

INDIA

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INDIA IS A GREAT TRIANGLE OF LAND REACHING SOOTH ON THE CONTINENT OF ASIA INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN. EAST OF IT IS THE BAY OF BENGAL, BURMAN AND EAST PAKISTAN, WHICH WAS FORMERLY A PART OF INDIA.

MODERN INDIAS HISTORY IS SHORT DATING ONLY FROM AUGUST 1947, WHEN GREAT BRITIAN GAVE INDEPENDENCE TO ALL. IN THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE HOWEVER IT BECAME POLITICALLY NECESSARY TO CREATE TWO GOVERNMENTS. ONE NEW GOVERNMENT WAS PRESENT DAY INDIA. THE OTHER PAKISTAN.

THERE ARE TWO MAJOR FAITHS OF INDIA.

THE HINDU RELIGION: BEHIND THIS RELIGION IS THE IDEA THAT EVERYTHING IS ONE, IN THE WHOLE UNIVERSE, BE IT SOMETHING HIGH OR SOMETHING LOW. ALL HINDUS BELIEVE THAT THEY HAVE MORE THAN ONE LIFE ON EARTH. A PERSON DIES AND HIS SOUL IS BORN AGAIN OF HIGHER OR LOWER STATUS. WHAT BODY HIS SOUL WILL INHABIT IN THE FUTURE DEPENDS ON HOW HE LIVES IN THE PRESENT. A GOOD LIFE WILL BE REWARDED BY A HIGHER POSITION IN THE NEXT REBIRTH; AND SO EACH INDIVIDUAL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS SOUL/S FATE IN THE FUTURE BY GAINING VERY GREAT UNDERSTANDING AND WISDOM A PERSON MAY FINALLY BE FREED FROM REBIRTH AND BECOME ONE WITH THE UNIVERSE.

THE MUSLIMS FOLLOW THE FAITH OF ISLAM WHERE AS THE HINDU RELIGION IS BROAD AND TOLERANT AND MANY SIDED, THE FAITH OF ISLAM IS DEFINITE AND CLEAR-CUT. IN ISLAM THERE IS ONE GOD, AND HIS NAME IS ALLAH. HIS MESSAGES WERE FIRST RECEIVED ON EARTH BY MOHAMMED AND ARE CONTAINED IN THE SCARED BOOK THE KORAN. THE KORAN INFLUENCES A MUSLIM BELIEVERS WHOLE LIFE - NOT ONLY HIS PERSONAL LIFE, BUT ALSO HIS SOCIAL LIFE. THE MUSLIM PEOPLE FOLLOW THE KORAN CLOSELY AND LOOK TO IT FOR GUIDANCE IN EVERYTHING THEY DO.

THUS WHEN GIVEN INDEPENDENCE FROM ENGLAND THE RESULTS WERE THE CREATION IN 1947 OF TWO STATES: PAKISTAN CHIEFLY MUSLIM AND INDIA CHIEFLY HINDU.

IT IS OFTEN ASKED WHY SO MANY OF INDIA'S PEOPLE APPARENTLY MADE NO EFFORT TO BETTER THEIR SITUATION: EDUCATIONALLY AND ECONOMICALLY. THE ANSWER IS THE "CASTE SYSTEM"

THE CASTE SYSTEM: THIS IS THE STRICT DIVIDING OF ALL HINDU PEOPLE

INTO HEREDITARY CLASSES. IT IS A SOCIAL ORDER SO RIGID THAT A PERSON MUST HAVE GREAT STRENGTH AND COURAGE TO BREAK AWAY FROM IT EVEN TODAY, EVEN WHEN THE INDIA CONSTITUTION OUTLAWS IT.

- FIRST IN THE CASTE SYSTEM ARE PRIESTS - WHO TOOK CARE OF THE WORSHIP SYMBOLS: FOOD, TO STAND FOR THE AIR THEY BREATHED, WATER, FIRE AND EARTH READILY AT HAND. THIS CASTE IS BRARMANS.

NEXT IN POSITION CAME THE KINGS AND THE WARRIORS WHO DEFENDED THE HONOR OF THE GROUP OR THE TRIBE. THEY ARE CALLED KSHATRIYAS.

THIRD PLACE IN THE SOCIAL ORDER IS THE MERCHANTS CALLED VAISYAS.

FOURTH PRINCIPAL CASTE IS WORKERS OR SUNDRAS. (SOO-DRAS)

BENEATH THE SUNDRAS WERE THE OUTCASTES - THE UNTOUCHABLES. THE VAST THROG OF MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN BORN BENEATH CASTE. WHO COULDN'T DRAW WATER FROM VILLAGE WELLS, LIVE CLOSER THAN A PRESCRIBED NUMBER OF FEET TO THE HOUSE OF CASTE PEOPLE IN THE VILLAGE.

IF THE SHADOW OF AN UNTOUCHABLE FELL UPON FOOD THAT A CASTE PERSON WAS EATING IT WAS THOUGHT TO BE POLLUTED AND MUST BE THROWN AWAY. IN THE CITIES THE UNTOUCHABLES LIVED BY THEMSELVES IN A WARD OR DISTRICT CALLED A MOHULLAH. THE UNTOUCHABLES NUMBERED IN THE MILLIONS. THEY ARE HUMAN BEINGS IN BONDAGE TO A SOCIAL ORDER THAT HAS NO LINK WITH THE SOARING HINDU IDEA OF LIFE.

THE NEW CONSITUTION WORDS NO DISCRIMINATIONS IN MODERN INDIA - BUT QUITE ANOTHER TO MAKE PEOPLE CHANGE THEIR AGE-OLD HABITS OF LIVING.

CHANGES ARE SLOWLY BEING MADE: A lot of Hindus practice birth control and widows are no longer allowed to throw themselves on a funeral pyre.