

The Beginnings

- If you were to ask a Hindu to define Hinduism, he or she might emphasize that it is not a religion or a philosophy but a culture, a unique civilization and way of life that has evolved
- Hinduism originated in _____ and is estimated by differing sources to be 3,500 to 5,000 years old.
- Profoundly influencing many other religions (especially the _____, _____ and _____ faiths), it also displays an extraordinary tendency to not only tolerate other faiths, but to assimilate their beliefs and practices as its own

The Beginnings (cont.)

- Hinduism is fundamentally different from the religions such as Islam, Judaism or Christianity in that it has no _____, no _____, no _____ and no doctrinal format.
- The ancient Aryan migrations from Europe and Iran into India, from approximately 1500-326 B.C., merged Aryan culture with that of the indigenous Dravidian peoples and created the social and philosophical foundation of modern Hinduism.
- The Aryans introduced deities (gods of nature) who required sacrifices to appease their wrath and solicit favors, as well as the Sanskrit language, the basis of the languages of North India and the original language of Hinduism's sacred texts.

Historical Influences: Muslims

- When Muslims invaded and ruled areas of India from approximately _____, they imposed a _____ on Hindus as an alternative to conversion to Islam.
- These thousand years under Muslim control left a lasting resentment and had a profound impact on Hindu politics, economy, culture, art, literature and science.
 - (This resentment is why we use "Totashtu" not "Amen" to help separate Christianity from Islam)
- Today, India has the _____ largest population of Muslims of any country in the world, numbering over 172 million. However, at less than 13 percent of the population, Muslims are still a decided minority

Historical Influences: Colonial Europe

- European colonialism in India began in the _____ century, and it too left an indelible mark on Hindu culture.
- First the _____ came, followed by the _____, the _____ and the British.
- The British dominated vast areas of India and maintained control until independence was granted in _____.
 - This is two years after WWII ended!

Historical Influences: Colonial Britain

- The British revolutionized life in India through the introduction of railway systems, roads, bridges, irrigation systems, the telegraph, the national postal system and English education.
- British missionary _____ helped initiate the use of the steam engine, paper production, banks, libraries and schooling for girls and the _____. He worked to abolish _____ (the practice of burning a widow after her husband's death) and established the Agricultural and Horticultural Society of India.

Historical Influences: Colonial Britain (cont.)

- The _____ government India has adopted is modeled after the British system, a sign of the lasting impact of colonial rule.
- British rule, religion and many of the advancements they brought to society were viewed as foreign.

Hinduism Moves Westward: The Expanse

- Today, Hinduism has ventured far beyond its Indian roots. Carried by devotees seeking opportunities for a better life, Hinduism can be found throughout the _____ world.
- As Indians pursue their fortune on a global stage, drawn by the prospect of better education or employment opportunities, they bring their families, culture, food and religion with them.
- Flourishing Hindu communities have grown in North America and Europe. However, Hindu ideology has been spreading more _____ into Western thought for more than a century

Hinduism Moves Westward: Globalized Ideals

- In 1893 Swami Vivekananda of India addressed the World Parliament of Religions gathering in _____ to promote Hindu concepts such as "universal tolerance," the acceptance of all religions as true and the belief that god is within each of us.
- In the years that followed, _____ (Hindu philosophical) societies were established throughout Europe and North America, the Hare Krishna movement took root and Transcendental Meditation flourished under the teaching of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

Hinduism Moves Westward: Popularity vs. Reality

- In recent decades, reincarnation has been glamorized in the West and is often portrayed as a second chance.
 - This is a far cry from the original concept: Hindus _____ the prospect of reincarnation and seek deliverance from its cycle.
- Reincarnation can be a sort of _____ in which a person must pay for the transgressions of past lives in hopes of a better lot in the next life.

Hinduism Moves Westward: Westernized

- From Hollywood stars who claim to have lived past lives, to yoga classes offered at gyms and community centers, to the horoscopes printed in newspapers, much of Western culture has _____ Hindu thought and practices.
- Westerners today are often interested in spirituality (_____ the person of Jesus), pluralistic truth (_____ absolutes) and eternal life (_____ the cross and resurrection).