlemagne spread Christianity.”¹⁶⁹ This phrasing leaves the connection between conquest and religious conversion quite vague—especially by comparison with the account of Abu Bakr’s “armed struggle against unbelievers.”

However, the text does a somewhat better job in conveying the role of violence in the spread of Christianity in the Americas, though not in all respects. The fact that the spread of Christianity was intrinsically bound with the conquest and subjugation of indigenous peoples is not mentioned until relatively late in the discussion, and then in vague terms: “Catholic priests had accompanied conquistadors from the very beginning of American colonization. The conquistadors had come in search of wealth. The priests who accompanied them had come in search of converts.”¹⁷⁰ How those converts were obtained is left unspecified. There is no mention of the *Requerimiento* or the systematic destruction of indigenous religions. The discussion of the *encomienda* system also omits its Christianization aspect.¹⁷¹ Instead, the HMH text portrays Catholic priests as opposing the cruelty and violence of the Spanish overlords.¹⁷² Although some clergy (notably Bartolomé de Las Casas) did speak out, the fact remains that Christianity was complicit in the mistreatment of indigenous peoples.

To their credit, however, the authors do point out how Spanish conquerors systematically destroyed the Native Americans’ religious institutions: “In converting the natives, Spanish priests and soldiers burned their sacred objects and prohibited native rituals.”¹⁷³ And among the IMs I reviewed, only the HMH package notes the religious dimension of the English colonists’ violence toward American Indians: “Religious differences also heightened tensions. The English settlers considered Native Americans heathens, people without a faith. Over time, many Puritans viewed Native Americans as agents of the devil and as a threat to their godly society.”¹⁷⁴ Here we find at least a degree of religious balance in the accounts of violence in the spread of Christianity and Islam.

Pearson: Compared with the HMH and MGH packages, the Pearson world history IM offers a more balanced picture of the role of violence in the spread of both Islam and Christianity, although there are a few blemishes.

Like the HMH and MGH IMs, the Pearson package stresses the military aspect of the early spread of Islam. In a discussion of assaults on the Byzantine Empire, the authors write that

some of “the fiercest attacks came from the Arab armies that were carrying a new religion, Islam, into the Mediterranean world and beyond.”¹⁷⁵ In another discussion, entitled “Muslim Armies Advance Into Europe,” the authors characterize Islam as “a powerful new force” that “swept out of the Middle East across the Mediterranean world”; “The pope and the Christian kingdoms in Europe watched with alarm as Muslim armies overran Christian lands from Palestine to North Africa and Spain.”¹⁷⁶ However, the Pearson authors do note that “Islam also spread peacefully through trade and cultural exchange—reaching East Africa as early as the mid-700s.”¹⁷⁷

Nevertheless, as with the preceding packages, the Pearson IMs gloss over the role of violence in Charlemagne’s efforts to spread Christianity to his non-Christian neighbors. The authors write: “Charlemagne worked closely with the church to spread Christianity to the conquered peoples on the fringes of his empire. During his reign, missionaries won converts among the Saxons and Slavs.”¹⁷⁸ By failing to mention that Charlemagne forcibly converted many Saxons, and made pagan practices punishable by death, the authors paint the Christianization of western Europe as more voluntary and peaceful than it in fact was.

Yet, to their credit, in their discussion of the Spanish conquest of the Americas, the Pearson authors refer to the fact that “the Spanish forced the Native Americans to convert to Christianity.”¹⁷⁹ In another section, they note that “Spain imposed its culture, language, religion, and way of life on millions of new subjects in its empire”; “‘Christianizing’ Native Americans...turned out to be more complex. In the end ... Spain imposed its will by force.”¹⁸⁰ This element of the story is missing from the HMH and MGH IMs.

While the Pearson package does a better job than the HMH and MGH IMs in presenting the violence that often accompanied the spread of Christianity in Spanish and Portuguese colonies, it, too, fails to describe the role religion played in rationalizing and justifying the English colonists’ mistreatment of indigenous people in North America.¹⁸¹

Social Studies School Services (SSSS): Like the Pearson IM, the SSSS high school world history package offers a comparatively balanced picture of the role of violence in the spread of both Islam and Christianity. Once again, however, it is not as balanced as it could be.

While a unit on “The Rise of Islam” focuses one-sidedly on the spread of the religion via the military conquests of the Arab armies, a unit on the Islamic caliphates notes that Islam also spread through trade to areas not ruled by Muslims, including China, Southeast Asia, and parts of Africa—and the authors reinforce this information through student exercises.¹⁸² Furthermore, a unit on “The Empire of Islam” (also included in the Grade 6 Curriculum Map, discussed above) correctly notes that military conquest alone does not account for the rapid spread of Islam; it mentions the weakness of the Byzantine and Persian empires and non-orthodox Christians’ unhappiness with their rulers.¹⁸³

Unfortunately, the balance that characterizes sections on Islam is lacking in the sections on the spread of Christianity. The authors underplay the role of violence in Christianity’s

growth both in Europe and in the Americas. The discussion of Christianity's rise to become the official religion of the Roman Empire does not note how that official status translated into state persecution of non-Christian faiths.¹⁸⁴ Similarly, the coverage of the Byzantine Empire mentions only the work of missionaries in spreading Christianity, and does not discuss the often brutal official persecution of non-Christians.¹⁸⁵ A section on the Byzantine emperor Justinian I incorrectly suggests that non-Christian religions were tolerated under his rule, despite his desire to promote Christianity.¹⁸⁶ Likewise, a unit on Charlemagne notes that he “managed to bring much of Europe under his control,” but does not mention the spread of Christianity under his reign or his use of forced conversions.¹⁸⁷ However, a later unit, on the Middle Ages in Europe, mentions that “at times, the Church even raised armies and went to battle,” which at least suggests to students that Christianity was no more peaceful than other religions of the day.¹⁸⁸

The coverage of the Spanish conquest of the Americas does a somewhat better job of conveying the role of violence in the spread of Christianity. The authors note that “religious idealism” was one of the motivations behind the Spanish conquest; they also write of Cortes and other Spanish conquerors: “Though their mission was to convert the natives to Christianity, they often ended up brutally mistreating them in order to impose Spain’s new political and economic order.”¹⁸⁹ However, the actual violence that often attended the spread of Christianity under the Spanish is left unclear. For instance, one section notes that the Spanish “believed that they had a mission to save the souls of the native people by convincing them to abandon their religion and embrace Christianity. Catholic friars established schools in their monasteries, where they taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and Christianity.”¹⁹⁰ This discussion makes no mention of the destruction of the indigenous peoples’ own religious institutions. A section on the *encomienda* system is somewhat more balanced: the authors note that *encomenderos* were given the right to effectively enslave indigenous people in return for instructing them in Christianity—suggesting, correctly, the complicity of the religion in the subjugation of the native population.¹⁹¹

Endnotes

¹ Bruce Grelle, "Defining and Promoting the Study of Religion in British and American Schools," in *International Handbook of the Religious, Moral and Spiritual Dimensions in Education*, ed. M. de Souza, K. Engebretson, G. Durka, R. Jackson, and A. McGrady (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer Academic Publishers, 2006), [461-74] 465. Other examples of this broad consensus include: Martha T. Dever, Martha L. Whitaker, and Deborah A. Byrnes, "The 4th R: Teaching about Religion in the Public Schools," *The Social Studies*, 92:5 (Sep/Oct 2001): 220-29; Kent Greenawalt, "Teaching About Religion in the Public Schools," *Journal of Law & Politics*, 18:2 (Spring 2002): 329-385, OmniFile Full Text Select (H.W. Wilson), EBSCOhost (accessed January 9, 2016); Warren A. Nord, *Does God Make a Difference? Taking Religion Seriously in Our Schools and Universities* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010); Jeff Passe and Lara Willox, "Teaching Religion in America's Public Schools: A Necessary Disruption," *The Social Studies* 1003:3 (May/June 2009): 102-106; Melissa Rogers, "Teaching About Religion in Public Schools: Where Do We Go From Here?," *Religion & Education*, 38:1 (2011): 38-47.

² Among the middle school social studies IMs, these are Cengage-National Geographic, *World Cultures and Geography: Texas* (Willard, OH: National Geographic Learning, Cengage Learning, 2015), R51-R58; McGraw-Hill Education, *World Cultures & Geography, Texas*, "World Religions Handbook"; Pearson Realize, *Contemporary World Cultures Texas Grade 6* (rev. f30be5c), "Culture Core Concepts: Religion." Among the high school world geography IMs, these are Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas World Geography*, Teacher's Edition (2016), 75-77; and McGraw-Hill Education, *World Geography, Texas*, "World Religions Handbook." The high school world history IMs with this feature are Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas World History*, Teacher's Edition (2016), "Section on World Religions and Ethical Systems" (282-97); McGraw-Hill Education, *World History, Texas*, "World Religions Handbook"; and Pearson Realize, *World History Texas* (2005-12), "Culture Core Concepts: Religion."

³ The TEKS also determine what is to be covered in the state standardized test, the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), by which student educational achievement is assessed. However, world geography and world history are not covered by the STAAR test. For information on the STAAR, see Texas Education Agency, "STAAR Resources," accessed September 5, 2016, <http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/staar/>.

⁴ Zack Kopplin, "Showdown Over Science in Texas," *Slate*, September 20, 2013, accessed February 29, 2016, http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2013/09/texas_science_textbooks_creationists_try_to_remove_evolution_from_classrooms.html.

⁵ For instance, as Lauren Caruba wrote during the 2014 textbook adoption process: "Problems with the textbooks became national news on September 16, when the SBOE heard public testimony on the materials. Historians specifically took issue with references to Moses as an inspiration for the Framers, as well as descriptions of the Sikh religion as a combination of Islam and Hinduism rather than a standalone faith." Lauren Caruba, "SBOE, Publishers Talk Textbook Controversy," *Texas Monthly*, October 21, 2014, accessed January 14, 2016, <http://www.texasmonthly.com/the-daily-post/sboe-publishers-talk-textbook-controversy/>.

⁶ For another discussion of the rationale for teaching about religion in public schools, see AAR Religion in the Schools Task Force, *Guidelines for Teaching About Religion in K-12 Public Schools in the United States* (n.p.: American Academy of Religions, 2010), 4-6, accessed February 29, 2016, <https://www.aarweb.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Publications/epublications/AARK-12CurriculumGuidelines.pdf>.

⁷ National Council for the Social Studies, "Study about Religions in the Social Studies," 2014, accessed May 17, 2016, http://www.socialstudies.org/positions/study_about_religions.

⁸ Grelle, "Defining and Promoting the Study of Religion," 465. The American Academy of Religions *Guidelines for Teaching About Religion in K-12 Public Schools in the United States* takes a similar approach in describing a "constitutionally sound approach for teaching about religion in public schools"; "encouraging student awareness of religions, but not acceptance of a particular religion; studying about religion, but not practicing religion; exposing students to a diversity of religious views, but not imposing any particular view; and educating students about all religions, but not promoting or denigrating religion." AAR Religion in the Schools Task Force, *Guidelines for Teaching About Religion in K-12 Public Schools in the United States*, i.

⁹ This is the metric often used by Christian Right critics of the IMs, who claim that textbooks have an "anti-Christian" slant because they devote fewer words or lines to Christianity than they do to some

other religion (usually Islam). Case in point is the SBOE's September 2010 Anti-Islam Resolution, accessed January 1, 2015,

http://www.tfn.org/site/DocServer/SBOE_resolution_9.2010.pdf?docID=2041. For instance, the resolution complains that one textbook "devot[ed] 120 student text lines to Christian beliefs, practices, and holy writings but 248 (more than twice as many) to those of Islam" (1).

¹⁰ For instance, it would be absurd to expect a world history textbook to devote an equal number of words to, say, Shinto or Scientology, as it does to Islam, Christianity, or primal religions.

¹¹ Pew Research Religion & Public Life Project, "The Global Religious Landscape," December 18, 2012, accessed January 1, 2015, <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-exec/>.

¹² Three states do not have state boards of education. National Association of State Boards of Education, "State Boards," accessed November 18, 2015, <http://www.nasbe.org/about-us/state-boards-of-education/>. The other states which select their education board members by partisan ballot are Alabama, Colorado, Kansas, and Michigan. Louisiana and Ohio select their state board members by a combination of nonpartisan ballots and appointments by the governor; Nebraska and Utah select their state board members by nonpartisan ballot alone; in Washington, some board members are elected by local school boards, one is elected by private schools, and the remainder are appointed by the governor. National Association of State Boards of Education, "State Education Governance Matrix," January 2016, accessed July 11, 2016, <http://www.nasbe.org/wp-content/uploads/Governance-matrix-January-2016.pdf>. Nevada also has a mix of elected (I was unable to determine whether by partisan or nonpartisan elections) and appointed state board members. Nevada Department of Education, "Nevada State Board of Education," accessed January 14, 2016, http://www.doe.nv.gov/State_Board_of_Education/. The Texas SBOE consists of 15 members chosen through partisan elections and representing single-member districts; the governor appoints one of the members to serve as chair of the board.

¹³ For instance, in the November 2010 general election, only 38 percent of registered voters participated; in November 2014, turnout dropped to 33.7 percent. Texas Secretary of State, "Turnout and Voter Registration Figures (1970-current)," accessed April 24, 2016, <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/historical/70-92.shtml>.

¹⁴ Indiana, for instance, requires that at least six members of its eight-person board have professional experience in education, and specifies that not more than five appointees can belong to the same political party. "Indiana State Board of Education," accessed February 24, 2016, <http://www.in.gov/sboe/>.

¹⁵ Texas Education Agency, "SBOE - State Board of Education," accessed January 17, 2016, <http://tea.texas.gov/sboe/>. This authority is established under Texas Education Code Title 2, Subtitle F, Sec. 28.002(c). The 2010 Texas social studies standards are available online at <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter113/index.html>.

¹⁶ Texas Education Code, Title 2, Subtitle F, Sec. 28.002(c).

¹⁷ I have been unable to locate any rules governing the TEKS revision process in the Texas Education Code or the SBOE's own operating rules (State Board of Education, "SBOE Operating Rules Amended 4-17-15," amended April 17, 2015, accessed June 28, 2016, http://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/Leadership/State_Board_of_Education/SBOE_Meetings/SBOE_Operating_Rules_Amended_4-17-15/).

¹⁸ Texas Education Agency, "SBOE—State Board of Education."

¹⁹ 19 TAC 66.15(g)(1).

²⁰ State Board of Education, "SBOE Operating Rules Amended 4-17-15," §2.9(c)(4)(A), §2.9(c)(4)(B)(ii), and §2.9(c)(4)(D)(ii).

²¹ Technically, the SBOE works from the recommendation of the education commissioner, who in turn relies on the review panels: "The panels' findings serve as the basis for the commissioner of education's recommendation to the SBOE regarding the adoption of materials." Texas State Board of Education, "Proclamation 2015," April 2013 (amended November 2013), accessed February 25, 2016, <http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=2147511987>, 5.

²² 19 TAC 66.33(a): "The commissioner of education shall determine the number of review panels needed to review instructional materials under consideration for adoption, determine the number of persons to serve on each panel, and determine the process for selecting panel members. Each appointment to a state review panel shall be made by the commissioner of education with priority

given to qualified individuals who are nominated by State Board of Education (SBOE) members and with the advice and consent of the SBOE member whose district is to be represented.”

²³ 19 TAC 66.33(a).

²⁴ The Review Adoption representative of the Texas Education Agency confirmed the one-week review period in a private email message to me on July 6, 2016.

²⁵ The current adopted list of IMs can be found at

https://tea4avfaulk.tea.texas.gov/ematevi/EMATREPORTS/RptInst/EM_CURR_ADPN.pdf.

²⁶ “Upon making their decisions, school districts and open-enrollment charter schools place their orders with the TEA....Adopted instructional materials are purchased with [state] funds.” Texas Education Agency, “A Brief Overview of the Adoption Process,” <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=2147485614>. Section 31.0211 of the Education Code was amended to allow local school districts to use state funds to purchase instructional materials “regardless of whether the instructional materials are on the list adopted under Section 31.024.” Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., 1st C.S., Ch. 6 (S.B. 6), Sec. 23, eff. July 19, 2011, accessed November 10, 2014, <http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/821/billtext/html/SB00006F.HTM>. The affected part of the Education Code is Education Code, Title 2, Subtitle F, Subchapter B, Sect. 31.0211(c)(1)(B), accessed November 10, 2014, <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/docs/ed/htm/ed.31.htm>. Under the new statute, as the TEA puts it, “Local authorities for each school district or open-enrollment charter school set their own policy for selecting instructional materials for their students.” Texas Education Agency, “A Brief Overview of the Adoption Process.”

²⁷ This data is taken from Texas Education Agency, *Instructional Materials Allotment Expenditures: State-adopted Instructional Materials by District: School Year 2015-2016*, May 19, 2016, accessed September 9, 2016, https://tea4avfaulk.tea.texas.gov/ematevi/EMATREPORTS/RptInst/IMA_RPT9.pdf. (Please note that this document does not use uniform IM titles; I count only those items which I can clearly identify as sixth grade social studies, high school world geography, or high school world history.) According to the Texas Education Agency (<http://tea.texas.gov/acctres/analyze/1415/gloss1415.html>), Texas has 1,024 public school districts (not counting charter schools or charter school districts).

According to the *Instructional Materials Allotment Expenditures* document, 455 public school districts purchased one or more of these IMs from the adopted list: 401 purchased approved sixth grade social studies IMs; 273 purchased approved high school world geography IMs; and 367 purchased approved high school world history IMs. McGraw-Hill was by far the most popular publisher (261 sixth grade social studies, 266 high school world geography, and 255 high school world history).

²⁸ For instance, the compilation of the TEKS Correlations—itemized lists showing how a given IM complies with each TEKS standard—must be a fairly costly operation.

²⁹ §113.42(c)(4)(A).

³⁰ Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas World History*, Teacher’s Edition (2016), 301.

³¹ Regarding mentions in the main body text, see McGraw-Hill, *World History, Texas*, Ch. 8 (The Byzantine Empire and Emerging Europe), Lesson 1, p. 5; Ch. 8, Lesson 4, p. 5; and Ch. 12 (Crusades and Culture in the Middle Ages, 1000-1500), Lesson 1, p. 7. Regarding mentions in the student exercises, see *ibid.*, Ch. 8, Assessment, Lesson 4, 19; and Ch. 8, Assessment, Lesson 5, 23 and 24. For another example, see how the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt world history offering attempts to satisfy TEKS 20(A) (“explain the development of democratic-republican government from its beginnings in the Judeo-Christian legal tradition” [§113.42(c)(20)(A)] and 22(B) (which expects students to discuss the influence of the concept of “equality before the law” that originated from the Judeo-Christian legal tradition” [§113.42(c)(22)(B)]): Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas World History*, Teacher’s Edition (2016), 645DJ2.

³² Since I do not have access to the versions of these IMs for states other than Texas, I cannot confirm that the TEKS influenced IM content. However, the marked similarities in terminology between TEKS 4(A) and the IMs, combined with the fact that the publishers’ TEKS Correlations cite these passages as complying with TEKS 4(A), strongly suggest an attempt on the part of the publishers to align their content with the TEKS.

³³ For an account of the role of ideology in the development of the Texas history standards, see Mark A. Chancey, “Teaching about Religion in Red-state America,” in Matthew Sutton and Darren Dochuk, eds., *Religion and Politics in Twenty-First Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 163-179.

³⁴ Gene B. Preuss, “‘As Texas Goes, So Goes the Nation’: Conservatism and Culture Wars in the Lone Star State,” in *Politics and the History Curriculum*, [18-38] 30-31. Preuss cites John J. Goodson, *State Board of Education: Controversy and Change* (Austin: House Research Organization, Texas House of Representatives, 2000), 3, 7; and “A Look at the Key Issues,” *Austin American-Statesman*, January 8, 1995. Geoffrey H. Fletcher writes that “the SBOE has been known to make arbitrary and capricious decisions about whether or not some books are worthy to be on the final list from which districts can select, especially in science and social studies, but also recently in elementary math.” Fletcher, “The Disruption of the Traditional Textbook Model Continues,” *The Journal*, June 24, 2009, accessed January 2, 2015, http://thejournal.com/articles/2009/06/24/the-disruption-of-the-traditional-textbook-model-continues.aspx?sc_lang=en.

³⁵ Texas Freedom Network Education Fund, *The State Board of Education: Dragging Texas Schools into the Culture Wars* (2008), 18, accessed July 12, 2016, <http://tfn.org/cms/assets/uploads/2015/11/RRReport2008web.pdf>.

³⁶ Ibid., 19. Preuss attributes the change to the Legislature as “an effort to stop the intensity of the state’s textbook wars” (Preuss, “‘As Texas Goes, So Goes the Nation,’” 30-31). Ellen Williams argues that the main problem with the textbook adoption process prior to 1995 was its “lack of selection resulting from the state’s one-size-fits-all approach.” Under the pre-1995 statute, the SBOE could adopt no more than eight textbooks for each subject or course, and districts were required to adopt the same textbook for all campuses, regardless of different needs. Yet Williams also notes that “the SBOE process was overly prescriptive, which severely limited the number of publishers submitting books and the number of books from which districts could choose. In fact, from 1988 to 1994, publishers submitted only three science texts for consideration in Texas, while 22 were submitted in California. Many Texas school districts requested waivers from the commissioner to provide broader selection.” By “overly prescriptive,” Williams apparently has in mind the lengthy and detailed bid specifications publishers were required to satisfy, specifications which included curriculum standards that were the predecessor of the TEKS. 49 SMU L. Rev. 901 at 931. Date Accessed: 2015/01/02. www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic. Williams cites (ibid., n. 259) a *Houston Chronicle* article which details publisher complaints about these detailed bid specifications. Kathy Walt, “State’s one for the books, publishers say/Selling texts to Texas can be risky business,” *Houston Chronicle*, July 3, 1994, State section, 1.

³⁷ To demonstrate his opposition to this limitation, conservative SBOE member David Bradley publicly tore the cover off an algebra book and declared, “Ladies and gentlemen, worthless binding. I reject the book.” He then tossed the book aside. Mary Alice Robbins, “Textbooks’ approval a ripsnorting affair,” *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal* November 7, 1997, accessed May 19, 2016, <http://lubbockonline.com/news/110897/AST-1672.htm>. The 1995 law also shifted the appointment of the state education commissioner (and TEA head) from the SBOE to the governor. Texas Education Agency, “An Overview of the History of Public Education in Texas,” accessed January 2, 2015, http://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/Welcome_and_Overview/An_Overview_of_the_History_of_Public_Education_in_Texas/.

³⁸ Mark Chancey notes that although this bloc was “one member short of a majority, [it] was often able to corral extra votes from other Republican members or from Democrats. It did not hurt the bloc’s stature or effectiveness when Governor Rick Perry appointed McLeroy as board chair in 2007 and Gail Lowe as his successor in 2009.” Mark A. Chancey, “Rewriting History for a Christian America: Religion and the Texas Social Studies Controversy of 2009–2010,” *The Journal of Religion* 94:3 (July 2014): [325-353] 331.

³⁹ The two former schoolteachers were Barbara Cargill and Terri Leo. Don McLeroy is a dentist; Lowe, the editor of a small-town weekly newspaper; David Bradley, an insurance and real estate agent; Cynthia Dunbar, a lawyer; and Ken Mercer, a technology project manager.

⁴⁰ Of the members of the Christian Americanist bloc, David Bradley was reelected with an effective percentage—turnout percentage times the ballot percentage—of 31.97% (2008); Cynthia Dunbar, with 27.72% (2006); Gail Lowe, with 40.25% (2008); Don McLeroy, with 22.29% (2006); and Ken Mercer, with 26.61% (2006). The other two members of the bloc, Barbara Cargill and Terri Leo, received effective percentages of slightly over half the registered voters: 51.48% and 51.25%, respectively, both in 2008. These percentages were derived using election results from the Texas Office of the Secretary of State, “1992 - Current ELECTION HISTORY,” <http://elections.sos.state.tx.us/index.htm>,

and SBOE district population, voter registration, and turnout analysis data supplied by the Texas Legislative Council at my request. See Appendix A for the source data.

⁴¹ On the term “Christian Americanism,” see Chancey, “Rewriting History,” 328-29.

⁴² Katherine Stewart, *The Good News Club: The Christian Right’s Stealth Assault on America’s Children* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2012), 150.

⁴³ Russell Shorto, “How Christian Were the Founders?,” *The New York Times*, February 11, 2010, accessed February 21, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/14/magazine/14texbooks-t.html>. Elsewhere, Lowe is quoted as saying: “Our country was founded on religious principles...and our students will know that [i.e., thanks to the new social studies curriculum standards]....I think the [Founding Fathers] fully intended that our government would not separate church and state.” Adam Blaylock, “State Official Discusses Curriculum,” *North Texas Daily*, September 10, 2010, accessed March 5, 2015, <http://ntdaily.com/changes-initiate-criticism-debate-about-texas-education/>.

⁴⁴ Quoted in Texas Freedom Network Education Fund, *The State Board of Education: Dragging Texas Schools into the Culture Wars*, 19.

⁴⁵ Shorto, “How Christian Were the Founders?”

⁴⁶ These three were nominated by six of the seven members of the Christian Americanist bloc. The seventh member, McLeroy, was unable to find another SBOE member to support his nominee. Texas Freedom Network, “A Look at the Texas Social Studies ‘Experts’” (blog), June 9, 2009, accessed February 29, 2016, <https://tfnblog.wordpress.com/2009/06/09/a-look-at-the-texas-social-studies-experts/>.

⁴⁷ As Mark Chancey notes, Barton held “only a bachelor’s degree in religious education from Oral Roberts University,” while “Marshall had an undergraduate degree in history from Yale University and a divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary” (Chancey, “Rewriting History,” 334, 335). Dreisbach, on the other hand, holds a D.Phil. from Oxford University and a J.D. from the University of Virginia (American University School of Public Affairs website, <http://www.american.edu/spa/faculty/ddreisb.cfm>). The other three expert reviewers—Jesús de la Teja, Lybeth Hodges, and James Kracht—all hold Ph.D.s in history or education.

⁴⁸ See, e.g., Daniel L. Dreisbach, “The Mythical ‘Wall of Separation’: How a Misused Metaphor Changed Church–State Law, Policy, and Discourse,” The Heritage Foundation, First Principles Series No. 6, June 23, 2006, accessed February 22, 2015, <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2006/06/the-mythical-wall-of-separation-how-a-misused-metaphor-changed-church-state-law-policy-and-discourse>. However, other indications suggest that Dreisbach’s views do not align with Barton’s and Marshall’s in all respects. As John Fea notes in a blog post, Dreisbach suggests in a review that “the ‘Christian nation rhetoric of the religious right’”—presumably including Barton—“is ‘specious.’” John Fea, “Daniel Dreisbach, the ‘Godless Constitution,’ and Christian America,” The Way of Improvement Leads Home (blog), December 31, 2009, accessed May 18, 2016, <http://www.philipvickersfithian.com/2009/12/daniel-dreisbach-godless-constitution.html>.

⁴⁹ David Barton, “2009 TEKS Review,” [July 2009], 11-12, accessed June 30, 2016, <http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6172>.

⁵⁰ Peter Marshall, “Review of Current Social Studies TEKS,” 3-4, accessed November 10, 2014, <http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6177>.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵³ Brian Thevenot, “SBOE Conservatives Rewrite American History Books,” *The Texas Tribune* Jan. 12, 2010, accessed February 21, 2015, <http://www.texastribune.org/2010/01/12/sboe-conservatives-rewrite-american-history-books/>. “Bill Ames had neither history or education credentials nor respect for fellow committee members who did. Indeed, the retired IBM executive and conservative gadfly believed they had been planted there in a conspiracy of ‘liberal groups’ and unions who wanted to ‘hijack’ U.S. history—or so he would later write in a three-part, 9,300-word rant, ‘The Left’s War on History,’ that was published by the conservative website Texas Insider” (*ibid.*). Besides Ames, a McLeroy nominee, these ideological appointees included two David Bradley nominees: Paul T. Owens, who served on the middle school social studies drafting team; and Peter Morrison, who served on the Grade 5 drafting committee. For a discussion of the ideological activities of Ames, Owens, and Morrison, see Texas Freedom Network, “Political Extremism and Curriculum Standards,” July 20, 2009, accessed February 29, 2016, <http://tfn.org/political-extremism-and->

curriculum-standards/. A full listing of drafting team members can be found at http://tea.texas.gov/uploadedFiles/Curriculum/Texas_Essential_Knowledge_and_Skills/K8SSTEKSComm.pdf and

http://tea.texas.gov/uploadedFiles/Curriculum/Texas_Essential_Knowledge_and_Skills/HSSSTEKSComm.pdf.

⁵⁴ Laura K. Muñoz and Julio Noboa, members of the committee charged with drafting the high school U.S. history standards, describe how Bill Ames used the consensus requirement to insist on his own American exceptionalist and hyperpatriotic views on each standard despite being consistently outvoted 8 to 1. Laura K. Muñoz and Julio Noboa, “Hijacks and Hijinks on the US History Review Committee,” in *Politics and the History Curriculum: The Struggle over Standards in Texas and the Nation*, ed. Keith A. Erikson (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 41-58. I do not know whether Owens or Morrison made similar use of the consensus rule.

⁵⁵ Shorto, “How Christian Were the Founders?” As Katherine Stewart writes, the SBOE bloc “that Lowe and McLeroy represent...forced hundreds of changes to the existing standards in order to give a sharply conservative slant to the material taught in public schools...a slant that conforms to Christian Nationalist narratives of history.” Katherine Stewart, *The Good News Club*, 151.

⁵⁶ §113.35(c)(1)(C).

⁵⁷ A Democratic member moved an alternative proposal which would have included BCE and CE in parentheses [e.g., “BC (BCE)”], but it was voted down. “Report of the State Board of Education Committee of the Full Board, March 10, 2010,” 5.

⁵⁸ §113.42(c)(4)(B). “Report of the State Board of Education Committee of the Full Board, March 10, 2010,” 6.

⁵⁹ By 2014, only Bradley, Cargill, and Mercer remained; however, Donna Bahorich, Pat Hardy, Sue Melton-Malone, and Tincy Miller, though not full-blown Christian Americanists themselves, often voted with Bradley, Cargill, and Mercer.

⁶⁰ The grassroots watchdog group Texas Freedom Network (TFN) reported that the 2014 social studies review panels largely excluded university-level content specialists while “individuals with no qualifications in a relevant field or teaching experience got places on the [review] panels.” Texas Freedom Network, “SBOE Politics as Usual: Textbook Review Once Again Plagued by Lack of Expertise,” July 14, 2014, accessed February 25, 2016, <http://tfn.org/sboe-politics-as-usual-textbook-review-once-again-plagued-by-lack-of-expertise/>. Of the four faculty members, two specialize in social studies fields, one teaches human resource management, and the other, Spanish and bilingual education. Texas Freedom Network, private communication, September 27, 2014.

⁶¹ Texas Education Agency, “SBOE Minutes,” Minutes 2014, “Report of the State Board of Education Committee of the Full Board Public Hearing September 16, 2014,” accessed January 18, 2015, <http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=25769819188>.

⁶² I should note that during my own testimony, Cargill did (albeit reluctantly) allow me to respond to comments made by board member Pat Hardy.

⁶³ David R. Brockman, “6 Overlooked Takeaways From a Reviewer of Controversial Texas Textbooks,” *Religion Dispatches*, December 17, 2014, accessed January 8, 2015, <http://religiondispatches.org/6-overlooked-takeaways-from-a-reviewer-of-controversial-texas-textbooks/>.

⁶⁴ Brockman, “6 Overlooked Takeaways.” My information on the credentials of the TTT reviewers comes from their website, <http://truthintexastextbooks.com/sample-page/> (accessed December 12, 2014). The TTT reviewers did include an Ed.D. in “educational leadership” and a professor of foreign languages. Neither discipline constitutes social studies expertise.

⁶⁵ Truth in Texas Textbooks, “TTT Report to Texas SBOE on Pearson World History incl TTT reply to publisher response_Feb_11_2015,” 3, accessed July 13, 2016, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0ByYi--BipgiqS3NwWlJjTmxvUDF3RTU0UE5uZjBXNjNSTzZR/view?usp=sharing>.

⁶⁶ Brockman, “6 Overlooked Takeaways.”

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ The original Pearson description is supported, for example, by Malise Ruthven, *Islam: A Very Short Introduction* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), 126; and John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, *Who Speaks for Islam: What a Billion Muslims Really Think* (New York, NY: Gallup Press, 2007), 17-21.

⁶⁹ Truth in Texas Textbooks, “TTT Report to Texas SBOE on Pearson World History incl TTT reply to publisher response_Feb_11_2015,” 10.

⁷⁰ Pearson, “Pearson Rsp to Public Comment World History_11_19,” 15-16, accessed July 1, 2016, <http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=25769819015&libID=25769819124>.

⁷¹ McGraw-Hill, “McGraw-Hill Education Response to Comments Submitted by the Truth in Texas Textbooks,” November 28, 2014, 2, accessed September 9, 2016, <http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=25769818929&libID=25769819038>.

⁷² McGraw-Hill, “McGraw-Hill Education Response to Comments Submitted by the Truth in Texas Textbooks,” November 28, 2014, 2, accessed September 9, 2016, <http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=25769818954&libID=25769819063>.

⁷³ Morgan Smith, “Texas Social Studies Standards Receive Failing Grade,” *The Texas Tribune*, February 16, 2011, accessed March 26, 2015, <http://www.texastribune.org/2011/02/16/texas-social-studies-receive-failing-grade/>. The Fordham report can be found at <http://edexcellence.net/publications/the-state-of-state-us.html>.

⁷⁴ §113.42(b)(1), (2), and (8).

⁷⁵ State Board of Education, “SBOE Operating Rules Amended 4-17-15,” §2.9(c)(4)(B)(ii).

⁷⁶ §113.18(b)(19)(A) & (B).

⁷⁷ For the list in high school world geography, see §113.43(c)(17)(B). For the list in high school world history, see §113.42(c)(23)(A).

⁷⁸ “DRAFT Proposed Revisions: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills: World History Studies. Prepared by the State Board of Education TEKS Review Committees. October 17, 2009,” 3. This document is no longer available on the TEA website. I was able to access them via archive.org’s Wayback Machine, accessed January 3, 2015, <http://web.archive.org/web/20100725204837/http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/curriculum/pdf/WorldHistoryStudiesTEKSOct2009.pdf>.

⁷⁹ §113.42(b)(1).

⁸⁰ Brockman, “6 Overlooked Takeaways.”

⁸¹ The Pew Research study of global religious affiliation in 2010 showed that Christianity accounts for 31.5 percent, Islam for 23.2 percent. Pew Research Religion & Public Life Project, “The Global Religious Landscape,” December 18, 2012, accessed July 1, 2016, <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-exec/>.

⁸² §113.42(c)(1)(C).

⁸³ §113.42(c)(9)(A) and (13)(E).

⁸⁴ §113.42(c)(4)(B). §113.42(c)(5)(B) covers “the political, intellectual, artistic, economic, and religious impact of the Reformation.”

⁸⁵ §113.42(c)(4)(A).

⁸⁶ Compare “DRAFT Proposed Revisions: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills: World History Studies. Prepared by the State Board of Education TEKS Review Committees. First Draft – July 31, 2009,” 5, with “DRAFT Proposed Revisions: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills: World History Studies. Prepared by the State Board of Education TEKS Review Committees. October 17, 2009,” 5. Neither document is now available on the TEA website. I was able to access them (January 3, 2015) via archive.org’s Wayback Machine, respectively <http://web.archive.org/web/20121026230924/http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=3643> (July 31, 2009) and <http://web.archive.org/web/20100725204837/http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/curriculum/pdf/WorldHistoryStudiesTEKSOct2009.pdf> (October 2009). First and final drafts of all social studies TEKS can be found on the Wayback Machine at <http://web.archive.org/web/20121026230924/http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=3643>.

⁸⁷ David C. Fisher makes a similar point: “Christianity certainly did contribute to social and political stability in these areas, but the standard is tendentious rather than pedagogic. Medieval Europe is best characterized in world history during this period as fragmented and disorganized, especially when compared with Byzantium, the *dar-al-Islam*, and the Tang and Song dynasties in China. Indeed, the iconoclasm controversy that divided the church in Byzantium and distanced it from its Western

counterpart suggests the limitations of characterizing Christianity solely as a unifying factor.” David C. Fisher, “A Missed Opportunity for World History in Texas,” in *Politics and the History Curriculum: The Struggle over Standards in Texas and the Nation*, 183.

⁸⁸ §113.44(c)(1)(C) and (7)(G).

⁸⁹ §113.42(c)(20)(A).

⁹⁰ §113.42(c)(22)(B).

⁹¹ As Andrew Preston notes, when “Judeo-Christian” first came into widespread use in the 1930s, it referred to those beliefs and values shared by Jews and Christians. The term first became common among liberals and later among centrists as a way of pointing to values shared by Jews and Christians that opposed the growing religious intolerance of the Nazis and other fascist groups. Andrew Preston, “A very young Judeo-Christian tradition,” *Boston Globe* (online), July 01, 2012, accessed January 4, 2015, <http://www.bostonglobe.com/ideas/2012/06/30/very-young-judeo-christian-tradition/smZoWrkrSLeMZpLoulZGnL/story.html>. That sense is still common in some scholarly circles. For instance, Alexandra Kogel and David K. Moore refer to “the Hebrew (and later Judeo-Christian) tradition”; the context suggests that “Judeo-Christian” refers to the shared tradition of thought and belief which developed after the rise of Christianity (Alexandra Kogel and David K. Moore, “Equality: Overview,” in *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, vol. 2, ed. Maryanne Cline Horowitz (Farmington Hills, MI: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 2005), [694-701], 695.) However, by the 1980s “Judeo-Christian” had been taken over by the Christian Right as a political code word for conservative Christian. Preston writes: “Today, the term tends to be used by Republicans as a way to rally their supporters around a presumed set of traditional values. During the GOP primaries, Rick Santorum invoked the term in an attack on Barack Obama’s health care plan (‘a president who is systematically trying to crush the traditional Judeo-Christian values of America’); more benignly, Mitt Romney credited America’s world stature to ‘our Judeo-Christian tradition, with its vision of the goodness and possibilities of every life’” (Preston, “A very young Judeo-Christian tradition”). Note, for example, the website “Judeo-Christian VoterGuide.com,” which includes links to a video entitled “War on God in America” (<http://www.judeo-christianvoterguide.com/>). For more on the development of the term “Judeo-Christian,” see also Douglas Hartmann, Xuefeng Zhang, and William Wischstadt, “One (Multicultural) Nation Under God? Changing Uses and Meanings of the Term ‘Judeo-Christian’ in the American Media,” *Journal of Media and Religion* 4:4 (2005): 207–234.

⁹² The revision history of these two standards can be found in two draft versions of the high school world history TEKS. Though neither is currently available on the TEA website, both can be found using archive.org’s Wayback Machine: “DRAFT Proposed Revisions: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills: World History Studies. Prepared by the State Board of Education TEKS Review Committees. First Draft – July 31, 2009.”

According to these documents, the drafting committee added a reference to the “Hebrew legal tradition” in the first draft, in response to feedback from an expert reviewer. The expert in question was likely Daniel Dreisbach, who commented that “a strong argument could be made that a source of republican ideas prior to ‘classical Greece and Rome’ was the Hebrew commonwealth” (Daniel L. Dreisbach, “A Report to the Texas Education Agency on K-12 Social Studies Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills,” 22, accessed January 31, 2016, <http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6174>). Yet while Dreisbach mentioned Hebrew commonwealth only as a possible source for democratic ideas, the final reference in the TEKS was instead to democracy’s “beginnings in the Hebrew legal tradition”—a much stronger (and more questionable) claim. The reference to the “Hebrew legal tradition” was changed to the “Judeo-Christian legal tradition” to address concerns voiced by the SBOE and in “informal feedback,” likely from one or more SBOE members (October 17, 2009 draft, 12-13). Significantly, in an October 2009 meeting, Christian Americanist SBOE member Don McLeroy asked the TEKS drafting committee to “Add a standard that describes the Judeo-Christian influence on the founding documents.” The McLeroy memo can be found at http://s3.amazonaws.com/static.texastribune.org/media/documents/mcleroy_memo.pdf (accessed February 21, 2015).

This change in the world history TEKS is consistent with a similar insertion of a reference to “Judeo-Christian influence” in the social studies TEKS for U.S. government. The 1998 TEKS and the July 2009 first draft revision of the U.S. government TEKS contain no references to the “Judeo-Christian” tradition. The first draft revision includes a requirement that students “analyze the

principles and ideas that underlie the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the U.S. Constitution, including those of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Charles de Montesquieu.” [TEKS 1(B), “DRAFT Proposed Revisions: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills: United States Government. Prepared by the State Board of Education TEKS Review Committees. First Draft – July 31, 2009,” 2. While this document is no longer available on the TEA website, it can be accessed via archive.org’s Wayback Machine, accessed February 22, 2015, <https://web.archive.org/web/20110820030358/http://www.tea.state.tx.us/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6168>.] Expert reviewer Dreisbach weighed in on this requirement in his review of the first draft: “Among the influential sources that should be added to this list, and that students must be exposed to, are the Bible and William Blackstone. As currently written, this section of the TEKS excludes the most cited authority [sic] in the political literature of the founding era....If the most cited authority is excluded and lesser cited authorities included, then the drafters should explain their choice of authorities.” (Daniel L. Dreisbach, “A Report to the Texas Education Agency on ‘The First Draft Recommendations for Revision to Social Studies TEKS’ K-12 Social Studies Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills,” 9, accessed November 10, 2014, <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=3643>.) Accordingly, in their second draft revision, the review committee worked with Dreisbach to produce the final form of this requirement: “identify major intellectual, philosophical, political, and religious traditions that informed the American founding, including Judeo-Christian (especially biblical law), English Common Law and constitutionalism, Enlightenment, and Republicanism, as they speak to issues of liberty, rights, and responsibilities of individuals” (emphasis mine). [TEKS 1(B), “DRAFT Proposed Revisions: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills: United States Government. Prepared by the State Board of Education TEKS Review Committees. October 17, 2009,” 2. Again, while this document is no longer available on the TEA website, it can be accessed via archive.org’s Wayback Machine, accessed February 22, 2015, <https://web.archive.org/web/20110820030358/http://www.tea.state.tx.us/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=7009&libID=7017>.]

⁹³ I should note that while David Barton and other Christian Americanists draw a sharp distinction between a “democracy” and a “republic,” and insist that the U.S. is the latter rather than the former, I can find no substantive difference between the two terms in popular usage. Accordingly, I will use the more common terms *democracy* or *democratic government* in the following discussion. For the record, Barton holds that “A democracy operates by direct majority vote”; it “is a series of referendum votes based on the predominant popular opinion at the time.” A republic, on the other hand, “differs in that the general population elects representatives who then pass laws to govern the nation” [David Barton, *The Myth of Separation* (Aledo, TX: WallBuilders Press, 1992), 229.] That argument fails to take account of the fact that the two terms are used as virtual synonyms today. The Oxford English Dictionary defines *republic* as “A state in which power rests with the people or their representatives”; it defines *democracy* as “Government by the people,” in which the people are involved in decision-making “typically by voting to elect representatives to a parliament or similar assembly” (“republic, n.,” OED Online, December 2014, Oxford University Press, accessed February 21, 2015, <http://www.oed.com.proxy.libraries.smu.edu/view/Entry/163158>; “democracy, n.,” definitions 3a and 5, OED Online, December 2014, Oxford University Press, accessed February 21, 2015, <http://www.oed.com.proxy.libraries.smu.edu/view/Entry/49755?redirectedFrom=democracy>).

⁹⁴ Shorto, “How Christian Were the Founders?”

⁹⁵ Ibid. Elsewhere, Lowe said: “Our country was founded on religious principles...and our students will know that [i.e., thanks to the new social studies curriculum standards]....I think the [Founding Fathers] fully intended that our government would not separate church and state.” Adam Blaylock, “State Official Discusses Curriculum.”

⁹⁶ Cynthia Noland Dunbar, *One Nation Under God: How the Left is Trying to Erase What Made us Great* (Oviedo, FL: HigherLife Publishing, 2008), xv.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 18.

⁹⁸ Ibid., xv–xvi.

⁹⁹ Barton, *The Myth of Separation*, 201.

¹⁰⁰ David Barton, Daystar Special Presentation [January 2012], accessed March 6, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Edt-qOvLrNA>. These two remarks are at 35:50 and 5:07, respectively.

¹⁰¹ For example, the editors of the *Journal of Church and State* write, “It is safe to say that no reputable historian takes the work of Marshall and Barton seriously.” Noting that Barton neither “possesses an earned doctorate [nor] is professionally qualified,” they describe him as “a politician (former vice chairman of the Texas Republican Party) who cranks out books and videos that try to show that the Founding Fathers were orthodox Christians.” Richard V. Pierard and Charles McDaniel, “Reappropriating History for God and Country,” *Journal of Church and State* 52:2 (2010): [193-202] 196.

¹⁰² Benjamin Isakhan, “Introduction: The Complex and Contested History of Democracy,” in *Edinburgh Companion to the History of Democracy*, ed. Benjamin Isakhan and Stephen Stockwell (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), [1-26] 11.

¹⁰³ Christopher Boehm, “Prehistory,” in *Edinburgh Companion to the History of Democracy*, ed. Benjamin Isakhan and Stephen Stockwell (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), [29-39] 29.

Boehm defines democracy as “a political system which allows the will of the rank and file to be expressed in arriving at and executing policies that affect the group.” Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Temma Kaplan, *Democracy: A World History* (Cary, NC: Oxford University Press, 2014), 5-7.

¹⁰⁵ The professor responsible for American history, historian Ed Countryman of Southern Methodist University, was assisted by a team of Ph.D. students, mostly from the University of Texas. The other scholar was political scientist Emile Lester of the University of Mary Washington. I should note that although TFN compensated me for my work, my comments were and are entirely my own and do not necessarily represent the positions of TFN or any other organization.

¹⁰⁶ Cengage Learning-National Geographic, *World Cultures and Geography: Texas* (Willard, OH: National Geographic Learning, Cengage Learning, 2015); Discovery Education, *World Geography and Cultures* (Discovery Education, 2014); Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas Contemporary World Studies: People, Places, and Societies*, Teacher’s Edition (2016); McGraw-Hill Education, *World Cultures & Geography, Texas*; Pearson Realize, *Contemporary World Cultures Texas Grade 6* (rev. f30be5c); Social Studies School Services (SSSS), *Grade 6*; and Sunburst Ignite! Social Studies, *World Cultures*.

¹⁰⁷ Edmentum, *TX-World Geography, Semester A* and *TX-World Geography, Semester B*; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas World Geography*, Teacher’s Edition (2016); McGraw-Hill Education, *World Geography, Texas*; Social Studies School Services (SSSS), *World Geography*; and WorldView, *World Geography: An Interactive Approach* (2014).

¹⁰⁸ Edmentum, *TX-World History Before 1815* and *TX-World History Since 1815*; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas World History*, Teacher’s Edition (2016); McGraw-Hill Education, *World History, Texas*; Pearson Realize, *World History Texas* (2005-12); Social Studies School Services (SSSS), *World History, Texas*; and WorldView, *World History A: Early Civilizations to Mid-1800’s* and *World History B: Mid-1800’s to the Present*.

¹⁰⁹ These reports are available online at the Texas Freedom Network website, http://tfn.org/cms/assets/uploads/2015/11/FINAL_Brockman_WH.pdf and http://tfn.org/cms/assets/uploads/2015/11/FINAL_Brockman_WG.pdf.

¹¹⁰ For example, a 2015 Brookings poll found that 61 percent of respondents had an unfavorable opinion of Islam; 56 percent of Republicans believed that Islam is incompatible with Western values (versus 39 percent of all respondents). Shibley Telhami, *What Americans (especially Evangelicals) Think About Israel and the Middle East*, Center for Middle Eastern Policy at Brookings, November 4-10, 2015, accessed September 9, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/2015-Full-Poll-Findings-Final.pdf>.

¹¹¹ David Robinson, “Africa, Islam in,” *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*, ed. Richard C. Martin, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004), [13-19] 14-15. Gale Virtual Reference Library (Web), accessed February 28, 2016, http://library.tcu.edu.ezproxy.tcu.edu/PURL/EZproxy_link.asp?url=http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX3403500035&v=2.1&u=txshracd2573&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w&asid=1b3bc310eabaf589674fa785e50617c214-15.

¹¹² David Waines, *An Introduction to Islam* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 52-53.

¹¹³ Ramsay MacMullen writes of Justinian: “A brutally energetic, or energetically brutal, ruler enjoying a very long reign, he pursued the goal of religious uniformity as no one before him. ‘He did not see it as murder if the victims did not share his own beliefs.’ Those he disagreed with he was likely to mutilate if he didn’t behead or crucify them; and among a number of highly placed pagans who escaped baptism by suicide, at least one he pursued to the grave, and buried him like an animal; apostates, he declared, should be executed. Persecution came in waves.... ‘There was a great

persecution of pagans, and many lost all their property....A great terror was aroused...[with] a deadline of three months to be converted.' Troops were used to destroy the remotest temples still active as centers of worship, in Egypt." Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianity and Paganism in the Fourth to Eighth Centuries* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 27.

¹¹⁴ "Involuntary conversions and the establishment of an organized church followed Charlemagne's military victories over the Saxons (beginning in 772), but Saxony was for years beset by bloody and destructive rebellions. Nevertheless, the monastery of Fulda, the bishopric of Würzburg, and new settlements such as Paderborn became centers of organized missionary activity. In 785 the leaders of Saxon resistance accepted baptism, although it may be doubted whether many Saxons followed their example until further pressures, including severe punishment for 'pagan' practices, had been employed." Donald A. Bullough, "Charlemagne," *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones. 2nd ed. Vol. 3. (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), 1556-1557. Gale Virtual Reference Library.

¹¹⁵ Discussing the *Requerimiento*, Lyle N. McAlister writes: "Well-established political theories furnished the rationale for discovery and conquest in the Indies. Christian princes could acquire dominion over infidels and pagans to extend Christendom, and a just war could be waged against those who resisted....[The Spanish jurist Jan de Placios Rubios] declared that popes could annul the jurisdictions of heathens and pagans and confer them on Christian princes, and that was exactly what Pope Alexander VI had done in the Bulls of Donation in 1493....[His *Requerimiento*] called on the Indians to acknowledge the pope as ruler of the world and, in his stead, the king of Castile by virtue of donation. It then informed them that if they accepted the summons they would be received as loyal vassals, but if they did not they would be deprived of their liberty and property and further states, 'We protest that the deaths and losses which shall accrue from this are your fault, and not that of their Highnesses, or ours, nor of these cavaliers who came with us.' While McAlister notes that the *Requerimiento* was frivolous in application (since the Indians to whom it was read in Spanish or Latin could not understand it), "Nevertheless, the document met the juridical requirements of conquest and helped to ease the royal conscience." Lyle N. McAlister, *Spain and Portugal in the New World: 1492-1700* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 90.

¹¹⁶ "The receiver of the grant, the *encomendero*, could exact tribute from the Indians in gold, in kind, or in labour and was required to protect them and instruct them in the Christian faith. The *encomienda* did not include a grant of land, but in practice the *encomenderos* gained control of the Indians' lands and failed to fulfil their obligations to the Indian population." *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s. v. "encomienda," accessed December 30, 2014,

<http://academic.eb.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/EBchecked/topic/186567/encomienda>. McAlister writes of the methods used by Spanish friars in Christianizing the native population: "They went first to existing native administrative and religious centers that they called *cabeceras* and that were surrounded by *pueblos sujetos*, that is, subordinate pueblos. In the *cabeceras* they broke up the native idols, pulled down pagan temples, and built their convents and parish churches, often using the ruins of destroyed pyramids as foundations. At first the magnitude of their mission forced them to resort to perfunctory instruction and mass baptisms, and on occasion they lured the natives with promises of food and protection." "On the question of the use of force, in 1559 a Dominican, Fray Palatino, published a learned treatise in which he reaffirmed that conversion must be accomplished by persuasion but allowed that, if the Indians refused to listen to the message, they could first be subjugated. This compromise suited King Philip's conscience, and in the following year he ordered it accepted in the Indies. Meanwhile, as in other matters, missionaries in the field adopted pragmatic solutions. They cajoled, bribed, threatened, and occasionally called on the secular arm to get the attention of the Indians and to induce them to listen. And they adopted a posture of stern paternalism toward neophytes who showed signs of relapse or laxity in attending services." McAlister, *Spain and Portugal in the New World*, 169-70.

¹¹⁷ See, for example, Philip Jenkins, *Laying Down the Sword: Why We Can't Ignore the Bible's Violent Verses* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2011), 133-35; and Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008), 120-21.

¹¹⁸ McGraw-Hill, *World History, Texas*, Ch. 9, "The Story Matters."

¹¹⁹ Ibid., Ch. 9, Lesson 2, p. 1.

¹²⁰ Paul L. Heck argues that jihad in the Qur'an "cannot be reduced to armed struggle. Virtually all instances of the root *j-h-d* speak primarily to the question of true intention and devotion (including, incidentally, those forms referring to oath-taking, for example, Q 5:53, *jahda aymānihim*). The term in

its various forms signifies a divine test (Q 47:31) to distinguish the lukewarm believers (Q 4:95; 9:81, 86) from those who desire God's satisfaction (Q 60:1) and strive body and soul in His way (Q 9:41, 88). *Jihad*, regardless of sphere of action, is a means of separating true belief from infidelity (Q 25:52) and of ranking the intention and merit of those who believe (Q 8:72–75). It is the mark of those who take up the mission of God without fear of blame or doubt (Q 5:54 and 49:15). Primarily at stake in the qur'ānic significance of *jihad* is not warfare per se but the degree of devotion to God's cause over concern for worldly affairs (Q 9:19, 24; 60:2)." Paul L. Heck, "Jihad Revisited," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 32:1 (2004): [95–128] 97–98.

¹²¹ Douglas E. Streusand, "What Does Jihad Mean?," *Middle East Quarterly* 4:3 (September 1997): 9–17.

¹²² McGraw-Hill, *World History, Texas*, Ch. 9 (Islam and Arab Empire), Lesson 2, p. 2.

¹²³ Ibid., Ch. 9 (Islam and Arab Empire), Lesson 3, p. 3.

¹²⁴ While the McGraw-Hill authors do note the persecutions of Jews that began in the Crusades period (Ibid., Ch. 12, Lesson 2, p. 4), Christian rulers began instituting restrictions on Jews at least as far back as the 500s CE. For instance, the Frankish Council of Mâcon (581/583) forbade Jews from serving as judges over Christians and restricted their behavior in other ways [Gregory Halfond, *Medieval Law and Its Practice: The Archaeology of Frankish Church Councils, AD 511-768* (Boston, NL: Brill, 2009), 102, 139]. Additionally, one Visigothic ruler of what is now Spain ordered the forced baptisms of Jews some time between 612 and 615. See Wolfram Drews, "Jews as Pagans? Polemical Definitions of Identity in Visigothic Spain," *Early Medieval Europe* 11:3 (2002) : [189–207] 190–91.

¹²⁵ Ibid., Ch. 7, Lesson 3, p. 9; see also Ch. 8, Lesson 1, p. 5; and Lesson 2, p. 2.

¹²⁶ Ibid., Ch. 8, Lesson 4, p. 5.

¹²⁷ Ibid., Ch. 8, Lesson 4, Resources (Biography of Charlemagne).

¹²⁸ Ibid., Ch. 17.

¹²⁹ Ibid., Ch. 17, Lesson 3, pp. 1–4.

¹³⁰ See *ibid.*, Ch. 17, Lesson 1, p. 7; and Ch. 21, Lesson 3, p. 6, and Lesson 4.

¹³¹ Texas Medical Board members are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Texas senate (Texas Administrative Code, Title 22, Part 9, Chapter 161, Rule §161.3). Members of the Texas State Board of Pharmacy are appointed by the governor, "with concurrence by the Senate" (<https://www.pharmacy.texas.gov/about/members.asp>). Members of the Texas Board of Professional Engineers are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Texas Senate (Texas Administrative Code, Title 22, Part 6, Chapter 131, Subchapter A, Rule §131.7).

¹³² Some aspects of these recommendations are adapted from the process used in California, discussed in California Department of Education, Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division, "Instructional Materials in California, An Overview of Standards, Curriculum Frameworks, Instructional Materials Adoptions, and Funding," May 2014, accessed March 3, 2016, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/documents/instrmatoverview2014.doc>.

¹³³ Modified from *ibid.*, 4–5.

¹³⁴ Some aspects of these recommendations are adapted from the process used in California, discussed in *ibid.*

¹³⁵ The authors write that "The rulers of the Byzantine Empire....encouraged people to adopt their religion, Christianity" [Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas Contemporary World Studies: People, Places, and Societies*, Teacher's Edition (2016), Unit 3, Ch. 13, Section 2, p. 316], leaving undefined the nature of that "encouragement." Similarly, in a section on Italy, the authors write that "the Romans helped spread Christianity," and that "Christianity arose and spread in the Roman Empire" (Unit 3, Ch. 13, Section 3, p. 320–21). Although the text notes that Charlemagne "built a powerful Christian empire," there is no mention of the role of violence against non-Christians (Unit 3, Ch. 14, Section 2, p. 338).

¹³⁶ Ibid., Unit 4, Ch. 21, Section 2, p. 513.

¹³⁷ Ibid., Unit 4, Ch. 20, Section 4, p. 496.

¹³⁸ Ibid., Unit 5, Ch. 22, Section 2, p. 546.

¹³⁹ McGraw-Hill, *World Cultures & Geography, Texas*, Unit 7, Ch. 17, Lesson 2, pp. 4–5. Contrast this with the account of the spread of Christianity: "Christianity, which became Europe's major religion, began in the eastern Roman Empire. It gradually spread throughout the empire. Once Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity in AD 312, Christianity began to spread quickly. By the time Rome's western empire fell in AD 476, Christianity was common throughout most of Western Europe" (Unit 5, Ch. 12, Lesson 2, p. 2). This account omits the fact that Christianity's rapid spread in

this period was due in part to the Roman state's active persecution of competing religions. A similar problem occurs in the discussion of Christianity's spread in Unit 5, Ch. 13, Lesson 2, p. 6.

¹⁴⁰ "The Byzantine and Persian empires were weak after centuries of warfare with each other. And many heretical Christian sects were unhappy about mistreatment by their Byzantine rulers. As a result, the Arab conquerors were able swiftly to create one of the world's greatest empires." Social Studies School Studies, Grade 6: Contemporary World Studies, North Africa and Southwest Asia—Southwest Asia, History Unfolding: The Empire of Islam, Teacher Guide, p. 8.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., North Africa and Southwest Asia—Southwest Asia, History Unfolding: The Empire of Islam, Introduction, The Rise of Islam.

¹⁴² That information is available, however, in another unit in the package (and thus available for assignment to students) but not listed in the Grade 6 Curriculum Map: Social Studies School Services, The Spread of Islam, Gathering the Facts.

¹⁴³ Social Studies School Services, Grade 6: Contemporary World Studies, Introduction to Culture—Diverse Groups, Human Geography: Understanding Human Culture: Religion (video).

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., Latin America—Mexico and Central America, Interact: Amigos: A Simulation of a Race through Latin America Developing Awareness of Its Lands, People, and History, Teacher Guide, Fact Sheets: Mexico and Central America.

¹⁴⁵ For example: "Both trade and conquest brought the religion of Islam to these regions. In the early AD 600s, Islam spread throughout the Arab world. An Arab empire expanded from Southwest Asia. This brought Islam to Azerbaijan and parts of Central Asia. Arabs conquered the Silk Road city of Bukhara, for example, in the early AD 700s" (Pearson Realize, *Contemporary World Cultures Texas Grade 6* (rev. f30be5c), Topic 5, Lesson 5, Text 1, p. 3); "In the AD 600s, the religion of Islam was first preached in Arabia. Followers of Islam are called Muslims. The first Muslims were Arabs. Arab Muslim armies quickly built an empire that stretched from Spain to Iran. North Africa was part of this empire. With the arrival of Arab Muslims from Southwest Asia, North Africa's religion, language, and culture were transformed." "Arab Muslim religious leaders and merchants came to North Africa. They build [sic] trading centers and mosques, or Islamic houses of worship. Many Arab migrants also came. They spread Islam to Egyptians and Berbers, the indigenous people of western North Africa. These migrants also helped spread the Arabic language throughout the region. Most North Africans converted to Islam, although many Jews and Christians continued to live in the region" (Ibid., Topic 6, Lesson 2, Text 2, p. 2).

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., Topic 4, Lesson 3, Text 1, p. 8.

¹⁴⁷ "The Franks expanded their empire and spread Christianity. Frankish rule reached its height under the king Charlemagne. He was crowned the first Holy Roman Emperor by Pope Leo III in 800." Ibid., Topic 4, Lesson 3, Text 2, p. 3.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., Topic 1, Lesson 8, Text 1, p. 5.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., Topic 2, Lesson 2, Text 1, pp. 3-4. Yet though the authors note that the encomienda system gave Spanish officials the right to enslave Indians in return for instructing them in Christianity, they write that the system "soon turned into a system of slavery without religious instruction." This is misleading, since encomienda would have been a system of slavery even *with* religious instruction. Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁵⁰ See Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas Contemporary World Studies*, Unit 2, Ch. 6, Section 2; McGraw-Hill, *World Cultures & Geography, Texas*, Unit 2, Ch. 4, Lesson 2, pp. 2, 5-6, and Review Question 6 ["Finding the Main Idea"]; Pearson Realize, *Contemporary World Cultures Texas Grade 6* (rev. f30be5c), Topic 1, Lesson 2, Text 1 and Text 2; and Social Studies School Services, Grade 6: Contemporary World Studies, Introduction to Culture—Diverse Groups, Human Geography: Understanding Human Culture: Religion (video)].

¹⁵¹ McGraw-Hill School Education LLC, *McGraw-Hill Education World Geography* (2014). All references are to the Student Edition unless otherwise noted.

¹⁵² On the Arabian Peninsula: "When Muhammad founded Islam, the new religion spread rapidly across the peninsula. Arab armies conquered Persia, much of the Byzantine Empire, North Africa, and Spain. Their military successes eventually ended, but Islam continued to diffuse across Asia and Africa" (Ibid., Unit 5, Ch. 18, Lesson 2, p. 4). How it "diffused" is left unsaid.

On North Africa: "In the AD 600s, invasions of Arab armies moved westward from the Arabian Peninsula. These invasions heavily influenced the cultures of North Africa. As Arab rule spread across North Africa, so did the Muslim religion" (McGraw-Hill, Unit 5, Ch. 15, Lesson 2, p. 2). This section

does note, however, that “Muslim and Jewish exiles fleeing persecution by the Spanish Inquisition infused Morocco with Spanish culture in the 1400s” (ibid.). This at least hints at the violence associated with Christian rule in Spain.

On Central Asia: “In the seventh through the ninth centuries, Arabs conquered such areas as Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. They brought Islam to the region. That religion later spread to other parts of the subregion” (Ibid., Unit 5, Ch. 19, Lesson 2, p. 2). How Islam spread to other parts is not specified.

I should note that this text quite appropriately discusses the peaceful spread of Islam in Africa and parts of Asia. See, e.g., Ibid., Unit 6, Ch. 20, Why Geography Matters, p. 1; and Ch. 22, Lesson 2, p. 1.

¹⁵³ Ibid., Unit 5, Ch. 16, Lesson 2, p. 2.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., Teacher’s Edition, Unit 5, Ch. 16, Lesson 2, “Theorizing About Religions.”

¹⁵⁵ “Northwestern Europe was profoundly influenced by Christianity, beginning with the arrival of the Romans and its inclusion in their empire” [Ibid. (Student Edition), Unit 4, Ch. 11, Lesson 2, p. 1]; “During Roman times, Christianity was established as the official religion of the empire, and this had long-lasting effects on the peoples and cultures of this subregion” (Ibid., Unit 4, Ch. 11, Lesson 2, p. 2).

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., Unit 3, Ch. 7, Lesson 2, p. 4. A similar disconnect between Spanish violence and the introduction of Catholicism occurs in the discussion of Central America and the Caribbean (ibid., Ch. 8, Lesson 2, pp. 1-2) and South America (ibid., Ch. 9, Lesson 2, p. 2).

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., Teacher’s Edition, Unit 3, Ch. 9, Lesson 2, “Identifying Cause of Catholicism as the Predominant Religion.” Another part of the same passage in Teacher’s Edition also suggests the Church’s complicity in violence against the Indian population: “Have students read the information about the spread of Christianity by Jesuit Catholic priests sent from Portugal to Brazil. As a class, discuss the king’s role in spreading Christianity and later spreading development inland. (*The king asked Jesuits to go to Brazil to convert the indigenous peoples to Christianity. Later the king’s ruling pushed slave hunters into Brazil’s interior to find indigenous peoples to enslave, which brought about inland development.*) Have students identify and define the impact of Christianity on the culture of the indigenous people. Ask: What were the pros and cons for indigenous peoples who converted to Christianity? (*Pro: They were protected from slavery. Con: They were forced to adopt religious beliefs that may have differed from their own.*)” (Ibid., Teacher’s Edition, Ch. 9, Lesson 2, “Drawing Conclusions About the Spread of Christianity.”) Once again, I could not find a similar discussion in the Student Edition.

¹⁵⁸ Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas World Geography*, Teacher’s Edition (2016), Unit 3, Ch. 10, Section 1, p. 219.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., Unit 3, Ch. 10, Section 1, p. 231.

¹⁶⁰ See McGraw-Hill, *World Geography, Texas*, Unit 2, Ch. 5, Lesson 2, p. 2; and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas World Geography*, Teacher’s Edition (2016), Unit 2, Ch. 6, Section 1.

¹⁶¹ Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas World History*, Teacher’s Edition (2016), Unit 3, Ch. 10, Section 1, p. 263.

¹⁶² Ibid., Unit 3, Ch. 10, Section 2, p. 269.

¹⁶³ See Heck, “Jihad Revisited,” 97-98.

¹⁶⁴ Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Texas World History*, Teacher’s Edition (2016), Unit 3, Ch. 10, Section 2, p. 269.

¹⁶⁵ The authors go on to note that Christians and Jews “paid a poll tax each year in exchange for exemption from military duties. However, they were also subject to various restrictions on their lives.” Ibid., Unit 3, Ch. 10, Section 2, p. 270.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., Unit 3, Ch. 10, Section 2, p. 270.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., Unit 2, Ch. 6, Section 2, p. 165, and Section 3, pp. 169-171; Unit 3, Ch. 11, Section 1, pp. 301-02.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., Unit 3, Ch. 13, Section 1, p. 354.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., Unit 3, Ch. 13, Section 1, p. 357.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., Unit 4, Ch. 20, Section 1, p. 558.

¹⁷¹ “Although the Spanish conquerors lived among the native people, they also oppressed them. In their effort to exploit the land for its precious resources, the Spanish forced Native Americans to work within a system known as *encomienda*. Under this system, natives farmed, ranched, or mined for Spanish landlords. These landlords had received the rights to the natives’ labor from Spanish authorities. The holders of *encomiendas* promised the Spanish rulers that they would act fairly and respect the workers. However, many abused the natives and worked many laborers to death,

especially inside dangerous mines.” Ibid., Unit 4, Ch. 20, Section 1, p. 557. The Glossary entries for *encomienda* and *encomienda* system (ibid., p. R4) also omit any mention of the Christianization aspect.

¹⁷² “Spanish priests worked to spread Christianity in the Americas. They also pushed for better treatment of Native Americans. Priests spoke out against the cruel treatment of natives. In particular, they criticized the harsh pattern of labor that emerged under the *encomienda* system. ‘There is nothing more detestable or more cruel,’ Dominican monk Bartolomé de Las Casas wrote, ‘than the tyranny which the Spaniards use toward the Indians for the getting of pearl [riches].’” Ibid., Unit 4, Ch. 20, Section 1, p. 559.

¹⁷³ Ibid., Unit 4, Ch. 20, Section 1, p. 559.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., Unit 4, Ch. 20, Section 2, p. 565.

¹⁷⁵ Pearson Realize, *World History Texas* (2005-12), Topic 7, Lesson 1, Text 2, p. 5.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., Topic 7, Lesson 1, Text 4, p. 2.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., Topic 8, Lesson 2, Text 3, p. 1.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., Topic 7, Lesson 1, Text 5, pp. 2. Similarly, in a video (Pearson, Topic 7, Lesson 1, Flipped Video: Western Europe after the Collapse of Rome), the narrator says that “Charlemagne wanted to bring Christianity to his kingdom. With the help of church missionaries, many people were converted to Christianity under Charlemagne’s rule.” There is no mention of the forced conversion of the Saxons.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., Topic 11, Lesson 3, Text 1, p. 2.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., Topic 11, Lesson 3, Text 4, p. 1.

¹⁸¹ See ibid., Topic 11, Lesson 4, Text 2.

¹⁸² Social Studies School Studies, Grade 10: World History, Development of Civilizations—Religion, Power Basics: The Middle East and the Rise of Islam: The Rise of Islam; and Post-Classical Era, The East—Tang, Song, and Islamic Caliphates, Atlas of World History: The Spread of Islam, Gathering the Facts.

¹⁸³ Ibid., Post-Classical Era, The East—Tang, Song, and Islamic Caliphates, History Unfolding: The Empire of Islam.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., Classical Era—Rome, The Historian’s Apprentice: What Does It Mean to Say Rome “Fell.” Also, another section on the Roman Empire incorrectly states that the Emperor Constantine “made Christianity the official religion of the empire” (Ibid., Classical Era—Rome, Power Basics: Rome: The Roman Empire). In fact, Christianity was not made the empire’s official religion until the later reign of Theodosius I.

¹⁸⁵ “The Byzantine Empire was a Christian empire. Its first emperors were Christian, and its official religion was Christianity. As the empire spread, so did Christianity. Missionaries converted the new members of the empire. In fact, the growth of Christianity under the Byzantines is one of the main reasons why Christianity is the most widespread religion today” (Ibid., Post-Classical Era: The West—Political, Power Basics: Europe in the Middle Ages: An Empire Divided—The East, Readings, The Byzantine Empire).

¹⁸⁶ “Justinian also did much to promote Christianity during this period. Although many religions were practiced in the Byzantine Empire, Justinian wanted to organize his empire under the one faith” (ibid., Post-Classical Era: The West—Political, Power Basics: Europe in the Middle Ages: An Empire Divided—The East, Readings, Justinian and Theodora).

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., Post-Classical Era: The West—Political, Everyday Life: Middle Ages: The Feudal System, Reading.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., Post-Classical Era: The West—Political, Power Basics: Europe in the Middle Ages: Life in the Middle Ages, Readings, The Church.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., Connecting Hemispheres—Expansion, History Unfolding: Age of Exploration: Explorers, Conquerors, Missionaries, Merchants, Introduction, The Age of Exploration; and ibid., Background Information on Illustrations 2A & 2B.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., Connecting Hemispheres—Expansion, History Unfolding: Age of Exploration: Explorers, Conquerors, Missionaries, Merchants, World History Activators: Cortes and Montezuma (Simulation), Postscript.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., Connecting Hemispheres—Expansion, History Unfolding: Age of Exploration: Explorers, Conquerors, Missionaries, Merchants, World History Activators: Cortes and Montezuma (Simulation), Postscript.