

September 25, 2017

Stephanie Gregson, Ed.D, Executive Director
Instructional Quality Commission
Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division (CFIRD)
California Department of Education
1430 N Street, Room 3207
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: 2017 History-Social Science Adoption Public Comment Submission

Dear Dr. Gregson and Members of the Instructional Quality Commission:

Greetings! I would like to take this opportunity to submit proposed edits on the instructional materials on Hinduism and India under consideration for adoption by the California Department of Education.

This submission is a follow up to a letter submitted on August 16, 2017 that represented a group of 25 professional scholars of Indian religious traditions, history, and social sciences that outlined some of the overarching problematic themes present in many of the textbook drafts.

As was previously noted in that letter, due to the influence of Orientalism (the Western colonial encounter with colonized peoples of the “Orient”) on the discourse on India and Hinduism, the draft textbooks and instructional materials in their current state do not provide an accurate nor balanced perspective on Indian history and culture, and Hinduism.

Specifically, we found four main themes of concern across several textbook drafts:

1. the use of stereotypical images that portray Hinduism and India as poor, primitive, and dirty;
2. inaccurate and unfavorable comparisons of Hinduism with other religions, and a generally negative approach to Hinduism, while negative references in other religions are largely avoided;
3. inadequate and often inaccurate descriptions of core concepts and scriptures in Hinduism; and;
4. the inaccurate description of Indian social structures.

Aside from these themes, the publisher drafts noted below also do a poor job of highlighting the most recent scholarship when it comes to the history of Ancient India. For instance, they present the concepts of Aryanism and Brahmanism, theories about the origins of Indian civilization and Hinduism as valid, widely accepted theories. In reality, Aryanism is a theory which is currently

debated in academia, and Brahmanism is considered an outdated colonial narrative. The California frameworks accordingly minimized discussion on these topics.

The attached document therefore offers specific suggested edits/corrections to address these issues for the following publisher drafts:

- *National Geographic World History: Ancient Civilizations and Medieval and Modern Times*
- *Discovery Education Social Studies Techbook: Ancient World History*
- *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Kids Discover (K-6)*
- *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's California Connections (6-8)*
- *McGraw Hill: Inquiry Journal*

Notably, while many of the publisher drafts can be improved with the suggested edits, the Discovery Education Social Studies Techbook 6th grade section on Hinduism/Ancient India will not be suitable for students unless entire sections/supplemental materials/videos are removed and/or replaced with materials grounded in current scholarship. The attached document identifies those sections.

In addition, although I have been unable to address this in detail, it appears that the National Geographic World History 6th and 7th grade sections completely ignored important positive changes on Hinduism and India that were made to the California framework in 2016.

It is critical that all of the drafts under consideration are accurate and show greater cultural competency towards Hinduism and India, especially since these textbooks will be used by elementary and middle school students across California for the next several years.

Thank you for taking these concerns into consideration, and please feel free to contact me for further commentary, if you find it would be helpful.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffery D. Long, Ph.D.

Professor of Religion and Asian Studies

Elizabethtown College

Elizabethtown, PA 17022

longjd@etown.edu

Series Editor, *Explorations in Indic Traditions: Theological, Ethical, and Philosophical* (Lexington Books)

Consulting Editor, *Sutra Journal*

Author, *A Vision for Hinduism, Jainism: An Introduction, and The Historical Dictionary of Hinduism*

Houghton-Mifflin Harcourt - K-6

No	Section	Page	Text	Edits
1	Ancient India	1 & 9	Image of Indra with caption: Indra, Indo-Aryan god of war.	REMOVE: The 'Ancient India' and the 'Indian Empires' sections use graphics (including images, photographs, etc) that represent Hinduism and India as poor, primitive, and filthy. They are stereotyping and border on insensitive and derogatory, and do not accurately represent the subject being discussed. We recommend that all the following graphics listed be removed and replaced with more appropriate and respectful graphics. "The cover page of the 'Ancient India' section has questions that do not accurately represent 'Ancient India.' We recommend the deletion of these and replacement ones related to the topic. For example, Unicorns are not related to India or Indian lore. Nor are the steppes. The question ""How Is Your Karma Doing?"" also misuses and misrepresents the concept." REMOVE: We recommend the deletion of the caption and the replacement of this picture. REMOVE: We recommend "Mysterious" be removed from the title as it is reinforces stereotypes and unnecessarily exoticizes a living civilization. Moreover, there is a great deal known about the culture through its archaeological remains, so it is not accurate to label is "mysterious."
2	Ancient India	4 & 5	Image of a tribal procession with caption: This image shows a ceremonial procession. This type of event may have been a way for upper class landowners, merchants, and spiritual leaders to make themselves look more important in society.	
3	Ancient India	10 & 11	Image of Heron Hunters with caption: Peering into past	
4	Ancient India	13	Image of cattle with caption: Aryans measured their wealth in cattle.	
5	Ancient India	16	Pictures of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva	
6	Indian Empires	4	An image that shows monkeys labouring alongside Indian workers	
7	Ancient India	1	Ancient India cover page ""Were Unicorns Real?""	
8	Ancient India	1	Cover page, 'How Is Your Karma Doing?'	
9	Ancient India	1	Ancient_India cover page ""Stepping out of Steppes""	
10	Ancient India	1,9	Image Caption: ""Indra, Indo-Aryan god of war""	
11	Ancient India	2	Heading of the section: ""Mysterious Ancient India""	

12	Ancient India	2	“We don’t know what weapons and tools the people used”	<p>ADD: To comport with the Frameworks, add after current line: "But the archeological excavations of the ancient site reveal artifacts that show features that are present in modern day Hinduism, such as a male figure that resembles the Hindu God Shiva in a meditating posture, as well as small clay figures in the posture of the traditional Hindu greeting 'namaste.'"</p> <p>The HSS Framework specifically mentions that the artifacts excavated from Harappan sites show features of modern day Hinduism. The additional suggested edits provide greater specificity and cultural context of the civilization.</p>
13	Ancient India	4	“By 2500 BCE, the Indus Valley civilization had two major cities: Mohenjo-Daro and, 400 miles to the northeast, Harappa”	<p>CHANGE TO: "By 2500 BCE, the Indus civilization had many cities that mostly lied on the banks of rivers Indus and Saraswati, the most important ones being Mohenjodaro and Harappa on the banks of Indus, and Rakhigarhi and Kunal on the banks of Saraswati."</p> <p>This information is a bit outdated. More than 500 archeological sites have been excavated along the banks of rivers Indus and Saraswati in the last few decades. Recent excavations have led to the discovery of Rakhigarhi which displaces Harappa as the largest Harappan city.</p>
14	Ancient India	4,5	Caption: This image shows a ceremonial procession. This type of event may have been a way for upper class landowners, merchants, and spiritual leaders to make themselves look more important in society.	<p>REMOVE: We recommend that the caption be removed as it is speculative. We also recommended that the picture be replaced with something more meaningful that represents ancient Indian civilization.</p>

15	Ancient India	13	“Aryan writings describe the Indo Aryans as people who enjoyed making war”	REMOVE/REPLACE: We recommend the deletion of this line and replacement of it with “Vedic teachings gradually built up a rich body of spiritual and moral teachings that form a key foundation of Hinduism as it is practiced today.” The language suggested here is part of the History Social Science framework.
16	Ancient India	14	“..The control over religious ceremonies would later lead to Hindu reform movements. Some movements even became their own religions, like Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism.	REMOVE/REPLACE: We recommend the deletion of this line and replacing it with "Hinduism evolved over time with philosophical schools, spiritual traditions and movements that catered to different communities. Some movements also grew to become their own religions like Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism."
17	Ancient India	15	“Sometimes, Hindus would claim that “purity laws” made it necessary to keep untouchables separate from the rest of Indian society”	REPLACE: We recommend the replacement of this with “Sometimes, some people would claim that “purity laws” made it necessary to keep untouchables separate from the rest of Indian society. But saints and sages within Hinduism helped reform the society and reaffirm the core Hindu principle of oneness of all beings."
18	Indian Empires	12	“The emperor led his army into battle and conquered Kalinga, a kingdom in eastern India. Ashoka later said that more than 100,000 people died in the war. Even though he won the battle, the emperor felt that his victory wasn’t worth so much death. After that, Ashoka converted to Buddhism and practiced peace.”	REPLACE to more accurately reflect the historical record: “Several years before leading his army into battle and conquering Kalinga, a kingdom in eastern India, Ashoka converted to Buddhism. Ashoka later said that more than 100,000 people died in the war. Even though he won the battle, the emperor felt that his victory wasn’t worth so much death. Ashoka now wanted to practice peace.” Ashoka’s army invaded Kalinga in 262 BC, but historians hold that based on Ashoka’s minor rock edicts from before 262 BC, it is evident that he had embraced Buddhism before the war.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt 6-8

Page	Text	Edits
167	You will also learn about the society and culture that restricted who Indian people could talk with or marry.	REMOVE: It is inaccurate to portray this as an overarching theme of a civilization or culture. They were not defining or essential feature of Indian culture or civilization. A statement about pluralism and diversity would be far more appropriate given the role the former had in contributing to the latter in terms of religious and cultural practices.
171	Some historians believe buildings have been found that were slave dwellings. Others believe these buildings actually were “motels” for travelers.	REMOVE: We recommend the deletion of this line as this is based on speculation and not the mainstream view among scholars.
175	“If YOU were there . . . Your family are skillful weavers who make beautiful cotton cloth. You belong to the class in Aryan society who are traders, farmers, and craftspeople. Often the raja of your town leads the warriors into battle. You admire their bravery but know you can never be one of them. To be an Aryan warrior, you must be born into that noble class. Instead, you have your own duty to carry out. How do you feel about remaining a weaver?”	REMOVE: There is no evidence, and in fact, the evidence is to the contrary, that birth based rigid caste system was present during early Vedic times. From ancient times up to today, there has been fluidity and movement within the system on the individual as well on the group level. Even during the Mauryan times, people from different classes served as warriors and emperors, like in the case of Chandragupta Maurya himself. As such, we suggest that this question be replaced with something like the following: “If YOU were there . . . Your family are skillful weavers who make beautiful cotton cloth. You belong to the class in Aryan society who are traders, farmers, and craftspeople. Often the raja of your town leads the warriors into battle. You admire their bravery and feel you could be a good warrior. How do you think your family will feel about your choice?”
175	“Most historians and archaeologists believe that the Aryans crossed into India through mountain passes in the northwest.”	REPLACE: “Some historians believe that the Aryans might have crossed into India through mountain passes in the northwest.”
177	"The texts include hymns, spells, charms, and descriptions of rituals."	REPLACE: We recommend changing to "The texts include hymns, descriptions of rituals, and philosophical and spiritual ideas."

177	<p>"One collection of Vedic texts describes religious rituals. For example, it describes how sacrifices should be performed. Priests placed animals, food, or drinks to be sacrificed in a fire. The Aryans believed that the fire would carry these offerings to the gods. A second collection of Vedic texts describes secret rituals that only certain people could perform. In fact, the rituals were so secret that they had to be done in the forest, far from other people."</p>	<p>REPLACE: We recommend changing to "One collection of Vedic texts contain philosophical ideas that form the basis of Hindu spirituality and practices. The other collection describes religious rituals. Rituals were conducted for many reasons and often involved offerings of fruits, grains, and flowers to various deities which were considered to represent different aspects of the Divine or Brahman. Rituals also frequently utilized the sacred fire, which represented the energy and light of the universe and the Divine."</p> <p>The Vedas are often categorised into jnana kanda and karma kanda. The former is a collection that have philosophical and spiritual ideas, the latter contain elaborate procedures for rituals that provide a connection between humans and the Divine. It would be important to mention both. Moreover, the part on "secret rituals" unnecessarily exoticizes the Vedas and should thus be removed.</p>
179	<p>"As Indian society developed, Brahmins came to be regarded as the highest group. Although Brahmins had a special religious role, many important Hindu writers and teachers did not belong to this varna."</p>	<p>REPLACE/ADD: We recommend the addition of the following at the end of the last line. "'As Indian society developed, jati recognized as Brahmin came to be regarded as the highest group. Although they had a special religious role, many important Hindu writers and teachers did not belong to these jati. Vyasa, who is considered to have compiled the Vedas and Valmiki who composed the Ramayana were not born into a jati recognized as Brahmin."</p> <p>This misrepresents the concept of varna with jati. Varna is best understood as a personality type, and thus is based on one's inherent qualities. Jati is a class, often based on occupation or guild. Thus, jati would be the more appropriate term for what is being attempted to be conveyed in this sentence. Also, the addition is part of the HSS framework and adding it would help provide better context.</p>

181	“People from Persia and other kingdoms in Central Asia, for example, brought their ideas to India.”	REMOVE: We recommend the deletion of this line as it is vague and inaccurate. Which ideas are being talked about here? What time period? While there was always an interaction and cultural exchange between the regions, it would be incorrect to essentialize that as a significant influence on Hinduism, unless it can be shown as such. Even if one were to consider the thesis of Aryan migration to be true, which posits that Aryans came into India while they wrote the earliest parts Vedas (in fact the earliest parts of the Rig Veda), most parts of the Vedas and other corpus of texts were all composed in India.
181	"Hinduism was also influenced by religious texts written in Tamil and other South Asian languages."	REPLACE: We recommend the line to be changed to "Hindu religious texts were written in many languages including Tamil." Scholars have shown that the earliest Tamil literature had Sanskrit influence, so it is incorrect to suggest that religious texts written in Tamil influenced Hinduism. In fact the earliest Tamil literature was already part of the corpus of Hinduism. Please refer to Shulman (2016), Tamil - A Biography.
186	“A man sitting at the foot of the tree begins to speak about how one ought to live. His words are like nothing you have heard from the Hindu priests.”	REPLACE: We recommend changing the line to “A man sitting at the foot of the tree begins to speak about how one ought to live, how one ought to meditate, how one ought to extinguish one's desire to seek peace. You have heard similar words from Hindu sages before, but his words seem compelling.” While Hindu priests may not have focused on such concepts, Hindu texts and sages and ascetics did. It would more accurate to revise this line to accurately reflect this fact. The line, as it is currently constructed, implies that these are new ideas and in contrast to Hinduism. Moreover, Buddha still spoke to core Hindu concepts like karma, dharma, and samsara, only his interpretations may have been slightly different. To suggest that "his words are like nothing you have heard from the Hindu priests" is a gross overstatement.
188	“The Buddha also challenged the authority of the Hindu priests, the Brahmins. He did not believe that they or their rituals were necessary for enlightenment. Instead, he taught that it was the responsibility of each individual to work for his or her own	REMOVE/REPLACE: We recommend the deletion of these lines. There is no evidence to suggest that Buddha challenged the authority of Brahmins. This is an interpolation by colonial scholars and is not supported by textual or historical evidence. Rather Buddhist texts tell us that he sought to reinstate the ideal role of

	liberation.”	"Brahmins," which he believed was to seek wisdom. It is also inaccurate to suggest that he was against rituals. He discouraged excessive ritualism, but encouraged and continued to perform rituals and traditions. Buddhists continue to perform many Vedic rituals even today.
188	“Some of the Buddha’s teachings challenged traditional Hindu ideas. For example, the Buddha told people that they did not have to follow the Vedas to achieve enlightenment.”	Furthermore, his teaching that it was the responsibility of each individual to work for his or her own liberation was similar to what Hindu scriptures and sages propounded.
378	“They did not need to visit temples or priests to reach liberation. Instead, they could express their devotion through singing, dancing, or ceremonial parades.”	REPLACE: We recommend slightly altering this line to “They could express their devotion through singing, dancing, or ceremonial parades as well as through visiting temples.” While it is true that the Bhakti tradition taught many diverse forms of reaching Divine, it also true that many of the Bhakti saints such as Purandara dasa lived and sang in temples and Alvar saints praise the ‘divya desams’ or temples in their Tamil bhakti compositions. Moreover, home altars have been common practice for millennia, so the current wording is phrased in a way to suggest that ritual relation was diminished by Bhakti, when in fact, it was arguably strengthened for each individual.
378	“These poems were written not in Sanskrit but in the languages that people spoke, like Hindi or Tamil.”	REPLACE: We recommend changing this line to “These poems were written both in Sanskrit as well as vernacular languages such as Hindi or Tamil.” Bhakti literature was composed both in Sanskrit as well as in vernacular languages. The saint, Ramananda, for example, composed works in Sanskrit.

National Geographic World History: Ancient Civilizations and Medieval and Modern Times

No	Page	Text	Edits
1	142	Brahmanism	REPLACE: We recommend replacing the word 'Brahmanism' with 'Vedic Period' or 'Early Hinduism'. Brahmanism is a colonial construct and most scholars do not use it to describe early Hinduism. The term was dropped from the HSS Frameworks last year.

2	148	<p>"Historians know little about Harappan religion. Infact, much about the Harappans remains a mystery."</p>	<p>REMOVE/REPLACE: The current line should be removed and replaced with: "Some of the statues and figurines, as well as images on the seals, show features that are all present in modern Hinduism, such as a male figure that resembles the Hindu God Shiva in a meditating posture, as well as small clay figures in the posture of the traditional Hindu greeting "namaste."</p> <p>The HSS Framework mentions that the artifacts excavated from Harappan sites show features of modern day Hinduism, and the suggested words are from the framework narrative. We suggest these additions, which are consistent with current scholarship on this time period.</p>
3	148	<p>Overtime, a social class system developed that determined how people lived. Priests were at the top, followed by warriors and nobles. Freeman, farmers, and traders were third in importance. At the bottom were slaves, laborers, and artisans. Non-Aryans made up most of the lowest class. Many centuries later, another group developed that was considered even lower.</p>	<p>REMOVE: We recommend the deletion of these lines as these are representative of an outdated Orientalist view about Indian social structure that reduces multiple identities into a unidimensional heirarchical structure. Current scholarship has shown that this description which was held by Colonial scholars is simply untrue. From ancient times up to today, there has been fluidity and movement within the system on the individual as well on the group level. Scholars of colonialism have shown that this view of Indian social structure is a product of colonialism that emerged out of India's encounter with the West's colonial rule. This also conflates two distinct concepts—varna (the oft-depicted 'four castes' that are based on one's individual temperament and natural abilities) and jati (the actual hereditary roles that are functional in much of contemporary India, sometimes known as 'sub-castes').</p>

4	149	<p>The Aryan hierarchy developed into a rigid caste system that was hereditary and could never be changed. People’s castes dictated the kind of work they did and whom they could marry. The caste system even dictated what people could eat. Such definitions applied to people’s children as well.</p>	<p>REMOVE: We recommend the deletion of these lines as these are representative of an outdated Orientalist view about Indian social structure that reduces multiple identities into a unidimensional hierarchical structure.</p> <p>Current scholarship has shown that this description which was held by Colonial scholars is simply untrue. From ancient times up to today, there has been fluidity and movement within the system at the individual as well group level. Scholars of colonialism have shown that this view of the Indian social structure is a product of colonialism and emerged out of India's encounter with the West's colonial rule. The term ‘caste’ itself is also inexact, conflating two distinct concepts—varna (the oft-depicted ‘four castes’ that are personality types based on one’s individual temperament and natural abilities) and jati (the actual community groups, often occupation-based, that are functional in much of contemporary India, sometimes known as ‘sub-castes’).</p>
5	150	<p>According to Hindu beliefs, people’s actions and conduct create karma , which determines the kind of life into which they will be reborn. The karma of someone who leads a good and moral life leads to rebirth into a better life. A life filled with misdeeds creates bad karma, which leads to rebirth into a life of greater hardship and suffering.</p>	<p>REPLACE: According to the Hindu concept of karma, people's karma or actions shape their present and future circumstances, including the kind of life they might live in this lifetime and the next. Good karma or good actions lead to better present life as well as future lives. A life filled with misdeeds creates bad karma, which leads to hardships and suffering in this life as well as in future lives.</p>
6	150	<p>One path involves the practice of yoga—a series of exercises intended to help a person achieve spiritual insight. An important idea underlying such practices is to seek and know the truth.</p>	<p>REPLACE: "One path involves the practice of yoga—a series of practices intended to help a person achieve spiritual insight. The different yogas or paths include meditation, selfless service, worship and study of scriptures. An important idea underlying such practices is to seek and know the truth."</p> <p>The four paths of yoga are required by the HSS framework.</p>

McGraw Hill: Inquiry Journal

	Page	Text	Edits
1	248	"The arrival of the Aryans brought great changes in India, including social system and beliefs that would become Hinduism."	REMOVE: We recommend removing this current line as it is not based on evidence or scholarly consensus. Even assuming the Aryan migration theory to be true, there is no evidence to suggest that social systems were brought into India by them and became part of Hinduism. In, fact even according to the Aryan migration theory most of Vedic and other Hindu texts that are source of Hindu beliefs were all composed in India
2	253	"We know about the Indus culture from studying the ruins of two major cities, Mohenjo-Daro (mohen-HEHN-joh DAHR-oh) and Harappa (huh-RA-puh). Mohenjo-Daro was discovered in the 1920s by archeologists"	REPLACE: We recomend changing the current line to "We know about the Indus culture from studying the ruins of hundreds of sites excavated along the banks of the rivers Indus and Saraswati. Important among them are the two major cities, Mohenjo-Daro (mohen-HEHN-joh DAHR-oh) and Harappa (huh-RA-puh) which were the first to be excavated in the 1920s by archeologists." Current archeological research is exploring the ruins of multiple sites on the banks of the Indus and Saraswati rivers to form conclusions about the Indus culture. This slight change would better reflect that reality.
3	255	"Historians have found many clay seals, stamps, statues, and figurines in Harappa. Some of these show features that are all present in modern Indian religions, such as male and female figures that resemble different deities, as well as small clay figures in traditional greeting poses."	REPLACE: We recomend changing the current line to "Historians have found many clay seals, stamps, statues, and figurines in Harappa. Some of these show features that are all present in Hinduism today, such as male and female figures in meditative pose that resemble different deities, as well as small clay figures in traditional greeting poses - 'Namaste'." The HSS Framework mentions that the artifacts excavated from Harappan sites show features of modern day Hinduism, and the suggested words are from the framework narrative. We suggest these additions, which are consistent with current scholarship on this time period.

4	256	<p>"Like most nomadic people, the early Aryans had no written language. After they settled in villages, they developed a written language called Sanskrit (SAN•skriht). Sanskrit gave people a way to record sales, trade, and land ownership. Eventually, Aryan hymns, stories, poems, and prayers were also written in Sanskrit. Later, they were recorded and collected into sacred texts known as the Vedas (VAY•duhs). Examples of the Vedas remain today."</p>	<p>REPLACE: We recommend that the text be replaced with "Like most nomadic people, the early Indic people had no written language. Their prayers, hymns, spiritual and philosophical insights, stories, and poems, collectively called the Vedas (VAY•duhs), were in a language called Sanskrit (SAN•skriht), and preserved and passed on through an oral tradition. Over time, they developed a written script for Sanskrit. Sanskrit also gave people a way to record sales, trade, and land ownership. The Vedas are still studied today by Hindus and others across the world for their spiritual and philosophical insights. The Vedas are also the basis for many rites and rituals."</p>
5	258	<p>"Not all religious teachers or sages were Brahmins."</p>	<p>ADD: We recommend the addition of the following at the end of the current line. "Many important sages such as Vyasa who compiled the Vedas and Valmiki who composed the Hindu epic Ramayana were not born into jati that associated as Brahmin."</p> <p>Vyasa and Valmiki are well known and prominent sages and are consistent with the references in the HSS Framework.</p>
6	259	<p>"In India's leading families, a boy had a guru (GUR•oo), or teacher, until he attended school in the city."</p>	<p>REMOVE: We recommend the removal of this sentence as it is inaccurate and confusing. People across Indian society had and have gurus or teachers for spiritual as well as secular learning. Having a guru is also not limited to males. Moreover the concept of going to the city for school is a more recent phenomena.</p>
7	262	<p>"Another part of Hinduism is the belief in reincarnation (REE-ihn-kahr-NAY-shuhn), or the rebirth of the soul. Hindus strive for moksha, the ultimate peace. Hindus believe that most souls do not reunite with Brahman immediately after death. Instead each soul must first pass through many lives."</p>	<p>REPLACE: We recommend making the following change "Another part of Hinduism is the belief in reincarnation (REE-ihn-kahr-NAY-shuhn), or the rebirth of the soul. Hindus believe that souls go through cycles of birth and death, with each life bringing opportunities to grow and improve spiritually. Moksha is the ultimate goal and entails a profound peace and union or deep connection with Brahman. Moksha can be attained through various paths of yoga or spiritual practices and ethical living."</p>

8	264	<p>"During the 500s BCE some Indians felt unhappy with the many ceremonies of the Hindu religion. They wanted a simpler, more spiritual faith. Many trained their minds to focus and think in positive ways. The training was called meditation. Some seekers developed new ideas and became religious teachers.</p> <p>One of these teachers was Siddhartha Gautama..."</p>	<p>REPLACE: "During the 500s BCE Indians increasingly started taking up meditation and an ascetic way of life. Meditation involved training ones mind to experience peace and happiness. Many learnt meditative techniques from Hindu sages and teachers and built upon these practices. Some seekers developed new ideas and became religious teachers.</p> <p>One of these teachers was Siddhartha Gautama..."</p> <p>The current line inaccurately asserts that Hinduism was not a "spiritual faith" and that meditation only started with Buddhism. While Hinduism did contain rituals, it similarly placed an emphasis on following a spiritual path to reach the Divine that was propagated through scriptures and by Hindu sages. This line is reflective of a pattern in McGraw Hill's materials that present subsequent Indic religions as an improvement upon or superior to Hinduism, and gloss over the dynamic relationships between the various Indic religions.</p>
9		<p>"Many people accepted the Buddha's message especially Untouchables and Indians in the lower jati. For the first time, these groups heard that they, too, could reach enlightenment."</p>	<p>REMOVE: We recommend the removal of this line as there is significant evidence to the contrary. There were many important Hindu sages who were from the lowest of classes (the HSS framework also makes a mention of Vyasa and Valmiki in this context). Hindu scriptures and sages propounded the message that all beings were inherently divine and capable of achieving moksha. Moreover, as recorded in Buddhist texts, most of Buddha's followers were known to be Kshatriyas or Brahmins.</p>

10	269	<p>"After a particularly bloody battle, Ashoka no longer wished to fight. The loss of life before his eyes changed the way he viewed the world. The emperor of mighty Mauryan Empire converted to Buddhism, that greatly affected how he ruled ancient India. Ashoka committed his life to spreading the teachings of the Buddha to his people."</p>	<p>REPLACE: We recommend changing these lines to the following "After a particularly bloody battle, Ashoka no longer wished to fight. It is believed that the loss of life before his eyes changed the way he viewed the world. The emperor of mighty Mauryan Empire, who had embraced Buddhism a few years before the war, now committed his life to spreading the teachings of the Buddha to his people."</p> <p>This section erroneously asserts that Ashoka embraced Buddhism after the the war against the Kalingas, when scholarly and archeological evidence of Ashoka's rock edicts indicate that he in fact converted to Buddhism several years before the war.</p>
11	271	<p>"Ashoka was an unusual king. Like many rulers, Ashoka began his rule with fierce wars of conquest. Eventually, he came to hate killing. After one battle, he looked at the fields covered with the dead and wounded soldiers. He was horrified by what he saw. He decided that he would follow Buddhist teachings and become a man of peace.</p> <p>Ashoka kept his promise. During the rest of his life, he tried to improve the lives of his people. Ashoka made laws that encourages good deeds, family harmony, non violence, and toleration of other religions. He created hospitals for people and for animals. He built fine roads, with houses and shade trees for the travelers' comfort."</p>	<p>REPLACE: We recommend making minor changes to this section as follows "Ashoka was an unusual king. Like many rulers, Ashoka began his rule with fierce wars of conquest. Eventually, he came to hate killing. It is said that after one battle, he looked at the fields covered with the dead and wounded soldiers. He was horrified by what he saw. He decided that he would uphold the teachings of Buddhism, a faith he had embraced years before, and become a man of peace.</p> <p>The edicts that he inscribed on rocks and pillars say that Ashoka kept his promise. They say that during the rest of his life, he tried to improve the lives of his people. They also say that Ashoka made laws that encouraged good deeds, family harmony, non violence, and toleration of other religions. And that he created hospitals for people and for animals. He built fine roads, with houses and shade trees for the travelers' comfort."</p>
12	272	<p>Ashoka's able leadership helped the Mauryan Empire prosper. India's good roads helped it become center of a large trade network the stretched to the Mediterranean Sea.</p>	<p>ADD: We recommend making the following addition "The able leadership of Ashoka and other Maurya rulers helped the Mauryan Empire prosper. India's good roads helped it become center of a large trade network the stretched to the Mediterranean Sea."</p> <p>While it is true that Ashok's leadership did in fact help the Maurya Empire prosper, the actions of other Maurya rulers did as well.</p>

13	273	Gupta rulers practiced the Hindu religion as did many of their subjects. They donated money to support Hindu scholars and build Hindu temples.	<p>ADD: We recommend making the following addition in the current line: "Gupta rulers practiced the Hindu religion as did many of their subjects. They donated money to support Hindu and Buddhist scholars and build Hindu temples and Buddhist Viharas."</p> <p>There is significant historical evidence that points to the support of Buddhism by the Gupta Empire. Travel records from the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Fa-Hien (Faxian), for instance, show extensive state patronage for Buddhism during the Gupta Empire.</p>
14	275	Some writings about mathematics from the Gupta dynasty have survived. The math formulas were changed into poems called sudras.	<p>SPELLING CORRECTION: "Some writings about mathematics from the Gupta dynasty have survived. The math formulas were changed into poems called sutras."</p> <p>Sutra is misspelled in this line.</p>
15	280	The Laws of Manu, a part of the Vedas	<p>REMOVE: We recommend deleting the second part of the sentence "a part of the Vedas."</p> <p>The current sentence is factually inaccurate, as the Laws of Manu are not part of the Vedas.</p>
		7th Grade	
16	160	"Bhakti derives from a sanskrit word that means "to share". Since followers of bhakti choose one of the Hindu deities to express their love and devotion to, bhakti came to mean "to choose."	<p>REPLACE: We recommending changing the current line to "Bhakti derives from a Sanskrit root word that means "to devote". Followers of Bhakti express their love and devotion to a chosen deity who is their favorite expression of the Divine."</p> <p>The above revision more accurately describes the Bhakti tradition.</p>
17	351	"Guru Nanak challenged the authority of the Hindu Brahmins and the jati system."	<p>REPLACE: We recommend changing the current line to "Guru Nanak challenged the authority of some priests and social abuses of the jati system."</p> <p>The current line simplifies the dynamic relationship between Guru Nanak and Hinduism and incorrectly implies that he opposed Hinduism or Brahmins.</p>

Discovery Education Social Studies Techbook: Ancient World History

Page	Citation	Edits
	Images	
Concept 6.3, Explore 3	Image of cows and trash on page	
Concept 6.2, Elaborate, Aryan Impact on India, Page 10	Image of children carrying manure	REMOVE: These sections use graphics (including images, photographs, etc). that represent Hinduism and India as poor, primitive, and filthy. They are stereotyping and border on insensitive and derogatory, and do not accurately represent the subject being discussed. We recommend that all the following pictures listed be removed and replaced with more appropriate and respectful graphics that better represent Hinduism and Indian civilization.
Unit 3 Chapter 6 Concept 6.2 Elaborate Activities 3	Image of slums in the activity suggested	
Concept 6.2, Elaborate 3	Primary Source: Excerpts from The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India	REMOVE: We recommend the deletion of this excerpt as the text uses such outdated colonial era understandings to discuss the cultures, traditions and peoples the British colonized. Much of the information and many of the descriptions are neither accurate nor form a balanced perspective.
Sub section: 'Life in Ancient India's Major Cities'	"Historians and linguists have only partially decoded the language, which consists of 250 to 500 characters. Many scholars are beginning to connect the language to the Dravidian language family (which includes the modern language of Tamil spoken in southern South Asia)."	REPLACE: We recommend changing the current lines to "Historians and linguists have for many decades tried to decode the language, which consists of 250 to 500 characters, but the attempts have been inconclusive." There is enough evidence that contradict a Dravidian Harappa hypothesis, for example Dravidian languages had a base 8 number system while, Harappan seals show a base ten.
Video segment 'Indus River Valley: Early Innovation'	"The scholars living in Harappa and Mohenjodaro, cities established nearly 5 thousand years ago, were responsible for a number accomplishments in the Arts, Science and Mathematics".	REPLACE: We recommend changing the current line to "The scholars living in the numerous cities on the banks of Indus and Saraswati rivers which were established nearly 5 thousand years ago, were responsible for a number accomplishments in the Arts, Science and Mathematics." Current archaeological research is exploring the ruins of multiple sites on the banks of the Indus and Saraswati rivers to form conclusions about the Indus culture.
Video Segment Migrants and Aryan Nomads	"Dravidians moved to South to protect their language and traditions." and uses words like "dark skinned and light skinned people".	REMOVE: We recommend the deletion of these lines as they are not supported by historical or archeological evidence and are based on contentious colonial race theories.

<p>Section on 'Mauryan Empire - Ashoka and Buddhism'</p>	<p>"At the end of war against the Kalingas, Ashoka converted to a religion of peace: Buddhism.</p>	<p>REPLACE: We recommend changing this line to "A few years before the war against the Kalingas, Ashoka converted to Buddhism. Only after the bloodiest battle did he embrace the teaching peace."</p> <p>This section erroneously asserts that Ashoka embraced Buddhism after the the war against the Kalingas, when scholarly and archaeological evidence of Ashoka's rock edicts indicate that he in fact converted to Buddhism several years before the war. It further implies that Buddhism was a religion of peace, while Hinduism was not.</p>
<p>Section 'Warrior who embraced peace'</p>	<p>"What is certain is that soon after his conquest of Kalinga, Ashoka became a Buddhist. He renounced war and began a reign of peace and nonviolence."</p>	<p>REMOVE: We recommend removing this line. As noted in the edit above, this line is based on an incorrect timeline. It also similarly implies that prior to Buddhism, peace and nonviolence were not part of Hindu teachings.</p>
<p>7th Grade The Rise of Gupta Empire</p>	<p>The section on Gupta Empire says "Both the Guptas and the Cholas were Hindu, and so they supported Hinduism over all other religions. Because of this, Buddhism began to decline during the Gupta and Chola ages".</p>	<p>REPLACE: We recommend changing the current text to "Although both the Guptas and the Cholas were Hindu and supported Hinduism, they also supported Buddhism through financial support and the construction of Buddhist temples and monasteries."</p> <p>There is significant historical evidence that points to the support of Buddhism by the Gupta and Chola Empires. Travel records from the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Fa-Hien (Faxian), for instance, show extensive state patronage for Buddhism during the Gupta Empire. Similarly, the Cholas are known to have created Buddhist Viharas (monasteries/temples) in modern day Sri Lanka.</p>

<p>Ancient India 6.1, Engage, Pg 1, Geography of India Link</p>	<p>Hindus make up about 80 percent of modern Indian society. 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>REMOVE: We recommend removing this passage. The current passage is problematic as it inaccurately describes caste and fails to distinguish between two different concepts of varna and jati. The caste system is not unique to Hinduism (caste being practiced in other religious communities in India as well, including among Christians, Sikhs, and Muslims), nor have all Hindus uniformly embraced it throughout history, with many seeking to reform or overturn it. The situation is analogous to an introduction to Christianity immediately launching into discussions of slavery and feudalism, with little or no discussion of Christian beliefs about God, faith, salvation, personal morality, and so on.</p>
<p>Ancient India 6.1, Engage, Pg 1, Geography of India Link - Video "Welcome to India"</p>	<p>India is a country that is exotic as it is mysterious.</p>	<p>REPLACE: We recommend changing this line to "India is a country with a rich and ancient culture that dates back thousands of years."</p> <p>This line has no redeeming academic value and only furthers Orientalist views on India and otherizes Indians and Hindus as "exotic" and "mysterious." Instead, it should describe something relevant about Indian civilization, as we have suggested above.</p>
<p>Ancient India 6.1, Explore, Pg 2 - Indian Subcontinent link</p>	<p>The first civilization in South Asia formed along the Indus River valley, and it lasted from about 3000 to 1500 BCE. Groups of nomadic people called Aryans then migrated to this empire from central Asia and broke it into smaller kingdoms. The Aryans introduced Hinduism to South Asia.</p>	<p>REPLACE: We recommend changing these lines to "The first civilization in Ancient India formed along the Indus River valley, and it lasted from about 3000 to 1500 BCE. Some scholars believe that groups of nomadic people called Aryans then migrated to this region from central Asia. Early Hinduism developed in Ancient India."</p> <p>This passage contains an unnecessary discussion on highly contested scholarship on Aryan migration. Even the theory of Aryan migration is not consistent with this description. If one were to posit such a migration, most Vedic and Hindu texts were still composed in India according to the geographical information that is embedded within these texts. Hence it is completely inaccurate that Hinduism was introduced by Aryans into South Asia.</p>

<p>"Unit 3 Chapter 6 Concept 6.2 Elaborate Activities 3": 'India's Rulers and Society'</p>	<p>Life in My Caste' activity</p>	<p>We recommend the complete deletion of this activity as this would only lead to a simplistic stereotyping view of Indian caste. Also the guidelines of adoption prohibit any role playing.</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------