

"Development of Hinduism in East Africa

Abstract:

Hinduism took root in Africa from the late 19th century onwards through the spread of the British Empire, which colonized huge swaths of land throughout Asia and Africa, including almost the entirety of the Indian subcontinent. Many Indians were recruited as indentured servants throughout the British Empire, settling mainly in the British colonies of Southern and Eastern Africa. The descendants of these settlers often chose to remain in Africa after the end of colonial rule, developing Indo-African communities that remain to this day. Hinduism is non-proselytizing religion and was usually not propagated to the same lengths or through the same means as Christianity and Islam. As such, it has mostly been confined to practise by the Indo-African communities of these countries. However, in post-colonial Africa, a small-scale movement for Hinduism and its propagation outside the Indo-African community has occurred, spearheaded by such individuals as Swami Ghanananda, the first Hindu swami of Ghana. Today, Lagos, Nigeria, which did not receive an original influx of Indian migrants as did countries such as South Africa and Uganda, is home to over 25,000 Hindus, mostly local converts[citation needed] and more recent, post-independence Indian immigrants. This was primarily the work of International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) missionaries. While Hinduism has been cited as possessing many parallels to traditional African religions