

The harp of india essay sample

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Parliament of the World's Religions opened on 11 September 1893 at the Art Institute of Chicago as part of the World's Columbian Exposition.[86] On this day Vivekananda gave his first brief speech. He represented India and Hinduism.[87] He was initially nervous, bowed to Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of learning and began his speech with, " Sisters and brothers of America!".[83][88] To these words he got a standing ovation from a crowd of seven thousand, which lasted for two minutes. When silence was restored he began his address. He greeted the youngest of the nations on behalf of " the most ancient order of monks in the world, the Vedic order of sannyasins, a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance." [89] He quoted two illustrative passages from the Shiva mahimna stotram—" As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take, through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee!" and " Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths that in the end lead to Me." [89]

Despite being a short speech, it voiced the spirit of the Parliament and its sense of universality.[89][90] Dr. Barrows, the president of the Parliament said, " India, the Mother of religions was represented by Swami Vivekananda, the Orange-monk who exercised the most wonderful influence over his auditors." [88] He attracted widespread attention in the press, which dubbed him as the " Cyclonic monk from India". The New York Critique wrote, " He is an orator by divine right, and his strong, intelligent face in its picturesque setting of yellow and orange was hardly less interesting than those earnest

words, and the rich, rhythmical utterance he gave them." The New York Herald wrote, " Vivekananda is undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions.

After hearing him we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation." [91] The American newspapers reported Vivekananda as " the greatest figure in the parliament of religions" and " the most popular and influential man in the parliament". [92] The Boston Evening Transcript reported that Vivekananda was " a great favourite at the parliament...if he merely crosses the platform, he is applauded". [93] He spoke several more times at the Parliament on topics related to Hinduism, Buddhism and harmony of religions. The parliament ended on 27 September 1893. All his speeches at the Parliament had the common theme of universality, and emphasised religious tolerance.