

# World religions: hinduism assignment

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Hinduism is an umbrella term given to the religion by Europeans that involves numerous religious teachings and philosophical ideas. Hinduism is more commonly known as Sanatana Dharma. Sanatana Dharma means literally eternal religion. Though Hinduism vastly lacks a uniting belief system there are aspects that define the Hindu religion. Hinduism is one of the oldest religions that do not have a known founder for the religion. The religion is based on several teachings and revolves heavily around rituals.

These rituals start at an early age and continue throughout a person's life. According to the Ixia College Week Two reading Hinduism (2009), There are certain rituals and rites of passage that are addressed in the ancient scriptures to purify and sanctify devotees in their journey through life, including rites at the time of conception, the braiding of the pregnant mother's hair, birth, name-giving, beginning of solid foods, starting education, investing boys with a sacred thread, first leaving the family house, starting studies of Veda, marriage, and death.

According to the Ixia College Week Two reading Hinduism (2009), “According to the Indian Supreme Court, which formally defined Hindu beliefs that in a way affirms universality rather than exclusiveness. According to the Court's definition, to be a Hindu means: Acceptance and reverence for the [Veda] as the foundation of Hindu philosophy. A spiritual tolerance and willingness to understand and appreciate others' point of view, realizing truth has many sides. Acceptance of the belief that vast cosmic period of creation, maintenance, and dissolution continuously recur.

Recognition that paths to truth and salvation are many Recognition that there may be numerous gods and goddesses to worship, without necessarily believing in worship through idols. Unlike other religions, absence of belief in a specific set of philosophic concepts. Hinduism incorporates several cultural and societal influences that make it vital to the region in which it originated. One societal influence in the Hindu religion is the implication of the five step caste system. The caste system originally consisted of four groups until a fifth was later developed.

The first group of the caste system consists of priests, philosopher, or spiritual specialist known as Brahmins. The second group is known as Ashtrays and consists of nobility such as kings, warriors, vassals whose priority is to protect and preserve society. Thirdly there are Vassals that are the economic specialist consisting of farmers and merchants. Then there are the Shudder that are made up of manual laborers and artisans. Last the fifth group formed to complete the caste system consisted of members known as the untouchables. The untouchables did the undesired work in society such as cleaning waster and moving human remains.

This societal role of the caste system has primarily shaped the Hindu people and their role in which they live. According to the Ixia College Week Two reading Hinduism (2009), Scriptures and other customs have influenced Hindu devotees to conform to structured societal roles. These roles are outlined in the Code of Mann, which was compiled by the year 100 CE. The Code of Mann is comprised of laws governing the aspects of life including the

expected conduct of the rulers, laws regarding marriage, expected proper diet, purification rites, social laws, lily rituals, and ethical guidance.

These cultural and societal implications have shaped the Hindu religion and followers of the religion and the region/ society in which they live. Hindu follows much like followers or a vast number of other religions desire liberation from earthly existence. Primarily this desire for liberation is one of the founding basis for religious traditions, rituals, and self disciplines in the Hindu religion. , According to the Ixia College Week Two reading Hinduism (2009), to reach the goal of liberation it may take at least the entire life or many life times Hindu lowers practice many teaching and rituals to strive towards the spiritual world.

Among these are the practice of many forms or yoga and meditation that they [Hindu followers] believe allows them to concentrate completely and experience oneness with the divine or deities. Additionally Hinduism devotees make pilgrimages that can be life threatening to worship and honor their deities, gods, and goddesses. Religious practices, rites of passage, and festivals to honor their deities also are geared to express their desire for earthly liberation. Moreover the Hinduism belief in incarnations embodies this desire to be liberated from earthy things.

Expressing in different forms again show that their desires and beliefs are not found in worldly possessions in society. Hinduism is a generic term coined by the Europeans for people of the Indian Subcontinent and their many religious practices, rituals, philosophies, and beliefs. Hinduism and its subsequent following may lack a uniting belief system but through its

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teaching, beliefs, and origin has defined the religion. Hinduism does not have a known founder but embraces several scriptures that are the basis for its religious levels.