

Hinduism paper

[Religion](#), [God](#)



Hinduism Paper Bill Jackson Axia College of University of Phoenix HUM 130 Religions of the World Professor Naomi Doumbia October 21, 2007 Hinduism Paper The term Hindu was introduced by the British in the nineteenth century as term to classify the people who lived near the Indus River (Fisher, 2005, p. 69). The term Hinduism was derived from the term Hindu in order to categorize the religion of this same region. The religion of Hinduism is actually comprised of several traditions and religious beliefs. This has lead to a lack of a uniting belief system and makes Hinduism hard to classify in the Western idea of a religion. Despite the lack of a uniting belief system, Hinduism has had a profound affect in India, the region in which it originated. Hinduism is driven by the concept of moksha, which, as Fisher (2005) explains, is the " liberation from the limitations of space, time, and matter through realization of the immortal Absolute". The term Hinduism is out dated and most Hindus prefer to call their religion Sanatana Dharma. Fisher (2005) states that there are over 330 million deities in India, and that a reason for this great number of deities is that the divine can not be identified by a single object, but instead has many faces. A majority of Indians live in villages, and the deities that are worshipped in these villages vary vastly from village to village. One common theme is that runs through most of these beliefs is that truth is obtainable and a person may directly experience this truth. Another common theme is the unwillingness to have a fixed name or form for their deity. This had lead to the misconception that Hinduism is a polytheistic religion. Most people observe that Hindus have many forms deities and give their deities many names. These people fail to realize that all of these forms represent a single deity, and the Hindu's on supreme God

answers to many different names. What separates most Hindus is the path they believe will help them to achieve enlightenment. Most variations of Hinduism accept the statement "truth is one; sages call it by various names", which was stated in the Rig Veda. The Rig Veda is an ancient collection of Vedic scriptures that are one of the oldest existing scriptures in the world (Fisher, 2005, p. 72). Hinduism is a vital aspect of Indian society. Since Hinduism believes that all truth is universal, just a different way to observe and practice it, India is able to be unified in a way that is impossible without Hinduism. As mentioned before, there is a myriad of different variations of Hinduism. If these variations were not united under the title of Hinduism, secular fighting might occur. This is not the case due to the fact that each sect considers themselves Hindus. There is very little else that unites these villages. This diversity and the ability to incorporate any belief system is India's greatest asset. The fact that Hindus believe all truth is one, allows the Indian people to be more tolerant and acceptable towards different faiths. This greatly reduces any friction that may occur when foreigners enter the country. One can even argue that Christianity is just one form of Hinduism. Christianity is simply a different path towards enlightenment and truth. Hindus hold the cow to be sacred. This is due to the fact that ancient Hindus had many uses for the cow. They used bulls to plow their fields and grow their crops. Cow milk is also a vital source of protein for the Hindus and many Indian dishes use cow milk as an ingredient. The cow was the lifeblood of ancient Indians. The Vedas, ancient texts that are considered to be the foundation of Hinduism, states that the cow is their mother because the cow gives them its milk. Not much has changed over the

centuries and the cow is still an important aspect in modern Indian life. The ultimate goal of all Hindus is moksha. This desire for liberation from earthly existence is due to the desire to escape the karma wheel of birth, death, and rebirth. It is only through the achievement of moksha that one will be freed from the limitations of space, time, and matter. This will also lead to a merging with the Absolute Reality and unadulterated peace. This is a liberation from all the earthly miseries. Women traditionally were linked their husbands and encouraged to seek liberation through their husband.

Liberation can not be attained as long as the I-sense lasts and the soul does not have a longing for liberation. Liberation takes at least a lifetime, but usually takes many lifetimes. Hinduism is a diverse religion with many customs and traditions. The variations are immense, but united under one belief of enlightenment. This is no different that western religions.

Christianity has many customs and traditions, the difference is that each has their own individual name and are not united. This is the strength of Hinduism; the ability to unite many forms of the same religion. Hindus understand that even though we are on separate paths, our destination is the same. References Fisher, M. P. (2005). Living Religions (6th ed.).

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