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**To:**  
Instructional Quality Commission  
c/o Thomas Adams, Executive Director  
1430 N Street, Suite 3207  
Sacramento, CA 95814

November 25, 2014

**Re: Edits Submission for History-Social Science Framework Field Review Draft of 2014**

Please find attached the edits submission for History-Social Science Framework Field Review Draft of 2014 of the Uberoi Foundation for Religious Studies Institute for Curriculum Advancement, of which I am the Director. This material has been initially prepared by Acharya Arumuganathaswami, Managing Editor of Hinduism Today magazine, and he and I together have worked together on the final text. He and I had also collaborated earlier on *The History of Hindu India* book intended for middle and high schools, as well as a documentary on the first chapter intended for the 6th grade coverage of India. Also, we have produced together an academic paper, "Teaching of Hinduism in the California State School System: Evaluation and Recommendations" which has been submitted to *The History Teacher*, a peer-reviewed journal published out of California State University, Long Beach. The book and paper was sent by Fedex and already been received by your office. The paper is to be considered part of our submission to the Instructional Quality Commission, as it provides documentation for many of our edits.

As you will recall, I was hired by your department as a Content Review Specialist for the 2005-2006 textbook review process. Ever since, I have remained engaged in the process of improving the teaching of Hinduism and Indian history in California's schools. I truly hope that these proposed edits to the sections on ancient India in the History-Social Science Framework Field Review Draft will prove to be acceptable revisions and additions to that document.

Thanking you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Prof. Shiva G. Bajpai, Ph.D. (SOAS, London)  
Professor Emeritus of History  
Former Director, Asian Studies,  
California State University, Northridge

# Proposed list of edits submitted by:

## UBEROI FOUNDATION INSTITUTE FOR CURRICULUM ADVANCEMENT

Dr. Shiva G. Bajpai, Director  
Professor Emeritus of History, California State University Northridge

Acharya Arumuganathaswami, Managing Editor, Hinduism Today

### Concerning:

History-Social Science Framework Field Review Draft, Chapter 4, The Early Civilizations of India, Pages 163 to 167; and Chapter 5, Survey of World Religions, p. 264.

**NOTE:** The following document is organized by paragraph. For each paragraph, we give first the draft's original text, then our proposed text, in *italics*. Following that is a numbered list of the specific edits we are recommending for the paragraph along with our justification.

### Paragraph 1: Lines 535 to 545

**ORIGINAL TEXT:** In this unit students learn about ancient societies in India. The earliest urban civilization, known as Harappan civilization after one of its cities, was centered in the Indus River valley, though its cultural style spread widely from present-day Afghanistan to west central India. Teachers may guide students in setting this region in comparative perspective with Mesopotamia and Egypt. The Indus River and its tributaries flow from the Himalaya mountains. It then travels southward across the plain called the Punjab and finally fans out to form the alluvial delta of Sind before emptying into the Arabian Sea. The spring flow of the Indus was fairly predictable, but excessive summer floods could still drown whole cities. On the other hand, the valley soil was not only rich but extended over about 250,000 square miles, twice the arable land area of Mesopotamia or the Nile Valley.

**REVISED TEXT:** *In this unit students learn about ancient societies in India. The earliest urban civilization is known as Harappan, after the first city excavated at the site. The Harappan civilization was present in the Indus and Sarasvati River valleys. Its cultural style spread from the Himalayas in the north to the Indus and*

*Saraswati deltas in the south, to southern Afghanistan in the northwest and the upper Ganga plain in the east. Teachers may guide students in setting this region in comparative perspective with Mesopotamia and Egypt. Both the Indus River and the Sarasvati originate in the Himalaya mountains and flow across the plains of modern Punjab into the Arabian Sea. The Indus-Sarasvati valley soil was not only rich but extended over about 285,000 square miles, more than twice the arable land area of Mesopotamia or the Nile Valley.*

#### **SENTENCE BY SENTENCE SPECIFIC EDITS:**

- 1. REPLACE:** The earliest urban civilization, known as Harappan civilization after one of its cities, was centered in the Indus River valley, though its cultural style spread widely from present-day Afghanistan to west central India.

**WITH:** *The earliest urban civilization is known as Harappan, after the first city excavated at the site. The Harappan civilization was present in the Indus and Sarasvati River valleys. Its cultural style spread from the Himalayas in the north to the Indus and Saraswati deltas in the south, to southern Afghanistan in the northwest and the upper Ganga plain in the east.*

Reasons and justification:

- a. It is not called Harappan civilization just “after one of its cities,” but because Harappan was the first city excavated and it is an archeological convention to name a previously unknown civilization by its first excavated site.
  - b. The “center” of the civilization is a subject of on-going research and debate.
  - c. “Present-day Afghanistan to west central India” is not accurate.
  - d. “Sarasvati” is the correct Sanskrit spelling; “Saraswati” is Hindi.
- 2. REPLACE:** *The Indus River and its tributaries originate in the Himalaya mountains. It then travels southward across the plain called the Punjab and finally fans out to form the alluvial delta of Sind before emptying into the Arabian Sea.*

**WITH:** *Both the Indus River and the Sarasvati originate in the Himalaya mountains and flow across the plains of modern Punjab into the Arabian Sea.*

- a. Punjab did not exist in ancient times, so it needs to be qualified as “modern Punjab.”
- b. Sind is the British spelling, the modern spelling is Sindh

- c. The equally important Sarasvati River needs to be mentioned to gain a complete picture of the geography and culture.
3. **DELETE:** The spring flow of the Indus was fairly predictable, but excessive summer floods could still drown whole cities. On the other hand
- a. This is important information, but will naturally be covered in texts, and the transition is no longer needed.
4. **CHANGE:** the valley soil was not only rich but extended over about 250,000 square miles, twice the arable land area of Mesopotamia or the Nile Valley.

TO: *The Indus-Sarasvati valley soil was not only rich but extended over about 285,000 square miles, more than twice the arable land area of Mesopotamia or the Nile Valley.*

- a. The original is not historically accurate. 250,000 square miles is below the lowest published estimate. These run from 262,000 sq. miles to 308,000. We recommend the mean of these two numbers, 285,000, be used ideally. Reference: Upinder Singh, *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India*, Pearson Education, 2009, Delhi, p. 137.
- b. We've changed just "valley" to Indus-Sarasvati valley" to make clear this estimate of square miles applies to both river systems. The original wording made it seem this applied only to the Indus.

## Paragraph 2: Lines 546 to 555

**ORIGINAL TEXT:** In the Indus River region, dense farming populations and urban centers developed a few centuries later than in Mesopotamia and Egypt. Harappan civilization attained its zenith between about 2600 and 1900 BCE. Teachers may inform students that no one knew of the existence of this urban society until the 1920s, when archaeological work started. Digs have revealed that several Indus cities, including Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, had streets laid out in grids, large brick platforms, well-engineered sewers, and a written script (which has not been deciphered). Archaeologists have also turned up evidence of active commercial exchange between the Indus River region and Mesopotamia by way of the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf.

**REVISED TEXT:** *In the Indus and Sarasvati River region, agricultural settlements such as Mehrgarh and Bhirrana, existed from at least 6500 BCE. From these evolved the advanced Harappan civilization ca. 3300 BCE, at the same time as did the Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations. Harappan civilization attained its zenith between ca. 2600 and 1900 BCE with an estimated population of five million, nearly 20% of the world's population. It was discovered by archeological excavations in the 1920s. Digs have revealed that many Indus cities, including Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, were well planned with streets laid out in grids and well-engineered sewers. Artifacts include pottery, seals, statues, jewelry, tools, and toys. The seals have writing on them which remains undeciphered and show deities, ceremonies, symbols and sacred plants and trees related to Hindu practices. One seal shows a meditating figure seated in a yoga posture that most scholars link to God Shiva. There are also small clay figures in the posture of the traditional Hindu greeting, "namaste." Evidence reveals active commerce between the cities of the Harappan realm as well as foreign trade with Mesopotamia.*

#### **SENTENCE BY SENTENCE SPECIFIC EDITS:**

**5. REPLACE:** In the Indus River region, dense farming populations and urban centers developed a few centuries later than in Mesopotamia and Egypt.

**WITH:** *In the Indus and Sarasvati River region, agricultural settlements such as Mehrgarh and Bhirrana, existed from at least 6500 BCE. From these evolved the advanced Harappan civilization ca. 3300 BCE, at the same time as did the Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations.*

- a. The Sarasvati River was equally important as the Indus.
- b. There is new historical knowledge which has not been incorporated into the curriculum. The 1974 discovery of the Neolithic Mehrgarh culture (6500 BCE to 2500 BCE) in Balochistan, Pakistan, has completely changed the understanding of the development of both agriculture in India and the Harappan culture, as did the later discovery of Bhirrana [see Singh p. 95-131] in Haryana, India. These discoveries put the Harappan civilization in the same time frame as Mesopotamia and Egypt, not later.
- c. In general, it is useful to realize that the archeological study of India is limited and underfunded for a variety of reasons, including political and practical—such as digging up the middle of modern cities with ancient histories, like Varanasi. There is also official indifference to ancient history in Pakistan where many sites are located.

- d. The culture has been given various names—Indus Valley Civilization, Harappan Civilization and now, more accurately, Sindhu-Sarasvati Civilization because it includes both major rivers and because it integrates both archeological and literary (Vedic) evidence. We recommend this latter term. However, Harappan civilization is not incorrect and may be used interchangeably.

6. **REPLACE:** Harappan civilization attained its zenith between about 2600 and 1900 BCE.

**WITH:** *Harappan civilization attained its zenith between ca. 2600 and 1900 BCE with an estimated population of five million, nearly 20% of the people in the world at the time.*

- a. The population figure of five million is from *Ancient Pakistan - An Archaeological History: Volume IV: Harappan Civilization - Theoretical and the Abstract (Volume 4) – 2014*. According to a chart published by the US Census bureau ([http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/worldpop/table\\_history.php](http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/worldpop/table_history.php)), world population is estimated at 27 million in 2000 BCE, which means that the Indus region accounted for 18.5% of the world's population at the time. It is important for students to have such perspective, correcting at the same time the Eurocentric emphasis on Mesopotamia and Egypt.

7. **DELETE:** Teachers may inform students that no one knew of the existence of this urban society until the 1920s, when archaeological work started.

**REPLACE WITH:** *It was discovered by archeological excavations in the 1920s.*

- a. Changed in the interest of saving space.

8. **DELETE:** Digs have revealed that several Indus cities, including Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, had streets laid out in grids, large brick platforms, well-engineered sewers, and a written script (which has not been deciphered).

**REPLACE WITH:** *Digs have revealed that many Indus cities, including Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, were well planned with streets laid out in grids and well-engineered sewers.*

- a. It was not just several, but many Indus cities were so laid out. It is also good to state that the cities were "planned," which was an unusual feature for the time. "large brick platforms" is deleted as they were most likely the foundations of buildings, and not just "platforms," which is misleading.
  - b. Written script is put over to the next sentences.
- 9. ADD:** *Artifacts include pottery, seals, statues, jewelry, tools, and toys. The seals have writing on them which remains undeciphered and show deities, ceremonies, symbols and sacred plants and trees related to Hindu practices. One seal shows a meditating figure seated in a yoga posture that most scholars link to God Shiva. There are also small clay figures in the posture of the traditional Hindu greeting, "namaste."*
- a. Just describing streets and sewers in the original text hardly does justice to the cultural richness of the Harappan civilization. Also, the students need to understand the evident connections between the Harappan civilization and Hinduism. See *History of Hindu India*, pp. 2-3; Singh pp. 170-173. These connections have been played down in order to make the Aryan Invasion/Migration theory more plausible.
- 10. REPLACE:** *Archaeologists have also turned up evidence of active commercial exchange between the Indus River region and Mesopotamia by way of the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf.*
- WITH:** *Evidence reveals active commerce between the cities of the Harappan realm as well as foreign trade with Mesopotamia.*
- a. Use of the term "turned up evidence" does not do justice to the massive trade between these ancient cultures; as well, no mention is made of the region's huge internal trade. It is also not necessary to state "by way of the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf" as this was the main route of transport at the time.

### Paragraph 3: Lines 556 to 568

ORIGINAL TEXT: Harappan civilization steadily declined after 1900 BCE, perhaps owing to ecological factors such as salt buildup in the soil and persistent drought. Indian history then entered the Vedic period (ca. 1500-500 BCE), an era named for the Vedas, a group of political and religious texts written in Sanskrit. In

this period, a group known historically as Indo-Aryans (also Aryans) came to control much of India. Most scholars argue on the basis of linguistic and archaeological evidence that people speaking languages in the large Indo-European family entered India from Central Eurasia in the second millennium BCE; others have argued against this view. The languages of the Aryans were ancestral to such modern South Asian tongues as Hindi. These newcomers were most likely animal herders at first. They may have arrived in India in scattered bands, later intermarrying with the older populations. Students consider how the diffusion and distribution of languages illuminates human migrations in the distant past.

*REVISED TEXT: Harappan civilization steadily declined after 1900 BCE, perhaps owing to seismic events, river capture and ecological factors. The next period of Indian history, (ca. 2000-500 BCE), is termed the Vedic and Later Vedic Period as the Vedas, a group of religious scriptures, became prominent during this time. The people who composed the Rig Veda in Sanskrit were called Aryans (“noble ones”). They lived in the “Land of the Seven Rivers,” which corresponds to the Harappan/Indus-Sarasvati region. The Rig describes the Sarasvati as “the most mighty of rivers” flowing from the Himalayas to the ocean. Therefore the Rig had to be composed before 2000 BCE, by which time the river had dried up. The Sanskrit language is part of the Indo-European family of languages, including most languages of northern India such as Hindi, and nearly all of the European languages including Latin and Greek. To explain how Sanskrit came to be in India, 19<sup>th</sup>-century historians proposed that Sanskrit-speaking people came in a series of “Aryan Invasions” from central Asia, destroying the existing Indian civilization. But there is no evidence of such conquest. Today some historians hold that the Aryans came in peaceful migrations from central Asia; a growing number of others believe they were indigenous to India. In either case, there was a significant disruption of Indian society from 1900 BCE onward, with a large section of the Harappan population moving to the Ganga plains and other areas within and even beyond India.*

#### **SENTENCE BY SENTENCE SPECIFIC EDITS:**

**11. DELETE:** Harappan civilization steadily declined after 1900 BCE, perhaps owing to ecological factors such as salt buildup in the soil and persistent drought.

**REPLACE WITH:** *Harappan civilization steadily declined after 1900 BCE, perhaps owing to seismic events, river capture and ecological factors.*



- a. This edit reflects the better historical information that is available. The drying up of the river, possibly the result of a seismic event and/or river capture, is considered the more likely drastic change than either salt buildup or drought, though those also were occurring. We have not mentioned them again specifically to save space. See Singh pp. 179-180.

**12. REPLACE:** Indian history then entered the Vedic period (ca. 1500-500 BCE), an era named for the Vedas, a group of political and religious texts written in Sanskrit.

**WITH:** *The next period of Indian history, (ca. 2000-500 BCE), is termed the Vedic and Later Vedic Period as the Vedas, a group of religious scriptures, became prominent during this time.*

- a. Need to update to more recent historical research. The 1500 BCE date for the Vedas was proposed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, prior to the discovery of the Harappan culture and prior to the discovery by satellite photos of the dried Sarasvati river bed. Previously the river was thought to be mythical. Since the Rig Veda repeatedly describes the Sarasvati as a mighty river, much of it had to be composed before the river dried up in 2000 BCE. So even though commonly cited, this 19<sup>th</sup> century dating of the Vedas only to 1500 BCE is incorrect. Singh discusses this at length on p. 185, with the conclusion that the date is uncertain, but at least at 2000 BCE and could even be as far back as 3000 BCE.
- b. It is a demeaning characterization and adverse reflection to call the Vedas “a group of political and religious texts written in Sanskrit.” The Hebrew and Christian bibles contain much more political information than the Rig Veda, but we do not see them demeaned as “group of political texts.” The Vedas are, to Hindus, religious and should be acknowledged as such.

**13. REPLACE:** In this period, a group known historically as Indo-Aryans (also Aryans) came to control much of India.

**WITH:** *The people who composed the Rig Veda, oldest of the four Vedas, in Sanskrit were called Aryans (“noble ones”). They lived in the “Land of the Seven Rivers,” which corresponds to the Harappan/Indus-Sarasvati region. The Rig describes the Sarasvati as “the most mighty of rivers” flowing from*

*the Himalayas to the ocean. Therefore the Rig had to be composed before 2000 BCE, by which time the river had dried up.*

- a. Here we encounter the Aryan Invasion in modified form, the first of three great notions about India created by the 19<sup>th</sup> century Orientalists of Germany and England. The phrasing implies a conquest (“came to control”) by an outside group over the natives of India, a conquest for which there is no indisputable evidence.

Consider, for example, that we are talking about an implausible scenario in which a migrant group of Aryans not only imposes political control without warfare over more than five million people of the Harappan civilization spread over more than a quarter-million square miles of land, but also a new language, a religion dominated by the Aryan brahmins and the entire caste system. The suggested edit simply describes what facts are known.

- b. Regarding the geography of the Rig Veda and the Land of the Seven Rivers, see “Sapta-Sindhusu: The Land of Seven Rivers, A new interpretation and its historical significance,” Shiva G. Bajpai, *Sindhu-Sarasvati Civilization New Perspectives*, Nalini Rao, editor, Nalanda International, Los Angeles, 2014. We also note that a map of the Rig Veda region was included in the Pearson Prentice-Hall 6<sup>th</sup> grade textbook approved in the 2005-2006 process.
- c. Note that Seven Rivers, or Sapta Sindhu, is the origin of the term Hindu, which originally meant the people who lived in the Land of the Seven Rivers.

**14. REPLACE:** Most scholars argue on the basis of linguistic and archaeological evidence that people speaking languages in the large Indo-European family entered India from Central Eurasia in the second millennium BCE; others have argued against this view. The languages of the Aryans were ancestral to such modern South Asian tongues as Hindi. These newcomers were most likely animal herders at first. They may have arrived in India in scattered bands, later intermarrying with the older populations.

**WITH:** *The Sanskrit language is part of the Indo-European family of languages, including most languages of northern India such as Hindi, and nearly all of the European languages including Latin and Greek. To explain how Sanskrit came to be in India, 19<sup>th</sup>-century historians proposed that Sanskrit-speaking people came in a series of “Aryan Invasions” from central Asia, destroying the existing Indian civilization. But there is no evidence of*

*such conquest. Today some historians hold that the Aryans came in peaceful migrations from central Asia; a growing number of others believe they were indigenous to India. In either case, there was a significant disruption of Indian society from 1900 BCE onward, with a large section of the Harappan population moving to the Ganga plains and other areas within and even beyond India.*

- a. The recommended text is historically accurate and neutral with regard to this contentious point about Indian history. Content Standards specify “Aryan Invasions” which no one defends any longer. Instead one camp speaks of “migrations,” the other of indigenous origins. The same evidence, as explained in the authors’ paper, *Teaching of Hinduism in the California State School System: Evaluation and Recommendations* by Dr. Shiva Bajpai and Acharya Arumuganathaswami, 2014, has been used to support either view. Without a formal poll, it is pure conjecture to say “most scholars” support a migration case. The majority of those who are expert in the issue and cited in the above-mentioned paper certainly do not support a migration theory. There is no DNA evidence of outside migration into India during this time period (see for example, “Genetic Evidence for Recent Population Mixture in India” by Moorjani et al, *The American Journal of Human Genetics* 93, 422-238, September 5, 2013 which discounts a migration in the time period of 2000 BCE to 1500 BCE).
- b. The Invasions theory of the Content Standards has to be considered outdated and must be corrected in the Narrative, just as statements about “nine planets” in the science Framework are corrected to read “eight” after the demotion of Pluto. See: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/sc/cf/documents/scienceframework.pdf>, page 54, where “nine planets” are mentioned with an asterisk and a sidebar note reads: “\* Under resolutions passed by the International Astronomical Union on August 26, 2006, there are eight planets. Pluto no longer meets the definition of a ‘planet’ but is now classified under a new distinct class of objects called ‘dwarf planets.’” In the 2005-2006 edits process, the term Aryan Invasions was removed in favor of Aryan Migrations and publishers were instructed by the SBE to note that even migration was a debated idea.
- c. The important historical point to be made here in this last sentence is that the population of the Harappan civilization dropped drastically, easily 75%, as people moved both east and west to more suitable environments in which to live.

**15. DELETE:** Students consider how the diffusion and distribution of languages illuminates human migrations in the distant past.

- a. The topic here is ancient India, not linguistics. This is a contentious issue with regard to India, which does not provide a clear-cut example for lack of historical evidence. Furthermore, the distribution of languages and human migrations is a complex topic more suited to a college-level course—witness the multiple conflicting theories of language and migration applied to the Native Americans.

#### **Paragraph 4: Lines 569 to 582**

**ORIGINAL TEXT:** In the Vedic period, new commercial towns arose along the Ganges, India's second great river system. In this era, Brahmanism emerged as a belief system that combined Indo-Aryan beliefs with those of older populations. Brahmins, that is, priestly families who claimed Indo-Aryan ancestry, assumed authority over complex devotional rituals. The brahmin class expounded the idea of the oneness of all living things and of Brahman as the divine principle of being. Indians also venerated thousands of deities, for example, Vishnu, preserver of the world, and Shiva, creator and destroyer of the world. These gods could be seen as aspects of Brahman. Brahmanism gradually built up a rich body of spiritual and moral teachings that formed the foundation of Hinduism. Students may read excerpts from texts that set forth these ideas, including the Upanishads and, later, the Bhagavad Gita. Students also learn about some of this belief system's core concepts, notably karma, reincarnation, and dharma (personal duty).

*REVISED TEXT: In the Later Vedic period, new royal and commercial towns arose along the Ganga, India's greatest river system. By 600 BCE the social, religious, and philosophical ideas and practices central to early Hinduism are fully evident and in continuity with the Harappan culture and the teachings and ceremonial worship of the Vedas. Nineteenth-century historians spoke of a priest-dominated religion at this time called Brahmanism, but this concept has been discarded. In addition to the early Vedic and Upanishadic texts, Hindu scriptures taking their present form at this time include later Upanishads, the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita, Puranas and Agamas. Brahman, the Supreme God, is defined in scripture as immanent (present throughout the world) and transcendent (beyond it as well). In action, Brahman creates, preserves and dissolves the universe over vast periods of time. Brahman also becomes the*

*various Deities with multiple names and forms who are worshipped as distinct personal Gods or Goddesses, such as Vishnu, Shiva, Sarasvati, Durga, etc. Key Hindu beliefs evident at this time include the identity of the soul (atman) with Brahman, dharma (including ethics, law and justice), karma, reincarnation, and liberation from rebirth. Central practices include home and temple worship, yoga and meditation, rites of passage (samskaras), festivals, pilgrimage, respect for saints and gurus, and, above all, a profound acceptance of religious diversity exemplified by the Vedic statement, "Truth is one, paths are many."*

#### **SENTENCE BY SENTENCE SPECIFIC EDITS:**

**16. DELETE:** In the Vedic period, new commercial towns arose along the Ganges, India's second great river system.

**REPLACE WITH:** *In the Later Vedic period, new royal and commercial towns arose along the Ganga, India's greatest river system.*

- a. The towns on the Ganga (as it is properly called) were not solely commercial. Some were the capitals of great kingdoms. They did not arise in the Vedic period, which would be as far back as 2000 BCE, but in the Later Vedic period.

**17. ADD:** *By 600 BCE the social, religious, and philosophical ideas and practices central to early Hinduism are fully evident and in continuity with the Harappan culture and the teachings and ceremonial worship of the Vedas.*

- a. This is a factual account drawn from The History of Hindu India describing what we know about religion in India in 600 BCE.
- b. There seemed to be no consensus in 2006 on what term to use instead of Brahmanism. Hindus use "Sanatana Dharma" (eternal dharma or truth). This term appears in the Rig Veda (4-138) and the Bhagavad Gita (11-18) as well as other scriptures. It has the drawback of not being English, and likely to be mispronounced. Another term, "Vedic Hinduism," is a misnomer, as all Hinduism is Vedic, be it ancient or modern. We say "early Hinduism" (lower case "e") as a descriptive term simply meaning the Hinduism of this period. While Hinduism has definitely evolved over the centuries—gradually putting more emphasis on devotional worship, for example—its major components are easily discernible in the Vedic period being discussed here.

**18. DELETE:** In this era, Brahmanism emerged as a belief system that combined

Indo-Aryan beliefs with those of older populations. Brahmins, that is, priestly families who claimed Indo-Aryan ancestry, assumed authority over complex devotional rituals.

**REPLACE WITH:** *Nineteenth-century historians spoke of a priest-dominated religion called Brahmanism, but this concept has been discarded.*

- a. Now we encounter the second of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Orientalist concepts of India, Brahmanism. The term *Brahmanism* is derived from the term for the high priest, *brahmana*, in the Vedas as well as in Hindu tradition, and not from *Brahman*, the Supreme God. As explained in the authors' paper on the teaching of Hinduism in California schools, the concept is largely derived from the European Protestant view of Catholicism and its priests. Disdain is evident even in this short passage of the draft narrative—"claimed Indo-Aryan ancestry," "assumed authority," and "complex devotional rituals." During the 2005-2006 textbook review process, all outside experts on India consulted by the Board of Education agreed that this term Brahmanism should be dropped. So, as with Aryan Invasions, it should be regarded as something which is no longer an accepted historical concept. We are surprised it even appeared here, given the results of the 2006 decision.

It is offensive that Hinduism is being named after its priests, as if Judaism was named "Rabbi-ism." Brahmanism was coined by Orientalists inspired by the disparaging and now archaic Protestant terms for Catholicism including popeism, popery, papalism and papist. See Vishwa Adluri and Joydeep Bagchee, *The Nay Science, A History of German Indology*, Oxford University Press, 2014, where this is discussed at length. For example, the authors state on p. 110 of the early German Indologist, Adolf Holtzman, that he was "obsessed with drawing a parallel between Brahmanism and Catholicism."

**19. DELETE:** The brahmin class expounded the idea of the oneness of all living things and of Brahman as the divine principle of being. Indians also venerated thousands of deities, for example, Vishnu, preserver of the world, and Shiva, creator and destroyer of the world. These gods could be seen as aspects of Brahman. Brahmanism gradually built up a rich body of spiritual and moral teachings that formed the foundation of Hinduism. Students may read excerpts from texts that set forth these ideas, including the Upanishads and, later, the Bhagavad Gita.

**REPLACE WITH:** *In addition to the early Vedic and Upanishadic texts, Hindu scriptures taking their present form at this time include later Upanishads, the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita, Puranas and Agamas. Brahman, the Supreme God, is defined in scripture as immanent (present throughout the world) and transcendent (beyond it as well). In action, Brahman creates, preserves and dissolves the universe over vast periods of time. Brahman also becomes the various Deities with multiple names and forms who are worshipped as distinct personal Gods or Goddesses, such as Vishnu, Shiva, Sarasvati, Durga, etc. Key Hindu beliefs evident at this time include the identity of the soul (atman) with Brahman, dharma (including ethics, law and justice), karma, reincarnation, and liberation from rebirth. Central practices include home and temple worship, yoga and meditation, rites of passage (samskaras), festivals, pilgrimage, respect for saints and gurus, and, above all, a profound acceptance of religious diversity exemplified by the Vedic statement, "Truth is one, paths are many."*

- a. The original paragraph presents numerous problems. The religious development was not the sole province of the brahmins of the time. The process was much more organic than that. As this is the one section of the entire narrative which discusses Hindu religion as such, extensive revision is required. All the other religions have a paragraph or two where their central beliefs are summarized; this is ours. In the case of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, members of those faiths participated in the development of the descriptions. There is no evidence that Hindus ever participated in the development of the original paragraph here.
- b. The proposed text is based on *The History of Hindu India* and the authors' paper on the teaching of Hinduism in California schools. Most of the textbooks approved in 2006 presented the Hindu concept of God as a form of pantheism, though without using that term. In pantheism, the universe is identical to God. This is not the Hindu belief, which is properly called panentheism and expressed in the proposed edit as God being both immanent and transcendent. This is important for a correct understanding of the Hindu view of God. In their sections on Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the texts put great emphasis on monotheism as opposed to polytheism, which is what most students will assume Hinduism follows. The more subtle and sophisticated Hindu view encompasses deeper conceptions of God than the oversimplified categories of polytheism and monotheism applied by

Western scholars.

**20. DELETE:** Students may read excerpts from texts that set forth these ideas, including the Upanishads and, later, the Bhagavad Gita. Students also learn about some of this belief system’s core concepts, notably karma, reincarnation, and dharma (personal duty).

- a. All of these subjects are included in the above list of core concepts, so this has been taken out to save space.

### Paragraph 5: Lines 583 to 590

ORIGINAL TEXT: As in all early civilizations, Indian society witnessed the development of a system of social classes. The main social categories, known as varnas, were priests; warriors; farmers, artisans, and merchants; dependent laborers; and, by 500 CE or earlier, dalits, or "untouchables." This class system became distinctive over the centuries for being especially complex and formal, involving numerous prohibitions that kept groups ritually separated from one another. Because these divisions became particularly rigid, scholars have classified the hierarchy as a caste system.

*REVISED TEXT: In ancient times, Indian society formed into self-governing groups, jatis, that emphasizes birth as the defining criteria. Jatis initially shared the same occupation and married only within the group. This system, often termed caste, provided remarkable stability to society and noteworthy identity to each community. The Vedas also describe four main social categories, known as varnas, namely: Brahmins (priests); Kshatriyas (kings and warriors); Vaishyas (merchants, artisans and farmers) and Sudras (peasants and laborers). A person belonged to a particular varna by his professional excellence and his good conduct, not by birth itself. In addition, by 500 CE or earlier, there existed certain communities outside this system, the "Untouchables," who did the most unclean work, such as cremation, disposal of dead animals and sanitation.*



## SENTENCE BY SENTENCE SPECIFIC EDITS:

### NOTE OF EXPLANATION REGARDING THIS SECTION:

Now we encounter the third focus of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Orientalist scholars: caste. Caste was deemed to be the essential defining characteristic and fatal flaw of the Indian civilization. We discuss this in detail in our paper, “The Teaching of Hinduism in the California State School System,” which is part of this submission. In the existing Framework, caste is mentioned in the Content Standards, but not the narrative, so this explanation in the narrative is a step forward. The practical issue with teaching caste is that in five of the seven 6<sup>th</sup> grade history social-science books approved in 2006 by the SBE, caste completely dominates the chapter to the exclusion of any comprehensive presentation of the religion or even the history of India. That problem is largely solved by this narrative revision, which guides the teachers and the publishers toward a much more comprehensive coverage of India and Hinduism.

This is an issue with real-life consequences. There have been many reports of the shame Hindu children have felt as result of the classes on India in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. They have been taunted by their classmates, “What caste are you?” and other offensive remarks. This is adverse reflection by definition, and weakens a student’s beliefs, just as would an equally condemnatory discussion of the institution of slavery in Christian, Hebrew and Muslim society as practiced in this same historical period.

**21. DELETE:** As in all early civilizations, Indian society witnessed the development of a system of social classes. The main social categories, known as varnas, were priests; warriors; farmers, artisans, and merchants; dependent laborers; and, by 500 CE or earlier, dalits, or “untouchables.” This class system became distinctive over the centuries for being especially complex and formal, involving numerous prohibitions that kept groups ritually separated from one another. Because these divisions became particularly rigid, scholars have classified the hierarchy as a caste system.

**REPLACE WITH:** *In ancient times, Indian society formed into self-governing groups, jatis, that emphasizes birth as the defining criteria. Jatis initially shared the same occupation and married only within the group. This system, often termed caste, provided remarkable stability to society and noteworthy identity to each community. The Vedas also describe four main social categories, known as varnas, namely: Brahmins (priests); Kshatriyas (kings and warriors); Vaishyas (merchants, artisans and farmers) and Sudras (peasants and laborers). A person belonged to a particular varna by his professional excellence and his good conduct, not by birth itself. In addition, by 500 CE or earlier, there existed certain communities outside this system, the “Untouchables,” who did the most unclean work, such as cremation, disposal of dead animals and sanitation.*

- a. The main error of this paragraph is conflating the systems of varna and

jati. It is not varna which was “complex and formal”; it was jati, though not to the extent indicated here. The main limitations of jati were intermarriage and interdining.

- b. Caste (as jati) is usually portrayed in the textbooks as a religious system, and that is indicated here with the phrase “ritually separated.” It is not a religious system, though Hindu saints and law-givers over the centuries have worked to encompass it. Jati is properly described as a socio-economic system.
- c. The actual origin of the jatis dates to ancient times. DNA research (Moorjani cited above) indicates “founder effects” can still be identified in certain jatis, which means their origins go back thousands of years before any kind of formal social classification.
- d. As discussed in our paper on the teaching of Hinduism in California schools, many commentators over the years have observed how the jati system provided stability to society in the face of social upheaval such as invasions. It is credited as the reason why India was not completely converted to Islam in the 10<sup>th</sup> and succeeding centuries, and why Christianity never gained more than a very small percentage of the population as adherents.
- e. The varna system, which is described and discussed throughout Hindu scripture and literature, has always been a system based on the actual nature and circumstances of a particular person’s life. It is not something inherited by birth; varna can be gained or lost depending on the person.
- f. “Dependent laborer” is not a technical term with a specific definition. It is more clear to say peasants and laborers. All laborers are “dependent” in some sense.
- g. At this point in history, the Untouchables were a small group. We have deleted the 20<sup>th</sup>-century political term dalit, which encompasses a much larger group in which true Untouchables are a small minority. Dalit is not a term from Sanskrit, nor from Hindu social history but a contemporary political construct to gain leverage mostly in elections and for economic concessions. Courts in India have ruled against its use as a replacement for Untouchable.
- h. India’s social system is *the* caste system, it wasn’t “classified” as such by anyone. The jatis were so named by the Portuguese when they arrived in India in 1498, and the name—which originally meant race, lineage or breed—was retained. The colonial British government in the 19th century went to great lengths to enumerate all the jatis and assign a hierarchy to them, but was unsuccessful in this effort due to the complexity and regional variations of the system.

**22. ADDITIONAL PARAGRAPH TO FOLLOW THIS ONE ON CASTE:**

Hinduism is the only major religion in which God is worshipped in female as well as male form, hence women have always been held in high regard in India. Women had a right to their personal wealth (stridhana), from all

sources, especially jewelry, gold and silver, but fewer property rights than men in the joint family system. They participated equally with their husbands in religious ceremonies and festival celebrations.

- a. We note that the revised narrative says nothing about the place of women in Hinduism during the historical period under study. We offer this paragraph to correct that omission.
- b. A statement about women's rights is made in the section on Islam in the revised narrative, Chapter 4, page 186, lines 1140 to 1144.
- c. This text is based on *The History of Hindu India*, p. 5.

## Paragraph 6: Lines 591-602

**ORIGINAL TEXT:** Buddhism emerged in the sixth century BCE in the life and moral teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, or the Buddha. Through the story of his life, his Hindu background, and his search for enlightenment, students may learn about Buddhism's fundamental ideas: unselfishness; compassion for suffering; tolerance; and the prohibition of killing, lying, stealing, and gossiping. The influence of Buddhism in India waned in the later first millennium CE as the Hindu tradition experienced a resurgence. Buddhist monks, nuns, and merchants, however, carried their religion to Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Central Asia, China, and Southeast Asia. In India, Jainism, a religion that encouraged the idea of *ahimsa*, or nonviolence, paralleled the rise of Buddhism. It has continued to play a role in modern India, notably in Mohandas Gandhi's ideas of nonviolent disobedience.

*REVISED TEXT: Buddhism emerged in the sixth century BCE in the moral teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, the "Buddha". Through the story of his life, his Hindu background, and his search for enlightenment, students may learn about his fundamental ideas: suffering, compassion and mindfulness. Buddhism waned in India in the late first millennium CE as the result of a resurgence of Hindu tradition. Monks, nuns, and merchants, however, had carried Buddhism to Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Central Asia, China, Japan and Southeast Asia, where it continued to prosper. In India, through teachings of Lord Mahavira, the Jain religion arose about the same time as Buddhism. Jainism encouraged the principle of ahimsa or nonviolence, already a key concept in Hindu dharma. It has continued to play a role in modern India, notably in Mohandas Gandhi's ideas of nonviolent disobedience.*

### SENTENCE BY SENTENCE SPECIFIC EDITS:

**23. DELETE:** Buddhism emerged in the sixth century BCE in the life and moral teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, or the Buddha. Through the story of his life, his Hindu background, and his search for enlightenment, students may learn about Buddhism's fundamental ideas: unselfishness; compassion for suffering; tolerance; and the prohibition of killing, lying, stealing, and gossiping.

**REPLACE WITH:** *Buddhism emerged in the sixth century BCE in the moral teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, the "Buddha". Through the story of his life, his Hindu background, and his search for enlightenment, students may learn about his fundamental ideas: suffering, compassion and mindfulness. Buddhism waned in India in the late first millennium CE as the result of a resurgence of Hindu tradition.*

- a. The first sentence was shortened to save space.
- b. The "fundamental ideas" of Buddhism are these three, suffering, compassion and mindfulness, not the more general list which are less specific to Buddhism.
- c. Buddhism itself waned, not just its influence.
- d. "the result of a resurgence of Hindu tradition" is more grammatical.

**24. DELETE:** Buddhist monks, nuns, and merchants, however, carried their religion to Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Central Asia, China, and Southeast Asia.

**REPLACE WITH:** *Monks, nuns, and merchants, however, had carried their religion to Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Central Asia, China, Japan and Southeast Asia, where it continued to prosper.*

- a. This makes it clear that as Buddhism declined in India, it was accepted and growing in other parts of Asia.

**25. DELETE:** In India, Jainism, a religion that encouraged the idea of ahimsa, or nonviolence, paralleled the rise of Buddhism. It has continued to play a role in modern India, notably in Mohandas Gandhi's ideas of nonviolent disobedience.

**REPLACE WITH:** *In India, through teachings of Lord Mahavira, the Jain religion arose about the same time as Buddhism. Jainism encouraged the principle of ahimsa or nonviolence, already a key concept in Hindu dharma. It has continued to play a role in modern India, notably in Mohandas Gandhi's ideas of nonviolent disobedience.*

- a. Since Buddha is mentioned as the founder of Buddhism, it seems only fair that Mahavira also be mentioned. While not the “founder” as such, he is the most historically prominent figure.
- b. Ahimsa was a central concept of Hinduism long before Jainism appears in the historical record.

### Paragraph 7: Lines 603 to 611

ORIGINAL TEXT: In the late fourth century BCE India moved toward unification owing to the conquests of the warlord Chandragupta Maurya. Teachers may note that the Maurya dynasty (321-184 BCE) was contemporary with the Hellenistic kingdoms to the west and had diplomatic and commercial relations with them. The Maurya empire reached its peak under the rule of Ashoka (268-232), who unified nearly all of India. Unlike most other ancient rulers, he aimed to govern on the basis of moral and ethical principles. Grounding his approach in the teachings of Buddhism, he instructed his subjects to commit themselves to nonviolence, family harmony, and tolerance.

*REVISED TEXT: In the late fourth century BCE Emperor Chandragupta Maurya unified India through conquest and diplomacy. Teachers may note that the Mauryas (321-184 BCE) had a standing army of one million soldiers and developed diplomatic and commercial relations with all major Hellenistic kingdoms. The Maurya empire reached its peak under Chandragupta’s grandson, Ashoka (268-232 BCE). He turned to Buddhism at the height of his power, renounced war and pursued a policy of peace towards all countries. As with the Hindu rulers before him, he governed on the basis of moral and ethical principles, especially nonviolence, religious harmony, and family solidarity.*

#### SENTENCE BY SENTENCE SPECIFIC EDITS:

**26. DELETE:** In the late fourth century BCE India moved toward unification owing to the conquests of the warlord Chandragupta Maurya.

**REPLACE WITH:** *In the late fourth century BCE Emperor Chandragupta Maurya unified India through conquest and diplomacy.*

- a. India did not “move toward” unification, it was unified under Chandragupta, and not just through conquest but also diplomacy.
- b. Chandragupta was an highly educated, outstanding leader with a sophisticated and fair system of government. Calling one of the greatest kings of India a “warlord” is an inaccurate negative

characterization and adverse reflection on a Hindu king.

- 27. DELETE:** Teachers may note that the Maurya dynasty (321-184 BCE) was contemporary with the Hellenistic kingdoms to the west and had diplomatic and commercial relations with them.

**REPLACE WITH:** *Teachers may note that the Mauryas (321-184 BCE) had a standing army of one million soldiers and developed diplomatic and commercial relations with all major Hellenistic kingdoms.*

- a. We've included the size of the army so students understand just how powerful this empire was.
- b. The second half of the sentence was adjusted to be shorter and to read more smoothly.

- 28. DELETE:** The Maurya empire reached its peak under the rule of Ashoka (268-232), who unified nearly all of India.

**REPLACE WITH:** *The Maurya empire reached its peak under Chandragupta's grandson, Ashoka (268-232 BCE).*

- a. It is informative for the student to know the familial relationship of Ashoka to Chandragupta.
- b. The Maurya empire was already in a high state of development which "unified nearly all of India" when Ashoka came to power. He did not significantly add new territories, but rather consolidated the Maurya rule over the vast empire.

- 29. DELETE:** Unlike most other ancient rulers, he aimed to govern on the basis of moral and ethical principles. Grounding his approach in the teachings of Buddhism, he instructed his subjects to commit themselves to nonviolence, family harmony, and tolerance.

**REPLACE WITH:** *He turned to Buddhism at the height of his power, renounced war and pursued a policy of peace towards all countries. As with the Hindu rulers before him, he governed on the basis of moral and ethical principles, especially nonviolence, religious harmony, and family solidarity.*

- a. Students need to know why Ashoka turned to Buddhism (specifically regret over his bloody conquest of Kalinga), and that he did not begin

his reign as such a benevolent king. This puts more emphasis on the extraordinary policy of peace that Ashoka instituted which was unparalleled in the world, possibly even to this day.

- b. It is inaccurate to say that most other ancient rulers failed to govern on the basis of moral and ethical principles. It was certainly the policy of many Hindu kings to do so, and there are examples elsewhere in the ancient world as well.
- c. According to the inscriptions on his pillars, Ashoka's treatment of his subjects came from his paternalistic attitude, not "the teachings of Buddhism" as such.
- d. We've put "religious harmony" rather than "tolerance" as it is a stronger phrase. Difference in religion wasn't just tolerated, it was accepted in a kindly fashion.

### Paragraph 8: Lines 612 to 619

ORIGINAL TEXT: The Maurya empire broke up in the early second century BCE, but the monarchs of the Gupta state reunified much of the subcontinent in the fourth century CE. The Gupta dynasty (280-550 CE) presided over a rich period of scientific development, including development of a base-ten numerical system that incorporated positional notation and the concept of zero. Students should also learn about other enduring contributions of ancient Indian civilization, including agriculture (cotton and cane sugar), architecture, metallurgy, collections of parables, and games (chess).

*REVISED TEXT: The Maurya empire disintegrated in the early second century BCE, but the monarchs of the Gupta state reunified much of the subcontinent in the fourth century CE, ushering in the Classical Age of India. The Gupta dynasty (280-550 CE) presided over a rich period of religious, socio-economic, educational, literary and scientific development including the base-ten numerical system and the concept of zero. Sanskrit became the principal literary language throughout India and the Indianized states of Southeast Asia. Enduring contributions of this classical civilization include agriculture (cotton and cane sugar), weaving, architecture, sculpture, metallurgy, games, and the performing arts.*

#### SENTENCE BY SENTENCE SPECIFIC EDITS:

**30. DELETE:** The Maurya empire broke up in the early second century BCE, but the monarchs of the Gupta state reunified much of the subcontinent in the

fourth century CE.

**REPLACE WITH:** *The Maurya empire disintegrated in the early second century BCE, but the monarchs of the Gupta state reunified much of the subcontinent in the fourth century CE, ushering in the Classical Age of India.*

- a. The original statement is not inaccurate, but does not do justice to this era which historians call India's Classical Age for its great and enduring accomplishments. Later societies were measured by the high standards of achievement set by the Guptas.

**31. DELETE:** The Gupta dynasty (280-550 CE) presided over a rich period of scientific development, including development of a base-ten numerical system that incorporated positional notation and the concept of zero. Students should also learn about other enduring contributions of ancient Indian civilization, including agriculture (cotton and cane sugar), architecture, metallurgy, collections of parables, and games (chess).

**REPLACE WITH:** *The Gupta dynasty (280-550 CE) presided over a rich period of religious, socio-economic, educational, literary and scientific development including the base-ten numerical system and the concept of zero. Sanskrit became the principal literary language throughout India and the Indianized states of Southeast Asia. Enduring contributions of this classical civilization include agriculture (cotton and cane sugar), weaving, architecture, sculpture, metallurgy, games, and the performing arts.*

- a. Simply saying the Guptas presided over scientific development seriously shortchanges not only the Guptas, but all the Indian kingdoms of the time. India emerges as a global power at this time. The vast trade routes carried Indian goods and knowledge to the known world. Huge Hindu kingdoms came up in Southeast Asia, not through conquest, but through missionary work among Hindus there for commercial reasons. Major Hindu scriptures found their final form during this time, as Sanskrit became the lingua franca of the courts and religious institutions of not only India but Southeast Asia as well. It is quite misleading as to the nature of India to leave out all this information. As is, the only scriptures mentioned in this paragraph are "collections of parables," by which we assume is meant the animal stories of the Panchatantra.
- b. We've expanded this list to include sculpture and the performing arts,



as this was the time when great stone and bronze statues were produced and the various forms of Indian dance and drama were perfected.

### 9<sup>th</sup> Grade, page 264, Lines 290 to 293

ORIGINAL TEXT: Hinduism – belief in monism, the oneness of all gods and all living things in the Divine One, Brahman; in pure and unchanging spirit behind the impermanence of the material world; in the peace found only in union with the eternal spirit of Brahman; and in reincarnation, karma, dharma, and Hindu ethics

*REVISED TEXT: Hinduism—belief in an Absolute Supreme Being, Brahman, both immanent and transcendent, who in action becomes God, Goddess, and the multiple Deities with specific names and forms; the identity of the soul (atman) with Brahman; temple worship, festivals, pilgrimage, dharma, karma, reincarnation, freedom from rebirth, and “Truth is One, paths are many”*

#### SENTENCE BY SENTENCE SPECIFIC EDITS:

32. The proposed text is a complete revision to the original.

- a. Monism is a Western philosophic term used to not very accurately describe Advaita Vedanta, which is only one Hindu philosophy among many.
- b. The original text of “impermanence of the material world” again reflects Advaita Vedanta (the most commonly known Hindu philosophy in the West). It hearkens to the Orientalist view of Hindus as “world denying,” which is a mistaken concept.
- c. “Peace found only in union” is simply incorrect. Shanti, peace, is easily found within a person through meditation and devotional practices. The implication here—in line with the world-denying slant—is that only by escaping from this world does a Hindu find peace. This is incorrect.
- d. The prime characteristic of Hinduism, its tolerance and acceptance of a wide range of belief and practice, deserves to be emphasized.