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caste 🗣️ (kăst)

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n.

1. Any of the hereditary, endogamous social classes or subclasses of traditional Hindu society, stratified according to Hindu ritual purity, especially the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra castes.
2. A social class separated from others by distinctions of hereditary rank, profession, or wealth.
3.
 - a. A social system or the principle of grading society based on castes.
 - b. The social position or status conferred by a system based on castes: *lose caste by doing work beneath one's station*.
4. A specialized level in a colony of social insects, such as ants, in which the members, such as workers or soldiers, carry out a specific function.

[Spanish *casta*, race, and Portuguese *casta*, race, caste, both from feminine of *casto*, pure, from Latin *castus*; see **kes-** in the [Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

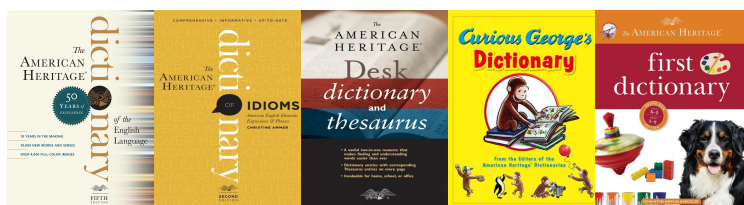
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