



October 31, 2017

Dr. Michael Kirst, President, State Board of Education  
Members, State Board of Education  
1430 N Street, Room 5111  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: 2017 History-Social Science Adoption, Academic Coalition Submission

Dear Dr. Kirst and Members of the State Board of Education:

We write to you as a group of professional scholars of Indian religious traditions, history, and social sciences to submit comments on the proposed K-8 History-Social Science instructional materials and textbook drafts under consideration for adoption by the California State Board of Education. Specifically, we seek to bring to your attention the highly problematic content in the sixth and seventh grade sections covering Hinduism and India.

While we fully agree with the Instructional Quality Commission's recommendation on September 28 to reject the *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: Kids Discover California Social Studies (K-6)* and *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: Social Studies for California (6-8)* draft textbooks and note that some improvements were made in other drafts, we believe that the Commission did not go nearly far enough in correcting the underlying Orientalist narrative still present in other drafts, such as *McGraw Hill* and *National Geographic*. We believe that given the extensive issues with these drafts, they are unsuitable for use in California's public school curriculum.

We originally outlined several areas of concern and inaccuracies that were present across multiple publisher drafts in a letter dated August 16, 2017, and Professor Jeffery Long, Ph.D. reiterated these issues in a subsequent letter on September 25, 2017. We summarize them below:

1. the portrayal of Hinduism and India as poor, primitive, and dirty by utilizing stereotypical narratives and images;

2. inaccurate and unfavorable comparisons of Hinduism with other religions, and a generally negative approach towards Hinduism, while similar negative references in other religions are largely avoided;
3. inadequate and often inaccurate descriptions of core concepts and scriptures in Hinduism;
4. the inaccurate description of Indian social structures; and
5. the use of the outdated and colonial era theories of Aryanism and Brahmanism to describe the origins of Indian civilization and Hinduism. In particular, the narrative in some textbooks essentializes Indian history into a description of racial categories based on theories and hypotheses that are still being vigorously debated in academia.

Overall, we believe that these concerns and the underlying narrative stem from dated linguistic theories and a lack of archaeological evidence, as well as what academics view as the influence of Orientalism on the discourse on India and Hinduism.

These issues in the textbooks are urgent and of a critical nature, not only because they run contrary to the stated objectives of California's *Education Code* and *The Standards for Evaluating Instructional Materials for Social Content*, which prohibit any group from being portrayed adversely or as inferior, but also because they do not provide an accurate understanding of a culture and religion that form an important part of California's diverse and multicultural fabric.

As educators and scholars, we believe it is absolutely critical that the State Board only adopt those draft textbooks that are historically accurate, equitable in their coverage of all religious traditions and civilizations, and culturally competent, since these textbooks will be used by elementary and middle school students across California for the next several years.

Consequently, we provide the recommendations below for each of the following publisher draft textbooks listed in the attached document.

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

Respectfully submitted (in alphabetical order, other than the lead author who is listed first):

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Bloomsbury Academic Publications  
Author, "The Ramnami Samaj and its Historical Development." in *Readings on Dalit Identity: History, Literature and Religion*, New Delhi: Orient Black Swan Private Ltd. (forthcoming).  
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Author-Translator, Bhagavad Gītā (Harper Collins Publishers, 2010)  
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***Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: Kids Discover California Social Studies (K-6)***

***Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: Social Studies for California (6-8)***

We concur with the assessment of the Instructional Quality Commission that the draft textbooks from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt are so deeply flawed and are thus not suitable for use by elementary and middle school children. We believe that they would require a complete rewrite if all the problems are to be addressed. Both the *Kids Discover California Social Studies (K-6)* and *Social Studies for California (6-8)* materials, for example, are replete with stereotypical and Orientalist images and captions, and trivializing questions that belittle and caricature Hindus and Indians, such as “What’s Your Karma?” and “Are Unicorns Real?” They further reduce Hinduism’s most sacred scriptures, the *Vedas*, to nothing more than “spells” “charms” and “secret rituals.” These issues have been identified in detail in our previous submission.

Furthermore, the narratives in both drafts lack adequate and accurate descriptions of core scriptures and concepts in Hinduism, including the *Vedas* (the primary body of Hindu scriptures), the four paths of yoga (meditation, selfless service, worship and study of scriptures), and the four primary goals of life (dharma, kama, artha, and moksha), just to name a few. These are all covered in the History-Social Science (HSS) Framework adopted by the State Board in 2016.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt’s programs also contain several instances of stereotypical portrayals of Indian social structures and practices. In multiple places in their textbooks, Hinduism is depicted as inferior or in opposition to other Indic religions, completely ignoring the dynamic relationship between Hinduism and other Indic traditions. We believe this constitutes adverse reflection of Hindus and Hinduism, as codified in California’s *Education Code*.

Finally, the textbook narratives on ancient India, especially in *Social Studies for California (6-8)*, rely heavily on racial categories and terminologies which are not appropriate for impressionable children, and are instead better left to college level discussions. We have elaborated on this issue further in the section below on McGraw Hill’s textbook drafts, which contains similar problems.

These are but a few examples reflective of the vast problems that we found with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt’s materials and we therefore recommend that the *Houghton Mifflin Kids Discover California Social Studies (K-6)* and *Social Studies for California (6-9)* drafts be rejected.

***National Geographic Learning: Nat Geo World History (6-8)***

As we noted in our prior letter, National Geographic’s materials are severely outdated. They completely disregard the new History-Social (HSS) Framework adopted by the State Board in 2016, thereby leaving out many important additions and corrections made to the Framework during the latest revision process. National Geographic’s narrative thus lacks adequate and

accurate descriptions of core scriptures and concepts in Hinduism, including the *Vedas* (the primary body of Hindu scriptures), the four paths of yoga (meditation, selfless service, worship and study of scriptures), and the four primary goals of life (dharma, kama, artha, and moksha), among others. **Overall, they leave out 20 important topics mentioned in the framework.** It is pertinent to note that the draft textbook also completely fails to mention the positive contributions of Hinduism. For instance, important aesthetic and intellectual traditions (e.g., Sanskrit literature, including the Bhagavad Gita; medicine; metallurgy; and mathematics, including Hindu Arabic numerals and the zero) are required by the Content Standards, but are left out of National Geographic's materials.

They also conflate the Hindu religion with caste to such a degree that it is erroneously depicted as the primary defining characteristic of Hindu practice. Their materials similarly confuse 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'). This distinction was made in the HSS Framework, but was not followed by National Geographic.

Moreover, the materials entirely gloss over the fluidity and movement within the varna-jati system on the individual as well on the group level, and ignore the resistance to caste-based discrimination that has always been an integral part of Hindu society. Their drafts also consistently perpetuate the outdated and colonial era theories of Aryanism and Brahmanism to describe the origins of Indian civilization and Hinduism. Since these theories are not consistent with modern scholarship, discussion on both of these concepts were minimized in the HSS Framework. Additional positive changes on Hinduism and India that were made to the HSS Framework, including the connection between features of excavated Harappan artifacts and modern Hinduism, are similarly ignored by National Geographic, while scientific and other achievements by Hindu civilization are left out.

In sum, *National Geographic Learning: Nat Geo World History (6-8)* does not provide an accurate or a balanced perspective on Indian history and culture, and Hinduism. Moreover, it completely fails to incorporate the changes that were made to the newly adopted HSS Framework in 2016. These changes to the Framework not only corrected some of the problems in the sections on Hinduism and ancient India, but also added positive contributions of Hindu and Indian civilization. By ignoring the Framework, this publisher has chosen to present an unbalanced, outdated and inaccurate view on Hinduism and India. We therefore recommend the rejection of its textbooks.

***McGraw Hill (Grades 6-8)***

A handful of edits that were proposed in Professor Jeffery Long's September 25, 2017 letter were accepted by the Instructional Quality Commission and incorporated into McGraw Hill's materials. Other edits were not accepted, however, leaving the draft textbook inaccurate in these areas. For instance, the timeline and facts surrounding Ashoka and his embrace of Buddhism on page 271 remain historically inaccurate. It is thus critical to accept all of the proposed edits from Professor Long on this topic to remedy this issue.

In addition, we had previously expressed concerns regarding the textbooks' reliance on the colonial era theories of Aryanism and Brahmanism to describe the origins of Indian civilization and Hinduism. As these concerns have not yet been addressed by the publisher, we expound on them further below and offer concrete edits to rectify this issue.

The hypothesis that a group of fair-skinned nomads from Central Asia called "Aryans" invaded Harappan cities (referred to as the Aryan Invasion Theory) and displaced and forced further south indigenous dark-skinned "Dravidians" was posited during the colonial era and is no longer considered plausible by most academics. It's now been decades since the debate has shifted to various Indo-European migration scenarios that are still vigorously debated in academia. While the debates continue, we wish to point out that several studies have shown that the relationships between race, skin color, and language are far more complex than previously understood. It is also pertinent to note that the Aryan Invasion Theory of India and the idea of "Aryan Supremacy" which led to the Jewish holocaust in Europe, were both derived from the same theoretical foundation, and were often constructed and reinforced using theories of "Scientific racism."

It is thus of the utmost importance that the discussion on ancient India not be essentialized into speculative racial categories that are at the heart of the Aryan invasion theory, and that we now know are not as clearly demarcated as was once assumed. This is also critical given the hateful racial connotations attached to the word "Aryan" in the context of modern political movements. We accordingly believe that the term "Aryan" is not appropriate to describe 'ancient Indians' in school textbooks and that there are better alternatives which we have suggested in our edits. We understand that the outdated History-Social Science Content Standards, last adopted in 1998, still mention the largely discredited Aryan Invasion Theory. The textbooks, however, should only utilize this to describe the construction of the theory in the colonial context, while noting that the theory is now obsolete. But more importantly, the entire discussion on ancient India should not be framed by the contours of an outdated theory.

Despite the existence of updated scholarship and the inherent problems with Aryan terminology, McGraw Hill's textbooks continue to discuss "Aryans" as a neatly delineated racial group. For example, their materials frequently use phrases such as [*italics added below for emphasis*]:

- "*Aryans* raised cattle for meat, milk, and butter."
- "*Aryans* were expert horse riders and hunters, as well as fierce warriors. As they moved about, the *Aryans* sometimes raided nearby villages for food."
- "...bands of *Aryans* moved throughout India. These groups mixed with the descendants of the Indus Valley people."

A brief disclaimer in the second paragraph that "Aryans were not a race or ethnic group" notwithstanding, even a discussion on the development of ancient literature in the Sanskrit and Tamil languages is subsumed within the narrative of Aryan-Dravidian binaries. As noted above, this is deeply problematic because it essentializes Indian history into speculative racial categories. Notably, this approach of describing a culture based on racial categories seems to be followed only for ancient India and not for other ancient civilizations. For example, the section on Ancient Persia has no mention or discussion of the other branch of Indo-Europeans - the Indo-Iranians, nor do we see any other branches of Indo-Europeans referenced in any of McGraw Hill's materials.

We believe that such racial descriptions are unnecessary and not supported by factual evidence, and should thus be avoided. Instead, we suggest that the word "Aryan" be replaced with more accurate alternatives, such as 'Vedic people' or 'ancient Indians' depending on the context of the sentence.

The chart below offers specific suggested edits/corrections to address this and other issues in McGraw Hill's materials. If these edits/corrections are not incorporated in their entirety, it is our recommendation that *McGraw Hill (Grades 6-8)* should be rejected.

**McGraw Hill (Grades 6-8) Line Item Edits**

<b>S. No</b>	<b>Page No.</b>	<b>Current Text</b>	<b>Suggested Edit/Correction</b>
<b>6th Grade</b>			
1	255	“Indo-European people lived in central Asia but began migrating to other places. Some moved west to Europe or south to Iran. The Aryans went to India. “	REPLACE: We recommend this line to be replaced with “Some scholars posit that Indo-European people lived in central Asia and began migrating to other places. Some moved west to Europe or south to Iran. Aryans went to India.”
2	255	“Like most Indo-Europeans, the Aryans raised cattle for meat, milk, and butter. They moved from place to place to find pastures and water for their cattle. The Aryans were expert horse riders and hunters, as well as fierce warriors. As they moved about, the Aryans sometimes raided nearby villages for food.”	REMOVE: We recommend the deletion of this line. We have detailed the justifications for this in our letter above.
3	255	“These groups mixed with the descendants of the Indus Valley people. Together, they created a new culture. Over time, the Aryans in India adopted a new way of life. They settled down in one place and became farmers, though they still raised cattle.”	REPLACE: There is no clarity yet on the ethnic identity of the Indus Valley people. It remains a mystery and might only be resolved once there is adequate evidence, such as through the current DNA analysis that is being conducted on skeletal remains found at the site of Rakhigarhi. We thus recommend that this speculative paragraph be replaced with the following so that it minimizes uncertain racial descriptions and focuses more on the cultural aspects of that time period “These groups are said to have mixed with many other groups and evolved into what is called the Vedic culture after the ‘Vedas’ the

			sacred scriptures that were composed during that period.”
4	255	“The Aryans began to make iron tools to clear forests so they could farm the land.”	REMOVE : We recommend this line be deleted.
5	256	“The Aryans lived in tribes. Each tribe was led by a raja (RAH-jah), or prince. The rajas created their own small kingdoms, which often fought each other over cattle, treasure and land.”	REMOVE: We recommend the deletion of this line. We have detailed the justifications for this in our letter above.
6	256	"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."	REPLACE: We had suggested a change to this line in our last letter but it was not incorporated. The current text is inaccurate as the Vedas were transmitted orally and were written down only later, thus we recommend changing it to “The early Indic prayers, hymns, spiritual and philosophical insights, stories, and poems, are collectively called the Vedas (VAY•duhs). They were all in a language called Sanskrit (SAN•skriht), and were preserved and passed on through an oral tradition. Over time, a written script for Sanskrit was developed. 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.”
7	257	“Texts in the Dravidian languages also began to appear around 300 B.C.E. From this time until the end of the 1st century C.E there was a large number	REPLACE: The period being referred to is the Tamil Sangam period. We recommend the sentence be replaced with “Texts in Tamil also began to appear around 300 B.C.E. From this

		of written works produced in Dravidian languages.”	time until the end of the 1st century C.E there was a large number of works produced in Tamil, which like Sanskrit literature was also transmitted orally for many centuries before being written down.”
8	257	“1 EXPLAINING How did the Aryans change their way of life after they settled in India?”	REPLACE: As noted in the letter above, ancient Indian history should not be essentialized into the description of speculative racial groups. We recommend the replacement of this question with “1 EXPLAINING How did Vedic culture emerge in India?”
9	257	“2 INFERRING Based on what you know about the Aryans before they moved to the Indus Valley, how do you think the people already settled in the area felt about the Aryans' migration?”	REPLACE: This assumes that the outdated Aryan Invasion Theory (AIT), which posited that Aryans invaded and replaced the Harappan cities, is valid. There is absolutely no evidence for this theory, thus we recommend the replacement of this question with “2 INFERRING Based on what you know about the Harappans, how do you think they felt when the cities slowly started to decline and they had to move from areas surrounding river beds to other parts of India.”
10	258	“ The most powerful varnas were the Brahmins (BRAH•mihns) and Kshatriyas (KSHA•tree•uhs).”	REMOVE: We recommend the deletion of this line as it is based on a simplistic hierarchical understanding of Varnas. It is not true that Brahmins were always the most powerful. Power through wealth was for example in the hands of Vaisyas or merchants.
11	258	“The Brahmins were the priests - the people who performed religious ceremonies.”	ADD: We recommend the addition of the following at the end of the sentence. “They were also doctors, scholars and teachers.”
12	258	“Next were the Vaisyas (VYSH•yuhs), or commoners.”	REPLACE: “Commoners is not an accurate description of Vaisyas and we thus recommend this sentence be

			changed to “The Vaisyas (VYSH•yuhs), were merchants and business people.”
13	258	“Below the Vaisyas came the Sudras (SOO•druhs). Sudras were manual workers and servants.”	REPLACE: We recommend this be changed to “Sudras were laborers, artisans and artists”
14	258		ADD: We recommend the addition of the following line at the end of third paragraph “There was also a class of renunciates or ascetic who were not part of any varna or jati.”
15	259	“As in other ancient societies, men had more rights than women in India. Males inherited property, unless there were no sons in the family.”	REPLACE: Indian customs in ancient India were diverse. India had many matriarchal and matrilineal societies and women also inherited gold and other valuables known as streedhan. Accordingly, we recommend further nuancing this line to “As in other ancient societies, men had more rights than women in India. While men inherited property in most cases, women inherited gold and other valuables from their families.”
16	259	“Both men and women attended religious ceremonies and celebrations, but not as equals”	REPLACE: Men and women had their own rituals as well as common rituals and ceremonies. We recommend this sentence be changed to “Both men and women attended religious ceremonies and celebrations”
17	259	“In early India, boys and girls often married in their teens. People could not get divorced.”	REMOVE: We suggest this line be removed as it perpetuates an unnecessary stereotype with no educational value.
18	260	“Over time, the Brahmin religion blended with the ideas of other people of India. This mix of beliefs	REPLACE: This is based on the colonial construct of Brahmanism. We recommend that this be changed to

		eventually became known as Hinduism”	“Over time, the Vedic culture blended with the ideas of other people of India evolving into what became known as Hinduism”
19	261	“Most ancient Indians, however, could not easily understand the idea of Brahman. They believed in many different deities that were more like people.”	REPLACE: This is an inaccurate understanding of this Hindu precept. We recommend that this be replaced with “Hindus believe that Brahman can be realized through various paths of yoga, including by practising devotion to personal deities which were seen as the manifestation of Brahman.”
20	261	“These writings say that every living thing has a soul that is part of Brahman.”	REPLACE: We recommend changing this line to “These writings say that everything is a manifestation of Brahman.”
21	262	“According to karma, people's status in life is not an accident. It is based on what they did in past lives.”	REPLACE: We recommend the sentence be changed to “According to karma, people's condition in life is not an accident. It is based on what they did in past lives.”
22	263	“Beliefs such as reincarnation also made many Indians more accepting of the jati system. A devout Hindu believed that the people in a higher jati were superior and deserved their status.”	REMOVE: We recommend deleting this sentence, as it inaccurately describes Hindu beliefs, including the concepts of reincarnation and karma. Reincarnation and karma are not linked to status or jati as depicted in this line.
23		“Many Hindus today still believe”	REPLACE: We recommend this line be changed to “Many Hindus believe”
24	264	“During the 500s B.C.E., some Indians felt unhappy with the many ceremonies of the Hindu religion. They wanted a simpler, more spiritual faith.”	REPLACE: This is inaccurate. The Upanishads, an important body of Hindu spiritual and philosophical texts already contained many spiritual ideas that explored the methods of understanding the self, God, and the

			nature of the world. As Richard Gombrich and other scholars have shown, Buddhism built upon Upanishadic ideas. Indeed all Indic religions have rituals and ceremonies. We recommend that this be replaced with “During the 500s B.C.E many Indians took up meditation and other spiritual practices.”
25	264	"Dressed in a yellow robe, he traveled the country, stopping to meditate, or think deeply."	REPLACE: According to Buddhist philosophy, meditation is not thinking deeply but the cessation of thought. We recommend this sentence be replaced with "Dressed in a yellow robe, he traveled the country, stopping to meditate."
26	264	"Like Hindus, the Buddha believed that the world of the spirit was more important than the everyday world."	REPLACE: The current text is inaccurate, as Hindu scriptures lay equal emphasis on artha (material prosperity) and kama (fulfillment of desires), and the duties associated with the four Ashramas or stages of everyday life. We recommend that the current text be replaced with "Like Hindus, the Buddha believed that spirituality was as important as material pursuits."
27	265	"Like Hindus, the Buddha believed in reincarnation, but in a different way. He taught that people could end the cycle of rebirth by following the Eightfold Path rather than their dharma."	REPLACE: This is inaccurate. Buddha taught that following the Eightfold Path was in fact the way to follow one’s dharma. We recommend changing this line to "Like Hindus, the Buddha believed in reincarnation. He taught that people could end the cycle of rebirth by following the Eightfold Path."
28	267	"Mahavira gave up his wealth and property. He owned nothing and begged for his food."	REPLACE: We request that the sentence be changed to “Mahavira gave up his wealth and property and became an ascetic. He owned nothing and begged for his food.”

29	267	"Although a Hindu himself, Gandhi had learned much about ahimsa and other Jain teachings while growing up."	REPLACE: Gandhi mentions in his autobiography that he was inspired to follow the path of ahimsa by the Hindu scripture 'Bhagavad Gita.' We recommend that the sentence be changed to "Gandhi learned much about ahimsa and other Jain and Hindu teachings while growing up."
30	269	"The loss of life before his eyes changed the way he viewed the world. The emperor of the mighty Mauryan Empire converted to Buddhism, a decision that greatly affected how he ruled ancient India."	REPLACE: In our last letter we had pointed out that Ashoka had embraced Buddhism more than two years before the Kalinga war. This change was accepted only in one place on pg. 269. We recommend that this be corrected in other places too for historical accuracy. The current text should be replaced with "The loss of life before his eyes changed the way he viewed the world. The emperor of the mighty Mauryan Empire took up non-violence, a decision that greatly affected how he ruled ancient India."
31	271	"He decided that he would follow Buddhist teachings and become a man of peace."	REPLACE: We recommend changing this line to "He decided that he would follow the principles of nonviolence and become a man of peace."
32	274	"Krishna reminds the prince to obey his duty as a warrior. The prince makes the painful choice to fight his family"	REPLACE: The current text simplifies the conversation between Krishna and Arjuna. We thus recommend changing it to "In the ensuing conversation, Krishna not only reminds the prince to obey his duty as a warrior and fight for justice, but also explains spiritual truths as well as the practice of yoga. The conversation is known as 'Bhagavad Gita' which is considered one of the most important treatises in Hinduism."

33	275	“The most important structures in early India were the rulers’ palaces and the temples used for religious worship.”	REMOVE: Unlike in ancient Egypt or in other places where importance was placed on building massive structures, ancient India did not place the same importance on or have such big structures. We thus recommend removing this line.
34	280	“Scholars are uncertain as to who the original author of the Bhagavad Gita or the complete Mahabharata was.”	REPLACE: We recommend changing this line to “According to Hindu tradition, Sage Vyasa composed the Mahabharata.”
35	280 and 164 (Inquiry Journal)	The Laws of Manu, Chapter VII	REPLACE: We recommend the removal of this activity and its replacement with a better one. ‘Laws of Manu’ is not a text representative of Hindus or Hinduism, as Colonial scholars had once assumed. It is only one of thousands of ancient texts, but one which was translated into English early on and given undue importance. The tendency of Colonial era scholars to give preeminence to certain texts and claim that they are representative of an entire culture has been shown to be problematic. It would thus be more appropriate to utilize a text, such as the Mahabharata, for this activity that Hindus connect to on a day to day basis rather than an archaic text that has limited relevance.
36	282	3. COMPARING How did the beliefs and social systems of ancient India, specifically varna and jati, influence the rights and abilities of citizens?	REPLACE: We recommend the removal of this question as the current material does not provide a comprehensive perspective on this topic or the ability to answer the question adequately. Instead we suggest the following question: “How did the beliefs and practices of ancient India, especially the concepts of pluralism and the inherent divinity of all beings

			influence the thinking and attitude of Hindus towards other humans, animals, and the environment?”
37	284	PREDICTING How might a belief in karma and jati influence the way a Hindu lives his or her life?	REPLACE: As noted above, karma is not related to jati or status as implied in this question. We recommend that this question be changed to “How might a belief in karma influence the way a Hindu lives his or her life and treats others?”
38	256		REMOVE: We recommend removing this map as there is a complete lack of reliable evidence to accurately map the migrations as the arrows in the map attempt to do. This map is based on speculative theories and is bereft of foundational evidence.
39	168 (Inquiry Journal)	IDENTIFYING CAUSE AND EFFECT How did the Hindu belief in reincarnation contribute to people’s acceptance of the jati system?	REMOVE: We recommend the deletion of this line as karma and reincarnation are common beliefs across all Indic religions including Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. It is not just a Hindu belief and there is no causal link between reincarnation and jati system.
<b>7th Grade</b>			
40	138	“Persian scholar al-Khwarizmi invented algebra.”	REPLACE: We recommend this line be replaced with “Persian scholar al-Khwarizmi compiled many mathematical ideas that would become known as algebra.” Many ideas in algebra were a combination of ideas known to Greek, Hindu/Indian, and Syriac-Persian mathematicians. In India for instance, Brahmagupta (628 CE) had previously solved quadratic equations as has been shown by Uta C. Merzbach and Carl B. Boyer in ‘A History of Mathematics’.

			The authors note “There are thus three main schools of thought on the origin of Arabic algebra: one emphasizes Hindu influences; another stresses the Mesopotamian, or Syriac-Persian, tradition; and the third points to Greek inspiration. The truth is probably approached if we combine the three theories.”
41	157	An invasion of the Huns from Central Asia was especially destructive and drained the empire’s resources.	REPLACE: “Many invasions by the Huns from Central Asia were repulsed but they caused destruction and drained the empire’s resources.”
42	160	"They did not sign their songs in Sanskrit, the language of royal courts."	REPLACE: "They sang their songs in Sanskrit as well as in vernacular languages such as Hindi and Tamil." We recommend this change since the current text is inaccurate. Bhakti literature was composed both in Sanskrit as well as in vernacular languages. The saint, Ramananda, for example, composed works in Sanskrit.
43	160	“The bhakti movements emphasized the spiritual equality of all believers. They also challenged certain religious traditions, such as the power held by elite priests in society.”	REPLACE: “The bhakti movements emphasized the spiritual equality of all. It emphasized chanting, singing, dancing and other forms of personal expressions of devotion over other rituals”.  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.

44	160	“Even though medieval India was not unified into one empire or a single religion, a cultural unity began to emerge”	<p>REPLACE: “Even though India was not unified into one empire or a single religion, a cultural unity had already emerged by the early medieval times”</p> <p>We recommend the change as a cultural unity had begun to emerge much earlier during the times of Gupta and Chola empires.</p>
45	167	“A Persian mathematician named al-Khwarizmi (ahl-khwa-RIHZ-meh) borrowed the symbols 0 through 9, from Hindu scholars. Muslim scholars applied this base-ten numerical system to the study of algebra.”	<p>REPLACE: “A Persian mathematician named al-Khwarizmi (ahl-khwa-RIHZ-meh) borrowed the symbols 0 through 9, or base-ten, as well as other mathematical ideas from Hindu scholars.”</p> <p>Brahmagupta and Indian mathematicians had already applied the numerals in solving the quadratic equations. Please refer to ‘A History of Mathematics’ by Uta C. Merzbach and Carl B. Boyer.</p>
46	170	“SONG OF THE DIVINE HERDSMAN”	<p>REPLACE: We recommend that this be changed to “SONG OF GOVINDA” or “SONG OF KRISHNA”. “Govinda” is another name of Krishna and thus a literal translation of the name is not as advisable.</p>