

HAF Public Comments Submitted and Publisher Responses – TX Proclamation 2015 – DISCOVERY EDUCATION

PASSAGE/TERM	COMMENT	PUBLISHER RESPONSE
<p>World Geography and Cultures> Regions in the Eastern Hemisphere> South Asia</p>		
<p>8.1 Geography of South Asia</p>		
<p>Model Lesson</p>		
<p>Video segment: "Introducing India"</p>	<p>Map of India shown at the start of the video excludes the state of Kashmir. Kashmir is not its own country as indicated by some of the maps. Also the internationally recognized Line of Control is not properly depicted.</p>	<p>Video will be removed. This will not impact TEKS or ELPS alignment</p>
<p>Explore</p>		
<p>First Map on slide 7</p>	<p>The religious distributions have some inaccuracies. Kashmir is mostly Muslim, not Hindu, Punjab is majority Sikh and Hindu, not Muslim, and Hindu population of Bangladesh is overrepresented and incorrectly centralized on the northwest of the country, rather than just the extreme north, and southwest of the country.</p>	<p>Maps will be redrawn with correct boundaries and demographic information.</p>
<p>Remaining Maps</p>	<p>Map of India shown at the start of the video excludes the state of Kashmir. Kashmir is not its own country as indicated by some of the maps. Also the internationally recognized Line of Control is not properly depicted.</p>	<p>Maps will be redrawn using the correct boundary lines of Kashmir.</p>
<p>8.2 Human-Environment Interaction in South Asia</p>		
<p>Slide 1 - India hyperlink: "Buddhism and Jainism also arose in India. Islam, which was imported by traders, spread during a period of Muslim rule. However, all three are minority religions in modern India, along with Christianity." " Within the Hindu caste system, are four hereditary classes. People are divided according to degrees of religious purity and social status. A fifth class, the untouchables—or Dalits—may be considered too impure to be anything but outcasts. Although it is illegal to discriminate against the Dalits, many face prejudice and oppression. An increasing number are converting to other religions to escape the menial jobs and injustices they face."</p>	<p>Our reviewers believe that this doesn't sufficiently explain the waves of Islamic contact with India prior to the formalization of Mughal rule. An example is from the autobiography of Timur, who founded the Timurid dynasty at the end of the 14th century, and boasted that his army killed 100,000 Hindus in a single day. This is inaccurate and deeply problematic: Caste did play a role in Indian society, particularly as it became more formalized, but linking caste with Hinduism - particularly core Hindu philosophies - greatly undermines two important historical truisms: rigidity of caste was far from universal, even in later time periods, and caste was not uniquely (and still is not) Hindu.</p>	<p>This Glossary Term (India) will be rewritten to add depth and clarity, both to historic events and to the nature of caste throughout time.</p>
<p>Hinduism hyperlinked reference term on slide 3 in introduction of the Ganges River http://app.discoveryeducation.com/glossary/reference/templateId/term/guid/d314d802-1671-41ed-a6e0-c2cbcd7a54d2#/templateId=term&guid=d314d802-1671-41ed-a6e0-c2cbcd7a54d2</p>	<p>This entire section is problematic. 1. The section begins with an explanation of the debunked Aryan Invasion Theory. 2. The Hindu understanding of God is not fully accurate. Brahman is referred to as just Brahman, not with a "the" preceding it. The other gods are understood by most Hindus as manifestations of Brahman. The way it is presented does not reflect this. 3. While karma and reincarnation are oversimplified, the critical concepts of dharma and moksha are not included. This leaves the student with an incomplete understanding of four of the key concepts in Hinduism. 4. Caste did play a role in Indian society, particularly as it became more formalized, but linking caste with Hinduism - particularly core Hindu philosophies - greatly undermines two important historical truisms: rigidity of caste was far from universal, even in later time periods, and caste was not uniquely (and still is not) Hindu. 5. Could provide more info on the Vedas.</p>	<p>This Glossary Term (Hinduism) will be rewritten to provide more depth and clarity. We will clarify Brahman, add information on moksha and dharma, and make additional edits to ensure accuracy and nuance.</p>
<p>Reading Passages: Cultural Study: The Ganges</p>		
<p>Akbar believed the water to be holy, calling it "the water of immortality."</p>	<p>It would be worth mentioning that Akbar was a non-Hindu as the entire focus of the piece is on the importance of the Ganges to the Hindus, the natural assumption would be that Akbar was a Hindu</p>	<p>We do not believe this to be a factual error. However, we will edit the text of the passage to clarify that Akbar was a Muslim ruler.</p>
<p>Explore</p>		

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One of the first great civilizations in the world began in the Indus River valley more than 4,600 years ago. It was located in the northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent, in what is now Pakistan.	A more recent term for this civilization is the Indus-Saraswati civilization, as it did not only rest on the Indus, but also on the now dry Saraswati basin. Also, as the map on this page shows, many of the Indus-Saraswati sites are located in modern day India as well as Pakistan.	We will edit the text to use the more common name.
Reading Passages: Connection to Current Times: India's Caste System		
General comment	This entire section would benefit from detailed rewriting to reflect more recent scholarship on caste. It is premised on the archaic version of the Aryan Invasion theory. It makes an unnuanced conflation of the Hindu Varna concept, and the socially constructed Jati concept. It portrays the caste system as mostly changeless over thousands of years. None of these ideas are accepted by mainstream historians and anthropologists.	We will remove this Reading Passage. This will not impact TEKS or ELPS alignment.
Most historians believe that the caste system...	Most historians don't believe that. This was based on a 19th century belief that the Aryans were foreign invaders who established caste to separate groups. Today, most historians and archaeologists (J.M. Kenoyer and J. Schaeffer, just to name a few) agree that there is no evidence to support an Aryan invasion, and not much evidence suggesting a mass migration. Even assuming Aryan migration, the use of caste to divide Aryan from non-Aryan populations has been debunked by genetic studies, and is not supported by scriptural evidence.	We will remove this Reading Passage. This will not impact TEKS or ELPS alignment.
The caste system is based on the beliefs of Hinduism...	As mentioned, the caste system that came into being did not emerge from Hindu beliefs, nor was it exclusively Hindu. As scholars of Sikhism, Islam, and Christianity in India note, the division of society among jatis led to the formation of many caste systems across the Indian subcontinent. For further reference see: http://www.sikhcastes.com/ , Fuller and Ballhatchet's work on caste and Indian Christians, and Sikand's work on Indian Muslims. This passage implies that the Hindu concept of Varna is the primary unit of classification within castes, when in fact that is the Jati.	We will remove this Reading Passage. This will not impact TEKS or ELPS alignment.
Hinduism allowed for the creation of India's caste system, a social system in which an individual's social standing is determined by his or her birth.	Actually, the caste system - as presently defined - has nothing to do with Hinduism, or at least what the Vedas envisioned.	We will remove this Reading Passage. This will not impact TEKS or ELPS alignment.
There is also a fifth group in Indian society...	Dalits, Harijans, or Scheduled Castes have no origins or sanction in Hinduism. This was an Indian social practice that became conflated with Hinduism because of the make up the South Asian population pre-Islamic invasion and the colonial era.	We will remove this Reading Passage. This will not impact TEKS or ELPS alignment.
Although the caste system has existed for thousands of years...	This conveys the idea that caste remained unchanged from ancient India, until the 1900s. This isn't the case. the Varna system of Vedic civilization was very different from the system arose from the Jati system in later centuries, and also varied widely by region. Caste underwent a period of rigidification during the colonial period, which was subsequently relaxed in the 1900s.	We will remove this Reading Passage. This will not impact TEKS or ELPS alignment.
Another person, Mohandas Gandhi, drew attention to the unfairness of the caste system	The fact that Gandhi was a devout Hindu should be mentioned, along with the fact that he was part of a long tradition within Hinduism of anti-caste reformism. This tradition also includes Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna, Dayananda Saraswati, and Vivekananda, and takes influence from the Hindu Bhakti movement, which ignored caste, and from Upanishadic philosophy which critiques priestly privilege and preaches the equality of all souls.	We will remove this Reading Passage. This will not impact TEKS or ELPS alignment.
8.3: People and Culture of South Asia		
<i>Explore</i>		

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Between 2000 BCE and 1500 BCE, a group of Indo-Aryan speakers from central Asia came to India. These groups brought their different language, culture, and technology with them. They spread across India. Over time, the Indo-Aryan culture mixed with the native culture.	The current status of these claims are under dispute by historians, and are constantly being revised. Insert qualifier to indicate uncertainty.	We will insert a qualifier as requested.
Within the British colony, most people were Hindu. Muslims, who believe in only one god, were the minority in India.	The implication is that Hindus believe in many gods. This is true in the sense that Hindus have many deities, but most Hindus believe in a single divine consciousness which encompasses all deities. This section does not seem like the place to discuss the differences between Hindu and Muslim theology.	We will remove this Reading Passage. This will not impact TEKS or ELPS alignment.
In the decades since independence, there have been attacks in both nations against each minority religious group. These hostilities have kept the relationship between the two faiths difficult. There are militant Hindu groups in India who have attacked Muslims. Religious riots in India have taken place regularly. In Pakistan, Muslim extremists have perpetrated terrorist acts. For example, in 2010, there was a terrorist attack in Mumbai, India. A Pakistan-based Islamic extremist group took credit for the violence there.	This passage draws a false equivalence between Hindu violence perpetrated on Muslims, and Muslim violence perpetrated on Hindus. The Hindu communities in Pakistan and Bangladesh barely exist any longer, while India maintains a healthy Muslim minority which has access to the legal system. The Mumbai attack was in 2008.	We will correct the date of the terrorist attacks and add information to convey the demographic shifts at partition.
Hinduism developed thousands of years ago. It was inspired in part by the religion of the Aryans, light-skinned invaders from the north who shared an Indo-European language.	This is a very archaic view and factually inaccurate. Mainstream historians refrain from speculating on the skin color of Aryans.	We will remove reference to skin tone or other racial aspects of Aryans.
Karma is similar to Western concepts of fate. It is the idea that an individual's actions, good or evil, will affect their future lives.	Karma is not analogous to fate. Karma depends on the exercise of choice and free will. Fate in Sanskrit is "niyati". Hindus disputed with Ajivikas in ancient times, because the latter believed in niyati while the former believed in Karma.	We will revise this description of karma to emphasize free will.
Hinduism also adopted the Aryan caste system. This is a social system in which an individual's social position is determined by his or her birth. That social position cannot be changed. Someone who is born to a lower class can never move up the social ladder. By the same token, someone from the upper class cannot move down. The highest class is the Brahmins, followed by the Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Sudras. Lower than all these are the Dalit, also called the "untouchables." Untouchables do the lowest, dirtiest jobs.	This is confusing and incorrect. The Aryan varna system is a part of Hinduism, but this is immediately conflated with the rigidity normally associated with the Jati system. The idea that caste is immutable doesn't reflect either the varna theory, or the practice of jati. Hindu legal texts contain many instances of when a "high caste" Hindu will lose his status, and scripture contains several key instances of "low caste" persons becoming Brahmins. Historically, groups frequently change the Varna classification of their Jati, in accordance with their increase or decrease in political and economic power.	We will revise this text to add accuracy, clarity, and depth.
People from north-central and northwestern India are similar to Europeans from the Caucasus region and people of southwestern and central Asia. The Caucasus region is in southern Europe.	This is outdated by at least two decades. Modern genetic studies show that Indian, particularly north Indian populations have much more in common with one another than with any group external to India. There have been at least eight studies conducted since the late 1990s that disprove the genetic link between Caucasus and South Asia. For one such example, see: http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/Aryan-Dravidian-divide-a-myth-Study/articleshow/5053274.cms	We will modify this description to remove references to racial similarities
Hindus, however, are strict vegetarians	Only about 20 percent of Hindus are vegetarians, though most do not eat beef	This passage has been updated for accuracy.
Since the 1980s, Bollywood has made movies such as Salaam Bombay!, Monsoon Wedding, and Slumdog Millionaire.	None of these films are Bollywood films. They were all produced by UK film companies.	We will update this sentence to clarify that the named movies are European movies inspired by Bollywood and to name popular Bollywood movies.
8.4: Government and Economy of South Asia		
Explore		
Mohandas Gandhi was born in Porbander, India, in 1869. He studied law in England. He then returned to India.	It might be worth mentioning somewhere in this section that Gandhi was a devout Hindu who was inspired by Hindu ideals like nonviolence and fighting to uphold righteousness	We do not believe that this is a factual error. However, we will edit the text to underscore Gandhi's religion and the influence of his religion on his beliefs and actions.
Pakistan was created for the Muslims. Pakistan is in the northwest section of what was once India, where most Muslims lived.	True on a modern map, but ignores that Bangladesh was a part of Pakistan in 1947	We will change this sentence to include the history of Bangladesh.

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<p>8.5: Modern Issue Analysis: Keeping Up With Growth</p>		
<p>Explore</p>		
<p>For centuries, India's social order was based on a caste system. People were born into a caste. They died as part of their caste. There was no movement either upward or downward. A person's job largely depended on his or her caste. So did economic opportunities. The lowest group in Indian society is the Dalits, or untouchables.</p>	<p>This, again, repeats the archaic and discredited notion that India's caste system is more or less historically static.</p>	<p>This passage will be modified for additional clarity and depth on caste in modern Indian society.</p>
<p>http://app.discoveryeducation.com/player/view/assetGuid/a822a65d-07a8-4e86-949f-900e1d128af8</p>	<p>To link Hinduism with a social practice would be tantamount to linking any of the other religions with social practices (which Discovery doesn't do). Caste is an important concept to understand, but making it a prominent part of the discussion of Hinduism is simply inaccurate. Moreover, a student watching these videos wouldn't know any of the key Hindu philosophical concepts such as dharma, karma, moksha or ahimsa</p>	<p>This video will be removed and replaced with several newer video segments that outline dharma and other key philosophical concepts.</p>
<p>Hindus believe that this process continues until a person achieves salvation. At that point the individual soul unites with Brahma, the absolute soul, and reincarnation ends.</p>	<p>It would have been worthwhile to mention moksha, which is what this text describes as salvation. Moreover, there's a spelling error: Brahman and Brahma are different.</p>	<p>The text will be modified to name moksha and portray it accurately.</p>
<p>Its origins are unclear, but it is believed that Indo-Europeans invaded the Indian subcontinent around 1500 BCE.</p>	<p>Invaded is a term that no one uses anymore. Even the early proponents of AIT, such as Michael Witzel and Romila Thapar, have backed away from those claims</p>	<p>This will be modified for clarity and depth.</p>
<p>The Indo-Europeans, once called Aryans but now known as Vedic people, are believed to have practiced a religion similar to Hinduism.</p>	<p>Most scholars agree it's accurate to say an early form of Hinduism, since the Vedas are the basis for Hindu philosophy</p>	<p>This will be modified to show the development of Hinduism from the Vedas.</p>
<p>Hindus believe that the Brahman can be found in all things and in all people. Hindus also worship other gods, including Vishnu, the protector and preserver; Shiva, the destroyer and restorer; and Shakti, the mother goddess.</p>	<p>Shiva, Vishnu, etc. are considered by most Hindus to be representations of Brahman.</p>	<p>As noted earlier, this will be modified to clarify Brahman and the role of other deities.</p>
<p>The doctrine of karma determines whether a person will be reborn as a higher being or a lower being.</p>	<p>Karma is NOT doctrinal.</p>	<p>The description of karma will be changed to show that it is not doctrinal.</p>

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PASSAGE/TERM	COMMENT	PUBLISHER RESPONSE
<i>World Cultures and Geography</i>		
<i>Chapter: History of South Asia (?)</i>		
<p>Varnas were social classes. At the top were priests, called Brahmins. At the bottom were laborers and peasants. The varna system had a deep impact for generally could not move from one social class to another.</p>	<p>Varnas and jatis are two different things. What you are describing here is jati, which is a birthright system based on occupation. Varnas, as described by vedas, are social classes based on temperament. As numerous scholars note (and the Hindu epics themselves point out), one was able to be different varnas based on temperament. There was no hierarchy until MUCH later in Indian history.</p>	<p>MHE proposes rewriting this editorial revision only because it is written at too high a level for Grade 6 students. To ensure sixth grade readability, we propose: "Varnas were social classes. They included Brahmins, or priests. There were also Kshatriyas, who were warriors. The Vaisyas were merchants, and the Sudras were laborers. The Hindu sacred writings, the Vedas, explained that a person's varna was based on what best suited him or her. Over time, however, the jati system began to shape how Indian society was organized. This system was based on the work a person did. It imposed restrictions on what people could do and how they related to each other. It led to the social system known as the caste system."</p>
<p>The Aryan legacy included a strict social class system called the varna system.</p>	<p>As noted earlier. And this wasn't an "Aryan" legacy, especially in light of evidence that points to social groupings and the Vedic period not being one of Aryan conquest, but the intermingling of cultures that helped to develop ancient Indian society</p>	<p>We will make this revision</p>
<p>Hinduism has no one founder, no one holy book, and no commonly agreed set of beliefs.</p>	<p>Not entirely true. Concepts such as dharma, moksha, and karma are very much consensus among all of the major Hindu traditions. Their interpretations and practice, however, do differ.</p>	<p>We will make this revision</p>
<p>Under Mughal rule, many South Asians converted to Islam.</p>	<p>This doesn't state why. The jizya was a tax levied on non-Muslims. Many Hindus converted because they simply couldn't afford to pay the jizya. There were also forceful conversions during this time. Other Hindus, sensing economic gain under Mughal rule, converted as well.</p>	<p>This is a request for additional content, not a factual error. We propose adding this content.</p>
<p>For the most part, Mughal rulers were fairly tolerant and generally did not support forceful conversion of Hindus.</p>	<p>This is inaccurate. Many Mughal rulers did not support forceful conversion, but at the same time did use other means such as the jizya as a means of conversion.</p>	<p>We will make this revision.</p>

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<p>In Sri Lanka, Buddhists and Hindus engaged in a civil war that lasted several decades and cost more than 60,000 lives.</p>	<p>This implies that Buddhists and Hindus were equal combatants. The government is Buddhist dominated, while the Tamils were mostly Hindu. However, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were led primarily by Tamil Christians, making the sectarian conflict not as easy to define as between Buddhists and Hindus.</p>	<p>MHE disagrees with this revision as it introduces confusion by identifying one side with a religious tradition and the other side with an ethnic identity. In addition, the Tamils have not been mentioned previously in the text, and students will not recognize the term. We propose a revision that reads as follows: "In Sri Lanka, the two main ethnic groups engaged in a civil war that lasted several decades and cost more than 60,000 lives."</p>
<p><i>World History</i></p>		
<p>The Indo-Europeans were one of the most significant nomadic peoples. The term Indo-European refers to a particular group of people who spoke a language derived from a single parent tongue. Indo-European languages include Greek, Latin, Persian, Sanskrit, and the Germanic languages (such as English and German). The original Indo-Europeans were based somewhere in the steppe region north of the Black Sea or in Southwest Asia. Around 2000 b.c., they began to move into Europe, India, and western Asia. One group moved into Asia Minor and Anatolia around 1750 b.c. With the native peoples, they formed the Hittite kingdom that had its capital at Hattushash (Bogazkşy in modern Turkey).</p>	<p>There is still a lot of debate on exactly who the Indo-Europeans were. This implies that they were part of a larger group. Many archaeologists have cast doubt on the relationship between ancient Indians and the Hittites, using both archaeological and DNA evidence.</p>	<p>This is a request for an editorial revision, not a factual error. To accommodate the reviewer's concerns, MHE proposes to change the text to explain the ambiguity and debate surrounding the Indo-European language group and the implications of the debate for the understanding of pre-history. MHE proposes to revise the paragraph in question to read as follows: "One of the most significant group of nomadic peoples were those who spoke Indo-European languages. The term Indo-European does not refer to a specific ethnic group. It refers to a group of languages that have many similarities and are thought by most linguists to derive from a single parent tongue. Indo-European languages include Greek, Latin, and its derivatives such as Italian, French and Spanish, as well as Russian, Persian, Sanskrit, and Germanic languages such as English and German. The people who spoke the original language that fragmented into these modern languages are thought to have originated somewhere in the steppe region that stretches roughly from where the Ukraine is located today east to central Asia. There is much debate about where exactly they originated because linguists have to use changes in language to trace the movement of people and cultures backward in time. There is much uncertainty, but between 4000 B.C. and 500 B.C., cultures using Indo-European languages developed all across Europe, in the Middle East, and as far east as Iran and northern India. There are many competing theories about the movement and mingling of peoples that spread the language group across such great distances." As a segue to the next paragraph, MHE also proposes to add this sentence to the beginning of the subsequent paragraph: "Around 1750 B.C., a culture using an Indo-European language developed in Asia Minor. These people formed the Hittite kingdom that had its capital at Hattushash (Bogazkşy in modern Turkey)."</p>

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<p>Many historians explain this shift as the result of a foreign migration.</p>	<p>Until about the mid-1980s. Now, it's accurate to say that some do, while many others point to other causes, including the drying up of the Saraswati River.</p>	<p>This is a request for additional content, not a factual error. MHE proposes to delete the sentence "Many historians explain this shift as a result of a foreign migration" and replace it with the following sentence: "Many historians explain this shift as the result of a foreign migration, while others cite other reasons including environmental changes." MHE prefers to retain the reference to "Many" historians only because the foreign migration theory remains the consensus among a large majority of historians and linguists who have researched this topic.</p>
<p>Around 2000 b.c., a group of Indo-European-speaking nomadic peoples began to move out of the steppes of central Asia. Indo-Europeans spoke similar languages. Some migrated west to Europe. Others moved south to Iran and later to the Indus Valley. One group, known as the Aryans, moved south across the Hindu Kush mountain range into the plains of northern India. Historians know little about the origins and early culture of the Aryans. The Aryans lived in tribal groups and had a strong warrior tradition. As they settled in northern India, the nomads came into contact with the Indus Valley civilization.</p>	<p>This passage implies the Aryan migrations are a fact when the origins are still in dispute.</p>	<p>McGraw-Hill Education is aware of the controversy concerning the origins of the post-Harappan civilization in northern India. Our understanding is that a large majority of western scholars subscribe to the idea of the migration of the Aryans into northern India. MHE also acknowledges that there is a scholarly community, largely, though not entirely, based in India that rejects the idea that a migration into India took place. We understand that the debate is very controversial because it has implications for the religious beliefs of many Indian people around the world, and has become an issue within Indian politics as well. Because the Aryan migration theory is still subscribed to by the majority of scholars, still appears in AP and American college textbooks on World History and Indian history, and is likely to be taught in history and linguistics courses in American universities, MHE believes that this theory should be presented in the text. We propose, however, to introduce students to the controversy by modifying the first paragraph on page 4 so that it reads as shown below and then adding the following new paragraph to address the reviewer's concerns: "Most western scholars contend that beginning in 2000 B.C. a group of Indo-European-speaking nomadic peoples began to move out of the steppes of central Asia and southward to Iran, the Indus River valley, and then into northern India. Linguists think that the language these people spoke was part of a sub-group of Indo-European languages called Indo-Aryan. For this reason, the people have been called Aryans by historians. Based on their study of language and cultural evidence, these scholars concluded that some Aryans migrated south over many centuries, crossed the Hindu Kush mountain range, and settled in the plains of northern India. Historians know very little about the origins and early culture of these Indo-Aryan speaking people. As they settled in northern India, they came into contact with the Indus Valley civilization. Exactly how a new Indian civilization developed after the Indus Valley civilization collapsed is in dispute. The idea that Aryans migrated into India and that their culture replaced the culture of the Indus Valley people has been disputed by some scholars, many based in India. These scholars think that the Indo-European language group may have originated in or near northern India. They also think that a mingling of tribes and cultures within the Indian subcontinent led to the development of the new Indian civilization that came after the Harappans."</p>

<p>The superiority of males in ancient Indian society was evident in a number of ways. Only males could inherit property, except in cases where there were no sons. Women could not serve as priests, and generally only males were educated. In upper-class families, young men began their education with a guru, or teacher, and then went on to study in one of the major cities. These young men were not supposed to marry until they completed 12 years of study. Although divorce was usually not allowed, husbands could take a second wife if the first was unable to bear children.</p>	<p>This is problematic because patriarchy was a norm in ancient societies. This passage implies that it was somehow exceptional to Indian society.</p>	<p>This is a request for an editorial revision, not a factual error. MHE does not agree that the text is singling out India for criticism because of its discussion of the patriarchal nature of ancient Indian society. The passage is purely descriptive. It does not say or imply that India was unique in having a patriarchal society. Discussions of the patriarchal nature of other ancient and classical civilizations are included in other chapters and lessons as well. See for example Chapter 4, lesson 3, online pages 3-4, "Economy and Society" for women in Ancient Greece, and Chapter 7 lesson 3, online page 6, "Life in the Roman World" for the description of women in Roman society. To prevent any confusion on this point, however, we propose to delete the first sentence of the paragraph and replace it with the following: "As in other ancient civilizations, ancient Indian civilization gave males a place of prominence."</p>
<p>Perhaps the most vivid symbol of men's dominance was the ritual of suttee (suh • TEE). In ancient India, the dead were placed on heaps of material called pyres, which were then set on fire. Suttee required a wife to throw herself on her dead husband's funeral pyre. A Greek visitor reported that "those women who refused to burn themselves were held in disgrace."</p>	<p>Suttee or sati was not forced, nor was it a regular aspect of ancient Indian custom. The practice, which had no basis in the Vedas or Upanishads, was seen as voluntary self-immolation by widows who wished to follow their dead husbands instead of re-marrying or remaining a widow. In some, it was an option of death over dishonor, though in much later periods, there were incidents of forced sati that led many reformers to call for its ban.</p>	<p>MHE proposes to make suggested revision.</p>

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PASSAGE/TERM	COMMENT	PUBLISHER RESPONSE
https://active.socialstudies.com/active_reader/10969		
<p>Hinduism was based on a powerful priesthood, the Brahmins. The photo here is of a modern-day Brahmin priest. Brahmins stood at the top of India's rigid caste system, in which people were limited by birth to a fixed social status.</p>	<p>This is predicated on a somewhat archaic view of caste. The rigidity of the caste system has fluctuated over time, and has been comparatively rigid in the modern era. In some regions and time periods, Brahmins have not occupied the "highest" position. The hierarchical relationship between castes is more complex and changing than this implies. Also, we can't be sure that this is a Brahmin priest. It's from the 19th century and could be landowner or a royal official.</p>	<p>Though Hinduism developed over many centuries in ancient India, Brahmins exercised a lot of influence based on their roles as priests and teachers. Brahmins were seen as those who held the knowledge. However, over time, Brahmins also became the top of a social hierarchy later known as caste, based on the Portuguese term <i>casta</i>. By the time of the introduction of the British census in 1850, one's caste became a birthright, and social mobility was seen as virtually impossible.</p>
<p>The caste system divided India in one way. Another clear division was that between men and women. In this, India was not different from many other traditional societies, such as those in China, Christian Europe, or later the Islamic lands of the Middle East. In those societies, women were subordinate to men in many ways. But this 19th-century watercolor depicts one Indian practice unique to India. The practice is <i>suttee</i>, in which a widow throws herself on her deceased husband's funeral pyre. The practice horrifies many, but some Hindus see it as an act of sacred devotion to the husband, a devotion that would continue into the afterlife.</p>	<p>Ritual suicide of widows is not unique to India, as this implies. To dedicate so much room to this as though it were a core Hindu practice is misleading. The practice was extremely rare prior to the colonial era, and then was quickly eradicated. An equivalent treatment of Christianity would include witch burnings as a core feature. Please refer to the material we sent on <i>sati</i>, which was developed by a group of religion scholars familiar with both cultural practices and gender roles in Hinduism.</p>	<p>Replace with: We intend to get rid of the material on <i>suttee</i>. The paragraph will be rewritten and we will replace this content with material about Hinduism that is more closely tied to the religion and not practices that were followed in India or which have been misconstrued by some as Hindu practices.</p>
active.socialstudies.com/active_reader/12447		
<p>About 1500 BCE, Indo-Aryan speaking pastoral peoples migrated from Inner Eurasia across the Khyber Pass and other passes into India, though we have little idea of their numbers. In any case, they established military dominance over the native, Dravidian-speaking populations.</p>	<p>The Aryan Invasion Theory has been debunked by most historians and archaeologists. Both DNA evidence, as well as new archaeological evidence, cited by scholars such as Bajpai, Kenoyer, Shaeffer, Rao, Bryant, obliterate the idea that Aryans were one group - or even Central Asian. The term Dravidian is problematic because it is a language often conflated with race or native Indian populations when genetics have disproved that idea.</p>	<p>Replace with: Most scholars believe that between 2000-1500 BCE, groups of people began settling in greater numbers across the subcontinent. Some of these groups were formerly nomadic, while others relocated to where land was more fertile. These groups have been called Indo-Aryan people, or Aryans, though it isn't clear whether they were part of the same tribes or a collection of different populations that settled in the region over centuries. Over time, they were in contact with peoples who spoke Dravidian languages, mingling with them either by force or trade.</p>
<p>Eventually, they settled on the plains of the Indus and Ganges River basins and developed an agrarian civilization with a distinctive social structure. Much intermarriage with Dravidians probably occurred.</p>	<p>As noted in the comment above, DNA evidence suggests a different hypothesis, especially since the genetic stock of most Indians has remained relatively homogeneous for at least 3,500 years, suggesting that mixing of different groups either occurred much earlier or that the early tribes shared similar genetic characteristics.</p>	<p>Replace with: They developed a primarily agrarian civilization along the Indus and Ganges River basins. Over time, much intermarriage with other groups probably occurred.</p>

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<p>The caste system did not fully emerge until later in Indian history, but fundamentally it involved a hierarchal system of four levels or castes (varna in Hindi) which can best be understood when seen as a pyramid.</p>	<p>The material seems contradictory. Varna is a Sanskrit term. The pyramid is also inaccurate since the varnas were not hierarchical. The social system developed into a more rigid and hierarchical form much later, as the first sentence indicated.</p>	<p>Replace with: The caste system did not fully emerge until later in Indian history, but its roots are in the varna system, which was idealized in the Vedas to divide society by one's skill. As more occupations developed in ancient India, another term called jatis was used to describe divisions by occupation. Jatis were governed by birth. Over many centuries, both varnas and jatis merged to become what many now know today as a top-down, birth-based caste system.</p>
<p>At the top, a small elite concentrated in its hands most of the power, authority, wealth, and privilege. Everyone else, which was the vast majority, worked hard, got little and, most of the time, did what they were told.</p>	<p>This relies on the old "caste pyramid" visual, which is not only outdated, but inaccurate. The varnas were not hierarchical.</p>	<p>Replace with: According to the varna system, each member of society has a specific role to adhere to; which, in turn, leads to the harmonious functioning of society.</p>
<p>The Brahmins, the top caste, were the priestly families whose main job was to perform sacrificial rituals in order to satisfy the Indo-Aryan gods</p>	<p>This isn't accurate. Again, the hierarchical reference is problematic, but so is the idea that Brahmins' sole role was sacrifice. They were considered the ones who were able to articulate the Vedas, which meant they held significant intellectual capital.</p>	<p>Replace with: The Brahmins were the priestly families whose main job was to perform rituals and teach texts such as the Vedas.</p>
<p>They collaborated with and supported the religious authority of the priests and shared the wealth of the land with them. In return, the priests asked the gods to favor society and instructed the people to obey the Kshatriyas.</p>	<p>Most Brahmins, even from ancient times, were poor. Begging for alms was considered the primary means of sustenance for those who pursued the priestly lifestyle. It was codified by various texts that described the role of "proper" Brahmins.</p>	<p>Replace with: The Kshatriyas were the ruling families. They often kept Brahmins as court advisers and spiritual teachers.</p>
<p>a collection of sacred texts composed in Sanskrit, the Indo-European language of Brahmin devotion</p>	<p>Brahmin devotion is simply inaccurate. More importantly, Vyasa, the reported author of the Vedas, was not Brahmin.</p>	<p>Replace with: a collection sacred texts composed in Sanskrit.</p>
<p>The Shudras, the lowest level class, tended to be socially despised by other groups, and they did manual labor.</p>	<p>This is not true. The varna of Shudras was given based on the temperament to serve. The idea of Shudras being viewed as "lower" didn't emerge until many centuries later with the idea of jatis.</p>	<p>Replace with: The Shudras were primarily in labor occupations, and their primary role was seen as being of service</p>
<p>In later centuries, the four main castes were divided into hundreds of sub-castes (jaisit), each with its own complex obligations and taboos</p>	<p>Varna and jati systems were two different things. The conflation implies that varna was hierarchical. Meanwhile, jati is misspelled. Moreover, it should be noted that the caste system was not intrinsic to Hindu philosophy. Jati is also misspelled.</p>	<p>Replace with: In later centuries, the four main varnas became merged with jatis, divisions by social occupation, each with its own complex obligations and taboos. There were hundreds, if not thousands of jatis, and the divisions became part of India's caste system.</p>
<p>Hinduism has neither a centralized religious organization nor a specific set of doctrines</p>	<p>But there are key philosophies such as karma, dharma, and moksha that are common to Hindus. There's no explanation of these philosophies.</p>	<p>Replace with: Hinduism has neither a centralized religious organization nor a specific set of doctrines, though Hindus generally believe in the idea of dharma, or righteous action; karma, that every action has a consequence; and moksha, that every being can achieve salvation over a period of lifetimes.</p>

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<p>In short, one has to be the best Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Sutra, or outcaste that one can be in order to progress to a higher caste. Progress is governed by karma, the force of one's past life. If one has lived properly in a past life, then one may find oneself reborn in a higher caste. Eventually, if a person continues to live well, she or he will be reborn as a Brahmin. When one has lived life perfectly as a Brahmin, one's soul will be freed. If, on the other hand, one does not live a righteous life, that person risks being reincarnated into a lower caste or, even worse, as an animal. One's social rank in life, then, reflects one's past lives.</p>	<p>There is no expectation of perfection, nor is reincarnation linked in any way with being born into lower or higher caste. A person will not be reborn as a Brahmin for living well. Hindu scriptures place no emphasis on status of birth, and indeed, many scriptures emphasize that one can achieve moksha from any birth circumstance. There is also no expectation of perfection. Many of the Hindu intellectual movements, particularly the Bhakti movement, believed that moksha could take place through devotion to the Divine.</p>	<p>Replace with: In short, one has to live according to his or her dharma, which is defined as righteous action for spiritual advancement. Hindu teachings believe that all beings suffer, but that that karma, the law of action and consequence, will govern the circumstances of future births. If a person lives well, she or he will be reborn in better circumstances and have an easier path to achieving moksha. However, karma is still based on one's choices, and Hindu teachings emphasize that having a better birth does not guarantee progress. The goal is to exhaust all of one's karma from previous lives in order to achieve moksha, or union with Brahman.</p>
<p>The principal of reincarnation provided religious support to the rigid caste system. It justified the privileges of the upper caste at one extreme and ill-treatment of outcasts at the other.</p>	<p>This occurred, but every society has found religious sanction for social discrimination. This sanction wasn't scriptural, and in fact, the rigidity of the caste system did not emerge until the colonial era.</p>	<p>Replace with: Though the principal of reincarnation was seen as giving everyone an opportunity to achieve moksha, many in later times used the idea to justify the caste system. Some Hindu leaders used the Laws of Manu, called the Manusmriti, to justify social hierarchy and division. Over time, caste became a central feature of Indian society, with the lower castes often getting pushed to the margins by the higher ones. Hindu reformers from Adi Shankara in the 9th century to Mahatma Gandhi in the 20th century fought against the caste system, arguing that it was not in the Vedas. The use of religious beliefs to justify oppression was not unique to India or Hinduism.</p>
<p>However, its principles, like slavery, are incompatible today with ideals of equality and human rights.</p>	<p>This implies Hinduism endorses inequality, when there is no scriptural sanction for inequality. Conflating Indian social practice with Hinduism is like conflating racism with Christianity or sexism with Islam.</p>	<p>Replace with: The caste system evolved over many thousands of years and eventually became a part of life in South Asia for people of all faiths. Though it is not as prominent in contemporary South Asian society as in previous eras, caste discrimination still exists in some parts of the Subcontinent, particularly in rural areas.</p>
<p>https://active.socialstudies.com/active_reader/11086</p>		
<p>The new immigrants were Aryans, who arrived in northwestern India from the other side of the Hindu Kush Mountains. Within about 100 years, the Aryans, a warlike people, had solidified their position in the Valley. Historians believe this to be the result of their more advanced iron weapons and use of horse-drawn chariots in battle.</p>	<p>The idea that the Aryans were a warlike people who subjugated the local population is not currently the historical consensus. The temperament of the Aryans is unknown, as is the level of conflict between them and the Indus Valley Civilization. Some scholars even reject the idea that Aryans and the Indus Valley Civilization were different populations.</p>	<p>Replace with: The new immigrants, believed to have either arrived in waves from outside of the Indian subcontinent or from other parts of it, were called Aryans. Over time, they solidified their position in the Valley and began expanding southward. Historians believe this to be the result of their more advanced iron weapons and use of horse-drawn chariots in battle.</p>

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<p>The need to subjugate others may be one of the reasons for their development of four strict social classes, the earliest form of the caste system. This together with their numerous gods and religious rituals form the basis of Hinduism.</p>	<p>This is premised upon the idea that the caste system developed from the beginning, which is not factually correct. The social classes were not strict during the Vedic period, though they became more ossified later.</p>	<p>Replace with: The caste system did not develop from the beginning and social classes were not strict during the Vedic period, though they became more ossified later.</p>
<p>Hindu beliefs are not only specified in the Vedas, they are also illustrated in two epic stories called the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.</p>	<p>This is oversimplified.</p>	<p>Replace with: Hindu beliefs are specified in the Vedas, the Upanishads, and two epics called the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. There are many other texts, including the Manusmṛti—known as the Law of Manu, that heavily influenced Hinduism and ancient India.</p>
<p>As the Hindu priestly caste of Brahmins gained more and more power and authority in the Aryan civilization, certain people sought reform. Among them was Siddhartha Gautama, an Indian prince born in what is now Nepal in 560 BCE. In his search for truth, Gautama left his royal wealth to find the cause and cure of human misery. While meditating, he reached Enlightenment, and became the “Buddha.”</p>	<p>It is true that Indians tried to reform Hinduism to reduce Brahminical privilege, but these people were the authors of the Upanishads. Buddha did not intend to reform Hinduism, but rather to seek an alternative path to spiritual liberation.</p>	<p>Replace with: As the caste system became more hierarchical, there were attempts to reduce the power of Brahmins, including the authorship of a set of texts called the Upanishads, which introduced the idea of individual deity worship without the use of priests. Others, however, saw a different path. Among them was Siddhartha Gautama, an Indian prince born in what is now Nepal in 560 BCE. In his search for truth, Gautama left his royal wealth to find the cause and cure of human misery. While meditating, he reached Enlightenment, and became the “Buddha.” He preached an alternative path to spiritual liberation that would not only reform Hinduism, but develop into a separate religion called Buddhism. Similarly, another king-turned- ascetic, Mahavir, would become the spiritual leader of Jainism, which developed two centuries before Buddhism.</p>
<p>The Buddha’s ideas were revolutionary in that they acknowledged neither gods nor priests.</p>	<p>Most forms of Buddhism entail a belief in deities, and other divine beings. It’s why Thai Buddhists worship Ganesha or Cambodian Buddhists worship Hanuman. True it has no Brahmins, but monks play a very similar role.</p>	<p>Replace with: The Buddha’s idea were revolutionary in that he stated that people could be saved by achieving complete enlightenment and release from all desire for worldly things, which Buddha called “nirvana.”</p>
<p>https://active.socialstudies.com/active_reader/10944</p>		

<p>Later, in the so-called Vedantic Age, from around 800 to 400 BCE, Hindu thinkers began to search for a broader meaning to the universe and human existence. In a group of writings called the “Upanishads,” they developed the idea of Brahman as a spiritual force underlying all of creation. Atman is the form Brahman takes as it is expressed in each true individual self or soul. Other Hindu gods are partial aspects of this universal spiritual reality. Of these, the three basic ones are Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu. Each deity expresses one phase of a cyclical pattern of change in the universe that is repeated over and over through all eternity.</p>	<p>It's actually called the Vedic age. Vendatism was a much later term. There is no qualifier for other. All Hindu deities are considered part of the universal spiritual reality. It should be noted that Hindus are neither monotheistic or polytheistic.</p>	<p>Replace with: Later came the Vedic age, from about 800 to 400 BCE. According to Hinduism, all Hindu deities are considered part of the universal spiritual reality. It should be noted that Hindus are neither monotheistic nor polytheistic. Hindu deities are parts of this universal spiritual reality, with Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu known as the most prominent. The mother Goddess, or Devi or Shakti, is also worshipped prominently.</p>
<p>Another key aspect of Hindu belief is the caste system. It is a strict division of people into very broad groups, somewhat limited by occupation, and with each person fixed by birth in one caste. Castes are ranked according to a supposed level of spiritual “pollution,” with the highest ranked being the Brahmin priests. In its final form, the system included the four broadly defined castes shown here, along with a fifth group that is really a kind of outcast group, often called the “untouchables.”</p>	<p>See prior remarks on Caste, Varna and Jati.</p>	<p>We intend to delete the material on the Hindu “belief” of the caste system as this is inaccurate. We will talk about the difference between caste, varna, and jati, and amend the diagram shown here.</p>
<p>https://active.socialstudies.com/active_reader/10971</p>		
<p>Buddhists were persecuted at times by Hindus and later by Muslims.</p>	<p>There is only one major incident of historical anti-Buddhist persecution by a Hindu king. The case of Pusyamitra Sunga. However, his persecution is regarded as mythological by many historians, similar to the probably mythological persecution of the Ajivika sect by emperor Ashoka.</p>	<p>Replace with: Under Ashoka, Buddhism spread throughout the kingdom, but after Ashoka's death, Hinduism revived because Hindu leaders adapted to Buddhism's influence. In India and other parts of Asia, Hinduism and Buddhism were co-practiced, meaning families often worshipped both religions at once. In time, Buddhism nearly died out in Buddha's homeland as Hindu revivalism became stronger. On the other hand, the opposite happened in places like Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, and Indonesia, where Hinduism was diminished by Buddhism. Buddhism and Hinduism both had a profound impact far beyond India's shores. One form of Buddhism spread to Southeast Asia, co-mingling with and eventually replacing Hinduism, though the Indonesian province of Bali is still mostly Hindu.</p>
<p>https://active.socialstudies.com/active_reader/12107</p>		

<p>The Aryans were a tribe of warrior-nomads who were gifted horsemen. Their homeland was somewhere north of the Indian subcontinent. Around 2000 BCE, they began to migrate southward—through Anatolia, Persia, and the Hindu Kush. By 1500 BCE, they were settling in the Indus River valley, living in tribal villages and farming the fertile land around the river. These settlers counted their wealth in the number of cattle and sheep they owned and often raided one another’s herds to increase that wealth.</p>	<p>The prior section pointed out how little information there is about this period of Indian history, but then this section goes on to speculate that the Aryans were warlike invaders.</p>	<p>Replace with: Historians are still not sure who the Aryans were. Were they one group or many, from outside of the Indian subcontinent or from within? This much is known: the Aryans played a significant role in shaping ancient India and the development of Hinduism. Many scholars believe the Aryans were tribes of gifted horsemen whose homeland was somewhere north or west of the Indian subcontinent. Around 2000 BCE, they were believed to have migrated southward—through Anatolia, Persia, and the Hindu Kush. By 1500 BCE, they were settling in the Indus River valley, living in tribal villages and farming the fertile land around the river. These settlers counted their wealth in the number of cattle and sheep they owned and often raided one another’s herds to increase that wealth. Other scholars, citing archaeological evidence, believe the Aryans were a collection of tribes that mingled and eventually became a larger society. They estimate that such mingling happened before 2000 BCE and continued for well over 1000 years. What we know about these ancient Aryans comes from a collection of their poems and hymns known as the Vedas, the Sanskrit word for “knowledge.” Sanskrit was the Aryans’ spoken language, and it is the basis for many Indian languages spoken today. When the Aryans first invaded India, they had no written language. The Vedas were passed along from generation to generation by word of mouth. It was not until Sanskrit developed into a written language, centuries later, that the Vedas were actually written down. The Vedas provided one of the central tenets of Hinduism: there are many paths to the one truth. Ancient Aryan literature also includes two epics. (An epic is a long story in poem form that celebrates the great deeds of a hero or heroes.) One epic is called the Mahabharata, or “Great Story.” Within the Mahabharata is the Bhagavad Gita, now known as one of Hinduism’s most influential texts. The other is called the Ramayana, and it tells of a king named Rama. These famous poems show the Aryans to be a warlike people, ruled by kings they called “rajas,” who fought many wars to set up their kingdoms.</p>
<p>From Classes to Castes</p>	<p>See prior comments on caste, jati, and varna</p>	<p>Replace with: To understand the caste system in India, it’s important to understand its history. In early Indian society, every man was the head of his household and had many roles: farmer, warrior, and even priest, leading his family in prayers and religious services. As tribes grew, they needed better-trained armies, so some men served only as soldiers. Others became priests, traders, or merchants. Some continued to be farmers. The Vedas, Hinduism’s most ancient texts, called for four classes based on one’s skill. This class system was called the varnas. These varnas still allowed for social mobility.</p>

<p>Many of the workers came from the non-Aryan people that the Aryans had conquered.</p>	<p>This was found to be uncorroborated by genetic studies in the 1990s and 2000s.</p>	<p>Replace with: However, over a period of centuries, another classification called jatis emerged. These were based on both one's birth and occupation. In other words, the child of a carpenter had to be a carpenter, while the child of a fisherman or woman had to stay in that occupation. Over time, rules within each jati developed forbidding certain types of interaction between jatis.</p>
<p>graphic of castes Activity 2: Hinduism</p>	<p>the caste pyramid, at least when describing ancient India, is inaccurate</p>	<p>Replace with: The jati system's rigidity would become one of the central features of what later became known as the caste system - the merging of both the varna and jati classifications. We will also delete the inaccurate graphic.</p>
<p>Hinduism is the major religion in India today. Hinduism and Indian culture are closely related in Indian society. In India, people are born into a social class. They remain in that class for the rest of their lives. This social class is called a caste. The caste that you are born into determines how you will live your life. This caste system is reinforced by the Hindu religion.</p>	<p>The entire activity is about the caste system. This is representative of the text's explicit focus on caste as the central feature of Hinduism, as opposed to its philosophy, its encouragement of nonviolence, adherence to duty, meditation, etc.</p>	<p>Replace with: Hinduism is the major religion in India today and the world's third largest. There are significant populations in the Indian subcontinent, the West Indies, Mauritius, and even South Africa. While Hinduism and Indian culture are distinct in many ways, they are also closely related in others. For example, while the caste system has its roots in ancient Hinduism, it is much different today than it was thousands of years ago. Today, all religious groups in India have some form of caste. Hinduism's principle philosophies are dharma—or spiritual advancement through fulfillment of duty; karma—every action has a consequence in future lifetimes; and moksha—union with Brahman after one has lived a virtuous life and exhausted all karma.</p>
<p>https://active.socialstudies.com/active_reader/11657</p>		
<p>The Hindu and Muslim religions are very different. For example, the Muslims believe in one god. The Hindus worship many gods. Muslims believe in the fundamental equality of all people. In Hindu society, there is a rigid system of division into classes, called castes. At the time, Muslims believed a man could have many wives. Hindus did not. These are just a few of the many important differences that separated the mass of Indian people from their Muslim rulers.</p>	<p>This is overly simplistic. Hinduism does indeed have many forms of divinity, but there is one universal spirit. Hinduism also believes in the equality of all, which is why it's important to distinguish between the religion and the society's practices (caste)</p>	<p>This is overly simplistic. We intend to have a better-written section on Islam which does not serve as a comparison with Hinduism.</p>

<p>Differences in religion often lead to conflict. When Muslims invaded India, around 1000 c.e., they killed countless numbers of Hindus. Later, they were less harsh. And many Hindus converted to Islam to avoid persecution or to escape from the caste system.</p>	<p>This presents a narrative that Muslims have always been "invaders," when the Islamic interaction with India occurred in waves - by trade, then through Sufis, and then several periods of violence. However, this sentence presents the interaction as one solely driven by conflict. Moreover, I've always found the idea that Hindus converted to Islam (or Christianity) to "escape the caste system." Casteism persists among Indian Muslims and Christians; and becoming a Muslim or Christian would not make casteist Hindus suddenly regard someone more favorably simply because they had changed their religion. My suspicion is that the embrace of at least some aspects of Islam and Christianity among some communities is an extension of the process of Sanskritization: namely, adopting customs associated with the ruling communities in order to advance the social standing of one's own community. This is a collective action and not the kind of personal "conversion" familiar from Christian narratives (and makes sense of how a figure like Kabir, ostensibly from a Muslim community, might actually know the Ramayan better than the Qur'an).</p>	<p>This section will be rewritten to include the complexity of religious groups and identity in the Subcontinent.</p>
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PASSAGE/TERM	COMMENT	PUBLISHER RESPONSE
<p>World History pre-1800</p>		
<p>Evidence points to the Dravidians as the founders of the Indus Valley civilizations. They later dominated only in southern India where speakers of Dravidian languages now make up about one-fourth of India's population. The Indus Valley civilizations declined around 1700 B.C.E., possibly because of ecological change or natural disasters.</p>	<p>Actually, there isn't much in the way of consensus. Moreover, the term Dravidian itself is very contested among historians and archaeologists.</p>	<p>This material is under review and will be revised to take into account the reviewer's concerns.</p>
<p>Some Aryan tribes had migrated westward into Europe while others moved east into Iran and India. The nomadic Aryans gradually adapted the more advanced civilization of the people they subdued.</p>	<p>The Aryan Migration theory is debated. It would be imperative to put a qualifier such as "Some scholars believe..."</p>	<p>This material is under review and will be revised to take into account the reviewer's concerns.</p>
<p>Hinduism evolved as a way of life as well as a religion. Brahmans were revered. The caste system became an integral part of Hindu culture. Four major castes became divided into hundreds of subcastes. An outcaste, the "untouchables," were consigned to do society's most degrading work. A caste determines a person's occupation, social status, diet, marriage partner, and religious rituals. A Hindu escapes from his caste obligations only by death and reincarnation into a different caste or life form until he reaches the highest stage of escape from the life-and-death cycle. Reincarnation to a higher caste depends on a Hindu's "karma." His future life depends on the extent to which he followed his "dharma," the rules of behavior for his caste.</p>	<p>This entire passage is inaccurate. First off, varnas were not castes. They were Vedic social groupings. Most scholars believe that what would become caste in India was based on jatis, which emerged many centuries later. Untouchables did not emerge in record until early in the Common Era, and it was not attached to any theology. There is no link between what this passage describes and Hinduism, thereby conflating Indian social practice with a religion. There is also no definition of dharma and karma.</p>	<p>This material is under review and will be revised to take into account the reviewer's concerns.</p>

<p>World Geography</p>		
<p>Chapter 19</p>		
<p>Most of the people of South Asia are descended from Aryans who migrated to the Indian subcontinent over 3,500 years ago. The Indo-Europeans from the Caucasus and Central Asia brought their physical characteristics, language, and culture to merge with those of the Neolithic inhabitants. Most of the people of Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka have Indo-European ancestry; however, over the many centuries they have intermixed with Dravidians, Tibetans, and Mongols. The result is a wide variation in physical characteristics within and among regions. The people of southern India and a minority in Sri Lanka are descended from the Dravidians, again though, with a wide variation in physical characteristics because of ethnic mixing. The people of Nepal and Bhutan have a strong Tibetan ancestry blended with Indian heritage.</p>	<p>Again, this is factually inaccurate and presupposes the veracity of one possible theory of the origins of South Asia.</p>	<p>This material is under review and will be revised to take into account the reviewer's concerns.</p>
<p>Hinduism became a way of life as well as a polytheistic religion. Brahmans were revered and given money as an act of religious merit. The caste system was established as an integral part of Hindu culture. Four major castes were divided into hundreds of subcastes.</p>	<p>Hinduism is not polytheistic. The claim about Brahmans being revered and compensated is also not wholly accurate. The overwhelming majority of Brahmans, based on their lives in villages, lived meagerly. Many Hindu ethics guides in ancient times through the medieval period proscribed a Brahmin lifestyle of begging for alms in exchange for Vedic teaching.</p>	<p>This material is under review and will be revised to take into account the reviewer's concerns.</p>

<p>Hinduism is the religion of 80% of the people of modern India. Thirteen percent are Muslims and the remainder are small minorities of Sikhs, Jains, Jews, Christians, and Buddhists. Most of the 20 million Sikhs live in the northern state of Punjab where they are the majority who seek independence. The constitution of India outlaws untouchability and makes discrimination based on caste illegal. Despite this, the caste system continues to influence the lives of most Hindus, especially those living in traditional villages. However, adherence to caste restrictions in many parts of India has declined because of modernization, urbanization, and education. Signs of change are that in 1997 an untouchable became the president of India, a Muslim became president in 2002, and a Sikh became prime minister in 2004.</p>	<p>There are multiple factual errors. For starters, the majority of India's Sikh population does not seek independence. The Khalistan movement itself divided the Sikh community. In fact, there were two parallel movements: one that sought independence and one that tried to create theological distance between Sikhism and Hinduism. There were some overlaps, but this would require Sikh scholars to explain with clarity. The caste system is not inherent to Hinduism, nor is it unique to Hindus. Caste is an Indian social practice. Hindus and their relationship to caste has always been complicated by geography, cultural norms, and other factors, as scholars such as Nicholas Dirks and Ramdas Lamb have written.</p>	<p>This material is under review and will be revised to take into account the reviewer's concerns.</p>
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