

Religion and Politics in Cuba; Before and After the Castro Revolution

By

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"Where do the contradictions between Christian teachings and socialist teachings lie? Where? We both wish to struggle on behalf of man, for the welfare of man,

for the happiness of man."Fidel Castro (1)

Rationale

As a teacher and life-long learner of the Spanish language and the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world, I am increasingly intrigued by the island nation of Cuba, a country that in my estimation is one of the least examined and least understood by my secondary Spanish students. When the recent controversy surrounding the Elián González case erupted and launched Cuba into the media spotlight, I realized just how little many of my students know about our Caribbean neighbor's history, politics and people. This can be attributed in part to the fact that many Spanish curriculums provide little if any exposure to Cuban culture, focusing instead upon Mexico, Spain and a few selected South American countries. In accordance with the aforementioned, I have chosen to use Cuba as the focus of my curriculum unit, and religion and politics as a means by which to study the diverse history and culture of the country.

Unit Objectives

My objectives in preparing and presenting this curriculum unit are primarily cultural, though some will also address linguistic ability and proficiency standards. First, I hope to stimulate an interest in Cuba by exposing students in a variety of manners to the country's rich culture and history. Secondly, I intend to help students make connections and comparisons with some of their own cultures by introducing them to the long-practiced Afro-Cuban religious traditions. Students will also be encouraged to examine the similarities and differences between religion-based cultural influences in Cuba and other Spanish-speaking countries throughout the world. The unit's accompanying lessons will incorporate activities that will encourage students to compare and contrast the state of religion in Cuba as it existed before and after the Castro revolution.

If this unit is to be effective, I feel it is imperative that one of its objectives be to dispel any erroneous preconceived ideas or misinformation that students may possess. To this end, I will make every effort to provide a variety of sources of information for students, and to present all information as objectively as possible. On a larger scale, it is my hope that by becoming more aware of and knowledgeable about unfamiliar cultural products and practices in the target cultures, my students will also develop an increased empathy and tolerance for those whose languages, cultures and personal beliefs differ from their own.

Lesson Design and Implementation

This unit is intended for use with the intermediate and/or advanced level Spanish curriculum for the 2000-2001 academic year. It could, however, be adapted for use in beginning level secondary classrooms. With slightly more adaptation, it could also be made appropriate for middle or secondary social studies classes. The activities included will require students to utilize a variety of methods and formats to both research and demonstrate their knowledge of the curriculum's content. Due to the historical and political elements of the

unit, it is meant to take an interdisciplinary approach to learning, and in doing so will address the district's content standards for the areas of Communications, Social Studies and World Languages.

Cultural Objectives and the Use of Target Language

The amount of focus given to the use of Spanish (which will henceforth be referred to as the target language) and the development of proficiency skills while using this unit is at the discretion of the individual instructor and is dependent upon the skill level of the students in the class. In a class of students who exhibit a significant level of proficiency, some of the elements of the unit could be presented as content-based lessons in the target language. Content based instruction refers to the concurrent teaching of language and content in other subject areas. The content of the lessons would in this case be of a cultural and historical nature, and would be presented and discussed in the target language. In lower-level classes, it would be impractical to experiment with content-based instruction of this unit. Though some amount of instruction could be conducted in the target language, it would be necessary to teach the majority of the lessons in the native language in order to achieve the unit's objectives, which are more cultural than linguistic for this very reason.

Length of Unit

Due to the amount of adaptation possible with this unit, I have not recommended an established length for its implementation. In accordance with the individual instructor's schedule, curriculum requirements and preferences, the sequencing and selection of the lessons and activities that this unit encompasses can be tailored to meet the needs and time constraints of each class individually. For my classes, I anticipate the full execution of this unit taking approximately three weeks, or 15 class periods.

Sequence of Lessons and Use of Supplemental Materials

The unit will begin with an overview of religion in Hispanic society. Students will use the Electric Library, various Internet web sites and selected readings to examine the history of Catholicism and native religions in the Hispanic world, as well as the evidence of religious influence upon contemporary Hispanic culture. Religious festivals and holidays, symbols and everyday practices will be examined at this time. Chapter 3 of the text "Literatura y Arte" may be used at this point to assist students in forming an initial understanding of the concepts of religion in the Hispanic world. The book offers an explanation of these concepts in the target language, as well as activities designed to ensure comprehension of the text. In addition, the text offers students a series of poems with religious and/or philosophical themes written by well-known Hispanic writers and presented in the target language. The chapter culminates with a brief introduction to the spiritually inspired paintings of El Greco.

In an effort to motivate students and subsequently assess their knowledge of the curriculum content, I will begin my introduction to Cuba with an informal pretest (refer to Appendix A) that will assess students' familiarity with the country, its people and its politics. This can be done as a written test-like activity, or as a trivia-type game presented as either a whole-class activity or a cooperative learning exercise. An informal whole-class discussion will be held as a follow-up to this activity with the objective of clarifying any questions students might have, and dispelling any misconceptions they may have with regard to the topic at hand.

The video "Cuba: Island of Dreams" would be suitable for viewing at this point, since it is evidently made to promote tourism to the island and portrays Cuba in a positive light. I feel that it is important to take this into consideration as I begin this unit. As I mentioned earlier, it is my intent to present this unit and its content in the most objective manner possible. The majority of the information students may have been exposed to through classroom instruction or the media will most likely have focused on the political tensions and poor relations that have existed for many years between the Cuban and the U.S. governments. In accordance with this input, some students may have developed a negative image of Cuba. While it is important and certainly necessary that students learn about the unfavorable political and economic conditions that have resulted from

Castro's socialist revolution, it is equally important that students be given the opportunity to see the beauty of the island and the rich culture and history of the people who call Cuba home.

Over the course of the past few years, I have had the opportunity to become acquainted with several Cuban-Americans. Together we have dedicated hours to the discussion of religion, politics and the struggles of daily life in contemporary Cuba. Each of these persons has left Cuba in search of freedoms of various sorts, or to avoid persecution for exercising freedom of speech or attempting to practice some form of free enterprise. Some were prisoners of conscience who were granted political asylum by the United States government. In spite of their denouncement of Cuba's current political policies and practices, however; all of these individuals share an unparalleled love for their country (meaning their land and its people). In my personal observation, the degree of their feelings of reverence and adoration for their homeland seems to be matched only by their animosity for Castro and his political regime. It is my hope and intention that my students develop and awareness of this type of love/hate relationship that many Cuban-Americans experience.

Students will next need to develop an understanding of and appreciation for Cuba's historical background and the relationship between church and state throughout the course of the island's history. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways. In my classes, students will begin by reading selected excerpts from John Kirks's Between God and the Party for summary and discussion. In lower-level classes, the historical time-line shown later in this narrative will be presented for study and discussion. In higher-level classes, students will be given the assignment of researching and creating their own time-line, using web sites and the Electric Library as well as resource texts.

Once students are able to demonstrate an understanding of Cuban religion and politics from an historical standpoint, they can begin to use this knowledge to develop their own perspectives and further expand their knowledge through research, analysis and debate. Along those lines, students will be given a choice of topics to research and will be required to share their findings with the class in the form of an oral presentation. Suggested topics will include: the Afro-Cuban Santería religion; the effect of the Bay of Pigs invasion upon church-state relations in Cuba, and religious resurgence in Cuba in the 1990's. In addition to these topics, students may also chose to research an important historical figure, such as Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara or José Martí.

Other activities will include, but not be limited to, a discussion and video of the Pope's 1998 visit to Cuba; a guest speaker from Cuba who will discuss the role of religion in everyday Cuban life, and a role-play and debate regarding the Elian González case.

As an optional culminating activity for level 3 and 4 classes, students could be responsible for completing a group project in which they collectively interview a native of Cuba currently residing in the Pittsburgh area and present both a written report and oral presentation of the information obtained from the interview. Through my affiliation with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Latin American Cultural Union and a network of friends from Latin America, I would be able to arrange the interviews for my students and accompany them if necessary. In order to address the World Language standard of conversing at the "Intermediate Low" level, the interviews and/or the oral presentations would be conducted in the target language to the extent that this is possible and/or practical.

Religious Presence in the Hispanic World

Religion's presence is strikingly evident in all aspects of public and private life in Hispanic countries throughout the world. When a child is born, for example, he is generally given the name of the Saint whose day is closest to his birthday. In addition to the person's birthday, he also celebrates the day of his saint. Examples such as these are extensive. Religion influences everything from education to politics in the Spanish-

speaking world; its impact is evident even in the language itself. The majority of Hispanic holidays and celebrations are also religious in nature.

The Catholic Church in most Hispanic countries has historically played a powerful role in society, exerting influence over political and social institutions alike. Since colonial times, the church has been a major player in the social arena for Hispanics, and has contributed significantly to the shaping of values and attitudes. The Catholic Church in Cuba, however, has in many points throughout history existed in sharp contrast to its more influential counterparts in Spain, Mexico and other Latin American countries.

Religious freedom, which has long been an issue in Cuba, is yet another reason for the ineffectual presence of the church throughout Cuban history. From the destruction of the religious beliefs of the indigenous peoples by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century to attempts to eradicate the Protestantism imported by foreign merchants three centuries later, religious intolerance was standard practice. Despite intensive efforts to eliminate the beliefs of these groups, however; neither Protestantism nor the Afro-Cuban religious traditions brought to Cuba by African slaves in the sixteenth century were ever able to be eradicated. In her 1989 essay on Catholicism in Cuba, Margaret E. Crahan states that *"By the mid-twentieth century, Cuba was not only the most religiously diverse, but also the most secular country in Latin America."* (2)

It is not surprising that Crahan describes Cuba as "the most secular country in Latin America." In contrast to that of its neighboring Latin American countries, the Cuban church has never been notably strong. The Catholic Church's activities for many years focused on the urban middle and upper classes, excluding a large portion of the Cuban population. This resulted in indifference toward the church among rural peasants and the working class. Radical social policies instituted by the Castro regime resulted in dissension between the church and the revolutionary government. Deteriorating diplomatic relations with the United States, compounded with Cuba's increasing economic dependence on the Soviet bloc further weakened already strained relations between the church and the government. In comparison to other Latin American countries then, Cuba has appeared for many years to be somewhat disinterested in organized religion.

Religion in Cuba

In my attempts to determine the approximate breakdown by percentage of adherents to the various religions practiced in Cuba, I have encountered a great deal of discrepancy. While some sources name Catholicism as the predominant religion, others say it is the Afro-Cuban religion Santería that is most widely practiced on the island. The percentages differ greatly from one source to the next, with estimates of the percentage of Catholics ranging from a meager 5% of Cuba's 11 million inhabitants to an impressive 90%, with several estimates ranging somewhere between those two extremes. In light of these inconsistencies, I have decided not to further document the statistical data I have found related to the above.

For the purpose of implementing this curriculum unit, I feel confident based upon my research in making the claim that Catholicism and Santería are the predominant religions in Cuba. While many sources suggest growth in Protestant religions, there has been no indication that the numbers of practicing Protestants has surpassed that of practicing Catholics.

Cuban Santería

While we will assume that Catholicism is a familiar term to most educators and students alike, Santería deserves some explanation.

Due to its African roots, Cuba can better be described as an Afro-Hispanic rather than a Latin American country. Despite the sometimes strained race relations among whites, blacks and mulattos, it can hardly be disputed that African culture has had a prevailing influence upon many areas of Cuban society, especially music, language and religion. As Raúl Canizares notes in his book "Cuban Santería", although the Santería

religion, like African culture in general, has remained discreetly covert, "its contributions to the Cuban ethos in music, language and folklore are immeasurable." (3)

Santería is an Afro-Cuban religion that has its roots in the Nile Valley in Africa. Brought to Cuba by African slaves in the 1700's, it has been defined as "the worship of African Gods as Catholic saints, a result of the transculturation process of the Cuban people and the religious syncretism resulting from such a process..." (4). A ritualistic faith characterized by spiritism, sacrifice and holistic healing, Santería has remained alive because of the ability of the Africans to disguise their ancient deities, or orishas, as Catholic saints.

Because Santería is often viewed as a primitive, backward religion, the majority of its adherents refrain from talking openly about it. Despite the religion's integration into Cuban society, most "santeros" do not wish to be publicly recognized. According to Canizares, even family members are often not aware that their own relatives are followers of the Santería religion. (5)

Historic Overview

In Between God and the Party; Religion and Politics in Revolutionary Cuba, author John Kirk challenges the reader to find an institution that has a richer historical tradition in Latin America than the Catholic church. He also asserts that few historical developments in recent times have had as far reaching influence throughout Latin America as the Cuban Revolution. "When these two diverse historical strands intertwined," he says "an extraordinary, fiery relationship resulted, as one would expect." (6)

Any study of Cuba commands an examination of the historical and political events that have shaped the country's rich history. In order for students to develop a clear understanding of the variable, often volatile relationship between the church and the Cuban government, it is necessary that they develop concurrently a general knowledge of the political history of Cuba, both before and after the Castro revolution unfolded. To this end, an historic timeline can be useful to both instructor and student alike. Depending upon the instructor's preference, it can either be given to students as a hand-out for study and discussion, or the students themselves may be assigned the task of researching and developing their own timeline, which may or may not include references to religion. See appendix II for a sample timeline.

Suggested Classroom Activities

For this section, I have chosen three activities that I believe effectively accomplish the objectives of the unit. As stated previously, the selection and sequencing of the following lesson plans is at the discretion of the individual instructor. Therefore, the order in which they are detailed below should be considered random and does not dictate the order in which they should be presented for all classes. It should also be noted that this list of activities is not comprehensive, and does not include all of the lessons that will be used in the implementation of this curriculum unit. In developing these lessons, I have tried to include activities that not only address national and district standards, but that will also foster higher order thinking skills and facilitate a cooperative learning environment in the classroom.

Lesson A ~ Religion in the Hispanic World

Rationale & Objectives

The purpose of this lesson is to give students some exposure to the beliefs, cultural products and practices that characterize religion in the Spanish-speaking world; and to establish a basic understanding of such. Students will be expected to accomplish the following objectives: Read and demonstrate comprehension of a text in the

target language; interpret the meaning of selected poetry in the target language; and compare and contrast the role of religion in target and native cultures.

Presentation and Procedure

Students will read selections from chapter three of *Literatura y Arte*. Because the suggested reading is in the target language, the teacher should begin with a brief introduction to the topic in the native language. In order to facilitate comprehension of the text, the teacher should present the new vocabulary needed, then instruct students to read the text the first time in pairs, making a list of cognates as they read. The students should then be instructed to read the text two or three more times to ensure comprehension. When the students have finished reading, they should form small groups and together discuss the reading and try to answer the series of comprehension questions the book provides. When each group has finished, the teacher can then lead a whole-class discussion about the topic. During the discussion, the teacher should encourage students to think about and draw conclusions regarding the similarities and differences that exist between religion in the native and target cultures.

Applicable Standards for Lesson A

Communications 2, 3, 4; World Languages 1; Arts and Humanities (1, 2)

Lesson B ~ The History of Church/State Relations in Cuba

Rationale & Objectives

This lesson will help students explore the complex relationship between church and state as it has existed and evolved since the introduction of institutionalized religion to Cuba in the late 15th century. The information students will examine will help them understand the reciprocal influence politics and religion have had and continue to have upon one another.

Presentation and Procedure

Students will examine information from two sources for this lesson; the Internet and the book God and the Party: Religion and Politics in Revolutionary Cuba. Of all of the books and materials I have reviewed in the course of creating this unit, I have found that this one offers the most comprehensive examination of the history of Cuban church/state relations. Students will read and discuss selected sections of the book, focusing primarily upon the changes in church/state relations that resulted from the Castro revolution, and the issue of religious freedom both before and after the installation of the socialist regime. They will be encouraged to pay special attention to the effect of the Bay of Pigs invasion on such relations, and discussion time will be devoted to this particular theme. In addition to examining the book, students will also research this topic via selected Internet sites and through the use of the "Electric Library" resources available at Oliver High School. Their task will be to create a timeline illustrating the major events and situations that characterized the history of church/state relations in Cuba.

Applicable Standards for Lesson B

Communications 2, 3, 4; Citizenship 1, 4

Lesson C ~ The Pope in Cuba

Rationale & Objectives

This is admittedly one of my favorite activities for this unit, primarily because it encourages students to use analytical and higher order thinking skills for the purpose of forming opinions and drawing logical conclusions. Students will be expected to review information presented by the national media regarding Pope John Paul II's 1998 visit to Cuba, and use this information to develop various types of presentations. It is reasonable to allow four to five days for this lesson to be executed in its entirety.

Presentation and Procedure

This lesson will use print and electronic media as the primary sources of information. Students will first be shown a variety of headlines from selected newspaper and magazine articles covering the Pope's visit. In groups, the students will discuss the meaning of the headlines and make general predictions regarding the editorial content of the articles. They will also be assigned the task of creating an alternative headline for each article. Each group will then delegate a member to present its ideas and predictions, and a whole-class discussion should ensue. During the discussion, the instructor should encourage the groups to compare and contrast their predictions and headline ideas.

For the next part of this lesson, students will use the Internet and the Electric Library to access various news organizations and publications and search for relevant stories. Their task will be to find an array of published pieces that discuss a number of issues related to the papal visit. Once they have gathered and reviewed the information, they will be given the assignment of producing two pieces of writing from a reporter's viewpoint. For the first piece they will be told to write as if they were a reporter for a major metropolitan newspaper. They will write an article that discusses the expectations of the Pope, Fidel Castro and the Cuban people, and predict to some degree whose expectations are most likely to be met by the Pope's visit and why. For the next piece of writing, students will be instructed to write as if they were the Editor of that same publication. They will be given the following scenario:

You are the editor of the Miami Herald. In light of the upcoming visit of Pope John Paul II to Cuba, you have received several letters recently from Cuban-Americans who feel that the Pope should not visit Cuba because Fidel Castro is an atheist who is only welcoming the Pope to his country to further his own political agenda. Write an editorial addressing their concerns.

After the writings are complete, students will then be shown a video segment taken from an episode of ABC's Nightline that aired shortly before the Pope's 1998 visit to Cuba. The video reveals some of the expectations of the people with regard to the Pope's visit, and discusses the issues facing the people of Cuba today. While viewing the video segment, students can compare what they learn with the expectations they predicted in their writings. Since the issue of personal and political freedom in Cuba is discussed in this video, it is appropriate to devote some time at this point to the discussion of this topic. There is also some commentary regarding the U.S. embargo against Cuba; this provides yet another interesting topic for discussion and debate.

As a culminating activity for this lesson, students will be given the task of organizing a debate about the possibility of lifting the embargo. For the purpose of this activity, each class will be divided into four groups, each representing a different viewpoint with respect to the embargo. The groups represented will be: the United States government, the Cuban government, the people of Cuba and Cuban-Americans residing in the United States. Students will be taken to the library first to gather research about the embargo. They will then be given one or two class periods to develop their arguments for the debate.

Applicable Standards

Communications 2, 3, 4; Citizenship 1, 4, 5

Appendix I

Pre-test for Introduction to Unit

Nombre _____

Answer the following questions to the best of your ability. If you are unsure of an answer, take an educated guess. Don't worry.....you will not be graded on your answers, HOWEVER, you will receive credit for answering all 10 questions. ¡Buena Suerte!

Cuba is located approximately 90 miles off the coast of what U.S. state?

Who is the current leader of Cuba?

How would you describe Cuba's political/economic system?

Whose 1998 visit to Cuba was covered extensively by the U.S. media?

What is an embargo? Which U.S. president initiated the embargo against Cuba?

What food crop is Cuba known for?

What does a "typical" Cuban look like, dress like?

What is the official language of Cuba?

What is the most widely practiced religion in Cuba?

What country was Cuba's primary source of economic aid during the 60's and 70's?

Appendix II

Historic Timeline of Church/State Relations

October, 1492 Columbus first sighted the island of Cuba

1512 The Spaniards began establishing settlements in Cuba

Late 1400's Institutional religion was introduced to Cuba by the Spanish Conquistadors

1650 By this time the indigenous population and their religious beliefs had been almost completely eradicated

1750 - 1850 During this period, the church grew in numbers and strength, to

a large degree due to the vast number of Spanish immigrants who came as a result of the great increase in sugar cane production. Plantation owners turned to enslavement of Africans to support the expanding sugar industry. By 1827, enslaved Africans accounted for almost half of the Cuban population.

1810 and 1812 Major slave rebellions took place during these years. The church's position against slavery was generally ignored by the Catholic population.

1842 The "Reglamento de esclavos" was developed, partly due to church pressure. This code outlined owners' obligations towards slaves.

1869 Spain rejected an offer by the United States to purchase Cuba for \$100 million.

Early 1898 President McKinley warned of U.S. intervention if the Spanish failed to grant Cuba its independence.

February 15, 1898 The U.S.S. Maine blew up in Havana Harbor

April 24, 1898 The U.S. declared war on Spain

1899 - 1902 Period of U.S. occupation of Cuba. During this time, General

Brooke (then military governor of Cuba) instituted new laws

to transfer power from the church to the state. Among the

new measures were the establishment of civil marriages as the

only legally binding act, the prohibiting of religious education

in public schools and the separation of religion from hospitals.

1902 The U.S. recognized Cuba's independence, but instituted the

Platt Amendment, which gave the U.S. the right to intervene militarily under certain circumstances.

1920 onward By the 1920's, U.S. companies controlled two-thirds of Cuba's

farmland, including the lucrative sugar industry. Corruption was widespread, and Cuba gained a reputation for prostitution and pornography.

1930 onward Fulgencio Batista, a sergeant in the Cuban army, became

increasingly powerful in Cuban politics.

1952 Batista seized power as dictator of Cuba. Supported by the

U.S. government, he protected U.S. business interests while in power, while building a huge fortune for himself. Under Batista's dictatorship the Cuban economy deteriorated, and its assets were increasingly placed in foreign hands. The middle and lower classes, the majority of Cuba's population, hated and feared the Batista dictatorship.

1956 Fidel Castro began a revolutionary movement by forming a

guerrilla army based in the Sierra Maestra mountains. The movement received widespread support from the Cuban people, church officials and the U.S. government, who ceased the supply of arms to Batista in hopes of ending the dictatorship.

1958 Batista fled to the Dominican Republic, taking as much of the

national treasury with him as he could.

January 1959 Fidel and his revolutionary army entered Havana. In February,

a new Cuban government was declared, with Castro as leader. The Christian sector was ecstatic, especially the Catholics, since Castro was one of their own. He promised to introduce religion into the national school system for the first time in Cuba's history.

April 1959 Castro traveled to the U.S. in search of economic assistance

from the U.S. government. The Eisenhower administration refused to support the new government in Cuba.

May 1959 Castro signed the agrarian reform law, eliminating giant estates

and turning confiscated lands of more than 1,000 acres over to small, private holders and cooperatives. Critics in Cuba and abroad were quick to recognize this measure as the first step toward communism. Many wealthy Cubans turned against the new government. Thousands left the island, mostly for Miami.

1960 By the end of 1960, less than two years after Castro took power,

the early optimism the church had felt was replaced by discouragement and despair. A separation of church and state seemed inevitable. Tensions between church and state stemmed from three major issues; sweeping socioeconomic reforms,

developing relations with the communist and atheist U.S.S.R.,

and the church's support of the U.S. system and condemnation of atheistic communism.

May 1960 The archbishop of Santiago delivered a controversial document

denouncing communism as the most powerful enemy of

Christianity and warning Cubans of the communist threat

to Cuban society.

Summer 1960 By this time, church-state polarization was complete. Masses

were held to celebrate the anniversary of General Franco's

victory over communism in Spain. Following the masses,

supporters and opponents of the revolution met in bloody

confrontations. Bombs were planted at some churches.

Relations between Cuba and the Soviet-bloc countries

continued to strengthen.

April 1961 Supported by the CIA, a group of Cuban exiles invaded Cuba at

the Bay of Pigs. The invasion lasted only two days, during

which time 1,180 of the 1,297 men involved in the invasion were taken prisoner. Rather than overthrow Castro, the failed attempt resulted in even greater support for the Castro regime. The involvement of three Spanish priests in the invasion caused Castro to determine that there existed a Catholic conspiracy against the government. Following the Bay of Pigs, all bishops and most priests were placed under house arrest. Castro forced all foreign priests to leave the island, and many others opted for voluntary exile. The Catholic church was left relatively powerless.

1961 President Kennedy imposed an economic embargo on the island

In the face of U.S. opposition, Cuba turned to the Soviet Union

for economic support.

1961 Cuban missile crisis

April 16, 1961 Castro publicly declared the socialist nature of the revolution,

causing great concern among conservative Christians.

1971 During a tour in Chile, Castro defined the similarities between

Marxist and Christian ethics, and expressed support for

religion as a means of improving social conditions.

1979 -1987 The church showed increasing support for the government and

the socialist objectives of the revolution, though not for the agenda of the Communist Party.

1990's Religion experienced a new resurgence during the last decade.

All religions experienced some degree of growth. Pentecostal and Santería activities have increased significantly.

1991 The Communist Party Congress (CPC) decided to admit

practicing Catholics as party members

1992 A constitutional amendment officially changed Cuba from an

atheist to a "lay" state.

1997 Castro declared Christmas an official holiday for the first time

since 1969.

1998 Pope John Paul II visited Cuba and celebrated mass in the Plaza

of the Revolution.

Appendix III

Content Standards

The present curriculum unit has been developed in accordance with the content area standards as established by the Pittsburgh Board of Education in support of the National Education Standards proposed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Because of the interdisciplinary focus of this unit, the lessons and activities of which it is composed address standards in a variety of content areas. Specifically, the areas of Communications, World Languages, Arts and Humanities and Civics (Social Studies) are addressed in this unit. The following is a list of the standards from each of the aforementioned content areas that are supported in the lessons involved in this curriculum unit:

Communications

1. All students use effective research and information management skills, including locating primary and secondary sources of information with traditional and emerging library technologies.

All students read and use a variety of methods to make sense of various kinds of complex texts.

All students respond orally and in writing to information and ideas gained by reading narrative and informational texts and use the information and ideas to make decisions and solve problems.

All students write for a variety of purposes, including to narrate, inform and persuade, in all subject areas.

All students analyze and make critical judgments about all forms of communication, separating fact from opinion, recognizing propaganda, stereotypes and statements of bias, recognizing inconsistencies and judging the validity of evidence.

All students exchange information orally, including understanding and giving spoken instructions, asking and answering questions appropriately, and promoting effective group communications.

8. All students compose and make oral presentations for each academic area of study that are designed to persuade, inform, or describe.

World Languages

All students converse, at a minimum level of "Intermediate Low," as defined in the oral proficiency guidelines developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, in at least one language other than English, including the native language if other than English.

Arts and Humanities

All students evaluate and respond critically to works from the visual and performing arts and literature of various individuals and cultures, showing that they understand the important features of the works.

All students relate to various works from the visual and performing arts and literature to the historical and cultural context within which they were created.

Citizenship (Social Studies)

All students demonstrate an understanding of major events, cultures, groups and individuals in the historical development of Pennsylvania, the United States and other nations, and describe themes and patterns of historical development.

All students demonstrate understanding of themes and patterns of geography, know the location of major bodies of water, land masses and nations, and describe the relationships between geography and historical, economic and cultural development.

All students describe the development and operations of economic, political, legal and governmental systems in the United States, assess their own relationships to those systems, and compare them to those in other nations.

All students examine and evaluate problems facing citizens in their communities, state, nation and world by incorporating concepts and methods of inquiry of the various social sciences.

All students develop and defend a position on current issues confronting the United States and other nations, conducting research, analyzing alternatives, organizing evidence and arguments, and making oral presentations.

8. All students demonstrate that they can work effectively with others.

Notes

1 As quoted in John M. Kirk's *Between God and the Party; Religion and Politics in Revolutionary Cuba*.

2 Paul Sigmund, ed. *Religious Freedom and Evangelization in Latin America*, 87.

3 Raúl Canizares, *Cuban Santería*, 24.

4 Juan J. Sosa. *La Santería: A Way of Looking at Reality*, M.A. thesis (Boca Raton, Florida: Florida Atlantic University, 1981), 101

5 Raúl Canizares, *Cuban Santería*, 26.

6 John M. Kirk, *Between God and the Party; Religion and Politics in Revolutionary Cuba*.

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